

Friday 8th September 2023

# ST MARY'S NEWS

The latest news from St Mary's CE VC First School

## KEY DATES

**Tuesday 12th September**

Individual Photos

**Friday 15th September**

Year Two trip to Lyme Regis

**Tue 19th & Thur 21st September**

Parent Consultations

**Tuesday 19th September**

Year One - T@SM Church visit

**W/C Monday 25th September**

Cycle to School Week

**Tuesday 26th September**

Year Two - T@SM Church visit

**Wed 27th - Fri 29th September**

Scholastic Book Fair

**Friday 29th September**

Macmillan Coffee Afternoon

**W/C Monday 2nd October**

Open Week for 2024 Starters

**Tuesday 3rd October**

Year R & 4 - T@SM Church visit

**Tuesday 10th October - 2pm**

Harvest Festival

**Monday 16th October**

Curriculum Open Morning

**Tuesday 17th October**

Flu Immunisations

**Tuesday 17th October**

Year Three - T@SM Church visit

**Friday 20th October**

Last Day of Term

**Mon 23rd to Fri 27th October**

Half Term Holidays

**Monday 30th October**

INSET Day - School Closed

**Tuesday 31st October**

First Day of Term

**Mon 6th & Tues 7th November**

Life Education Day

**Tuesday 7th November**

Year One - T@SM Church visit

## Note from Mr Homer

Welcome back!

*I hope that everybody had an enjoyable break. It has been lovely seeing all of you and the children this week and there has been a really positive buzz around the school.*

*Throughout the break, a whole team of contractors and staff have worked their magic on our school. We now have a new learning garden and toilet for Year One, new flooring in a number of areas across the site, some very exciting plumbing upgrades, a new door into what will become a new and improved sensory/ELSA base, new LED lighting, new high level windows, some freshly painted walls, upgrades to our IT network and, of course, an awesome upgrade to our playground equipment! On top of all of this, Willow has moved into Oak, Oak has moved into Ash, Ash has moved into the Music Room and the Music Room has moved into Willow! As if that wasn't enough, as our team were organising their new rooms and ensuring they were ready for this week, they gave every classroom an overhaul as we all continue our focus on developing inclusive learning environments. It really has been a busy summer!*

*So, now that is all over, we are really looking forward to the year ahead! With so much change, we understand that this can often be an anxious time for children and families, so we would like to offer you a chance to meet with your child's class teacher in a couple of weeks time to ask any questions you may have. These optional appointments will be available to book from 6:30pm this evening via this [LINK](#). These will take place on Tuesday 19th (in-person) and Thursday 21st September (virtually). If you are unable to make either of these dates but you require an appointment, please arrange this directly with your child's class teacher.*

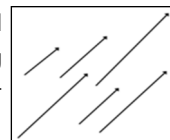
*Have a lovely weekend,*

*Mr Homer*



On Friday 1st September, all of the St Mary's team gathered together for a day of training.

We started the day by exploring the concept of a 'brand' and how this could promote consistency and clarity across our school. We agreed that by moving together in the same direction, we would be able to advance the development of our children's education. We will continue to focus on this going forward.



As part of our discussion around 'brand' we identified the need for an agreed goal which we would all strive for. For us, this will be our new school vision. We started working on our school vision last half term and six themes became clear in the mind of the children and the St Mary's team. These are based around the following: *be positive, be brave, be honest, be polite, be friendly, be joyful*. Throughout our training, we spent a long time exploring how these can feed into our school's new vision and values.

After a short break, we were then joined by our School Improvement Partner who challenged our understanding of highly effective teaching and learning. We explored how our new curriculum should be planned, delivered and assessed to maximize its effectiveness. This topic sparked much debate amongst the team!

Following lunch, we all completed a thorough safeguarding update and then spent time finalizing plans for our children's return to school.



## Welcome

**This week we have welcomed our new Reception children into St Mary's!**

It has been lovely to meet some new and returning families and to see lots of new smiley faces!

As has become a custom here at St Mary's, all of our Reception children have been paired up with a Year Four buddy who will look out for them throughout the year.

Our wonderful School Association provided a small gift to the parents of our Reception children, recognising that this is often an emotional time for parents as we begin to realise just how quickly our children are growing up!



**Dorchester Library**

Summer Reading Challenge 2023

**Ready,  
Set,  
Read!**

### A note from Mary, Sarah, Georgie and Ollie...

*It was lovely to visit St Mary's last term to launch our Summer Reading Challenge "Ready, Set, Read".*

*We have been delighted to see so many children in the library collecting stickers and medals. If your child has not yet finished the challenge, or is yet to start it, there is still time. Just come along to the library before September 23<sup>rd</sup> so we can register them, hear about the books they have read, give them stickers, a medal and ensure that the certificate gets sent to school.*

*We look forward to seeing you soon!*



I would like to extend our warmest welcome to Reverend Leila as she begins her new role as Rector of the Benefice of Charminster, Stinsford and the Chalk Stream Villages.



The continued presence of a dedicated and compassionate spiritual leader, like Reverend Leila, will undoubtedly enhance the spiritual and moral fabric of our school, moving forward.



Leila's wisdom, guidance, and support not only enriches the lives of our children but also inspires our entire community. We look forward to the spiritual leadership she will provide, and we are excited to continue this journey of faith and education together.

Once again, on behalf of our entire school community, I extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to Reverend Leila.

## This Week's Awards for Growing and Flourishing





# This week at St Mary's

## This week in Willow...

...we have had a really enjoyable first week in school, exploring the new environment and meeting our Year four buddies.



## This week in Oak...

...all of the children have settled into their new learning environment. We have been using the story of the Colour Monster to talk about our feelings and have had fun making monsters, hunting for monsters and writing letters to the sad monster, giving suggestions on how to cheer him up! We have also used coloured cubes as a 'check in' to show how we are feeling. 'Happy yellow' and 'calm green' seem to be a popular choice!



## This week in Beech...

...we have enjoyed getting back into the rhythm of things and settling into our new routines! We enjoyed PE in front of a packed audience of parents near to home time and we set out our class charter to help us achieve our goals this year!



## This week in Maple...

...we have had a fabulous start to the new term, really working well as a team. We have started our new topic on 'Movers and Shakers' and have begun to use the Dawson's model to help us find out if a person fits the criteria to be known as a significant person in history. We have read information about Mary Anning, Neil Armstrong, Rosa Parks, Emmeline Pankhurst and many more to see their significance. In mathematics we have been counting in tens and using tens and ones to make numbers. We have reminded ourselves of the numbers up to 20. We have enjoyed some handwriting practice, using our new writing books!

## This week in Linden...

...we have really enjoyed getting to know each other by playing games in the classroom and during PE. We have also loved exploring the new play apparatus!



## This week in Ash...





# Are you concerned about a pupil?

If you are worried about a child,  
you must share your concern without delay.



**Mick Homer**

Headteacher

**Designated  
Safeguarding Lead**



**Lisa Thornicroft**

Teacher & SENDCo

**Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead**



**Karen Bennett**

Family Support Advisor

**Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead**

**Our Safeguarding Governor is Reverend Pene Kennedy**

If you are concerned about a child's welfare or worried they are being abused,  
you can make a referral directly to:

**Dorset's Children's Advice and Duty Service on 01305 228866**

**In an emergency, or if you believe a child is at immediate risk of harm,  
call the police on 999.**

Click or scan this QR code  
to go straight to Dorset  
Council's website:

