



Dear Families of St Mary's,

Sorry for the delay in the newsletter we have had some technical issues with our email system. They are resolved now

Exciting week at St Mary's

The expansion has started! The stripping of the old school has started, as we prepare to become a primary. Can I remind everyone that children now come in through the top door again as the boiler work is complete. Thank you to our nursery parents for picking up via the church yard entrance.

We have started our new lunch menu of one hot option and one cold. I'm resending the menus with the newsletter, as children are making their choice a day in advance please talk through the choices at the start of the week. We are on Week 2. Due to the new arrangements. The MI room will be out of use this term. Thank you to all our cooking volunteers for their time and commitment over the year.

Jungle Jo came to school on Tuesday to kick start our "in to the wild" topic. She brought spiders, snails and lots of excitement, giving the pupils opportunity to touch and hold the animals. Thank you to everyone who gave us such positive feedback.

Sumdog.com

A big thank you to the School Association for purchasing subscriptions for all children in Years 1-4 for Sumdog! Sumdog is an online resource which the children can access at home and at school. (Sumdog also now have a free iPad app!) Teachers can set particular lessons and homework tasks and children can play reading, writing and maths games using their own individual login. The questions are tailored to the individual playing to allow them to be successful as well as giving some challenge. The Sumdog website is completely safe and secure to use and children can play against other children from their class, school or from around the world. The more they 'play' the more coins they earn which can then be 'spent' in the shop to customise their avatar which is of course a great motivation for them. The children's individual login will be sent out by class teachers so keep a lookout for them in Homework books (but if you can't wait, do sign up yourself - it's free!) and please encourage your children to use this great, fun website to further their learning.

Golden Apple Awards go to:

Taisya Ashchelova, David Berry, Bella Walker, Riad Aiboud, Mollie Rees, Rhys Bradley, Sam Baker, Georgia Gibbs, Joseph Moloney, Jasper Hunt, Mia Harvey, Karmel-Mai Colclough, Jack Hardcastle, Henry Jay, Anna Heck, Louis Holmes.

Class Award goes to Reception this week

Mon 28th April Y2 SATs meeting – 3.00pm school hall

Wed 30th April – 6.00 pm Y4 Parent's Meeting Green Park Residential Trip

Tuesday 20th May – French Assembly 3.00 – 3.20pm

Thursday 22nd May – Ascension Day Church Service 2.30pm

Headlice

We have had no reported cases since March. Please check regularly and report any cases to the office. Many thanks

Family Holidays & Other Absences:

An increasing number of requests for holiday have been made. Please read the section from our Attendance Policy which explains the process and restrictions on authorisation of holiday. Many thanks.

"Absences in order to take family holidays will **not** generally be authorised except in very exceptional circumstances. The Governors, in conjunction with those from the other Berkhamsted schools, have agreed the following *may* in some cases be viewed as "exceptional circumstances":

- Family/ carer funeral or trauma.
- Weddings (immediate family only: 1 day maximum) or other particularly special family celebrations
- Religious festivals
- Visiting new schools prior to re-location.
- Visits to the child or parents' country of origin.

In these exceptional circumstances the school may agree to authorise up to 10 days per school year. A request must be made at least 3 weeks before departure (except in the case of funerals when this time constraint does not apply) by completion of a "Leave of Absence" form obtainable from the school office or the school website. The parents/ carers may be invited to meet with the Head teacher to discuss the request. All other absences will be recorded as unauthorised unless special permission has been granted by the Head Teacher. Should the child remain absent beyond the time granted, any further absence will be recorded as "Unauthorised". "Parents who fail to respond to requests by the school to send their children to school, or who take unauthorised holidays during term time may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Fine by the Local Education Authority. The notices will be issued at the discretion of the Headteacher and will be applied to parents whose children have at least 21 sessions of unauthorised absence in the previous/and or current term."

Your views about St Mary's First school

Please complete the survey on Survey Monkey sent out on Friday. The Governing body, Headteacher and Senior Leadership team use the feedback from the annual questionnaires to help us evaluate our performance and to feed into our planning for future improvement. Your views really matter to us, so please take this opportunity to be as open as you can about what you think the school is doing well and areas where you think we could do better.

We value your feedback at any time, you don't need to wait until we ask for it in the questionnaire. Our teachers have an open door policy, Mrs Haezewindt is happy to meet with parents and issues can be raised for discussion at the Parent Forum. We would also encourage you to complete the Ofsted "Parentview" questionnaire every year, which can be done at any point during the year <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

To access the questionnaire, please follow the link below, or copy and paste it into your search engine:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RKND8RK>

If you would prefer to complete a paper questionnaire, please ask the office staff for a copy, or request a copy via your child's link book.

Our Value this half term is Love. Love one another John 13v.34

Save the date:

Film Club – 'Frozen'. Monday 28th April 3.30 pm.

Spring Fete 17th May

Camping on the field 28th June

8th September return to school Autumn 2014

24th October - Celebration Service for the refurbished school and 150th anniversary

Nursery Update

The children have settled back in after the Easter break. They were very brave during 'Jungle Jo's' visit and most touched the cockroaches, snake and let the stick insects walk on them! The role play area in Nursery is transforming into an ocean, complete with sand and the children are helping to make things for it.

Dates:

April

28th & 29th – Y4 Cycle Training

28th – Drumming Workshop- Y1

Y2 SATs Meeting 3.00 pm

Film Club – 3.30, Frozen

29th – Y2 College Lake

Y3 Whipsnade Zoo

30th- Green Park Parent's Meeting 6.00 pm

PROMISE AUCTION 10th May at 7pm in St Mary's Church to provide funds for urgent repairs to the church organ, there will be an exciting evening of promises to be auctioned . More than forty products and services ranging from sumptuous cakes to rides to airports , family photoshoots ,sports massages, babysitting and much more. £5 entry. For tickets please contact Evelyn on elhodgson@btinternet.com tel: 01442 873458 or Karen on kazbaldwin111@gmail.comtel: 01525 229353

This year's Tring Midsummer Fun Run will take place on Wednesday 18th June. Entry forms and online entries are now available at www.tringrunningclub.org.uk/FunRun