Unique and Valued by God

The St Mark's Fortnightly Newsletter

26th March 2021

'A school where children develop the passion to learn, the skills and knowledge to succeed and the confidence to take Christian values into our diverse society.'

Dear Parents, Carers, Children, Staff and Governors,

Children are working extremely well across the school and are participating in a range of events and activities across the school curriculum. As we approach the Easter break, it is particularly important that we remember the important events of Easter and why is it significant for Christians. It provides us with an opportunity to reflect on the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and give thanks that free forgiveness and new life can be obtained through trusting in him. Palm Class will be leading us in our special Easter service which will be held on Wednesday 31st March. A video link will be sent through to you so that you can watch this service yourself.

Inclusion Quality Mark

We are thrilled that our IQM report has come through and we really feel as though it accurately captures our school and the provision we offer. See pages 5 and 6 for more details

KEY SCHOOL DATES FOR SPRING TERM

DATE	DETAILS
Monday 29th March 2021	RE Week - details to follow
Wednesday 31st March 2021	End of Term 4—last day of term 3.20 or 3.30pm
Monday 19th April 2021	Children return to school EYFS & KS 1– 8.45am, KS 2-8.55

VALUE OF THE WEEK

Flourishing Relationships—

Saying sorry

BIBLE VERSE

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all

1John 1:9

Classes

N -Cedar Class — 96%

R- Ebony Class— 97%

Yr 1-Juniper Class — 98%

Yr 2-Oak Class — 94%

Yr 3-Olive Class —98%

Yr 4-Palm Class — 99%

Yr 5-Sycamore Class –92%

Yr 6-Willow Class — 94%

WELL DONE!

You are all doing amazingly! This weeks target is 96.01%. Remember, that poor attendance not only has an impact on your child's learning, it effects the whole school. We have noticed that there has been a few children arriving late this week, so please give yourself extra time for travel. EYFS &KS 1-8.45 and KS2—8.55

Healthy Packed Lunches

We were thrilled in 2019 when the school finally obtained Healthy School Status for its commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles through regular exercise and healthy eating and drinking. We have noticed that things have slipped a little since our return to school so please take notice of our Healthy School Packed Lunch Policy.

PACKED LUNCHES CAN INCLUDE

- a sandwich with a healthy savoury filling or equivalent main meal (eg. pasta, noodles, rice, cous cous, potato, soup, falafel, curry etc.)
- a portion of fresh or dried fruit without added sugar (eg. apple, mango, grapes, raisins) **AND** a portion of vegetables (eg. carrot sticks, mini tomatoes, cucumber, celery etc.)
- yoghurt, fromage frais, cheese or similar dairy item or other non-dairy protein item (eg. tofu, seeds, salami).
- water
- **ONE TREAT ITEM -** choose from a small cake OR a biscuit OR a cereal bar OR a small packet of crisps or snacks. (Please be aware that **these items often have high fat, sugar and salt levels**)
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PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE

- chocolate, chocolate covered biscuits or chocolate spread
- jam
- sweets
- fizzy drinks such as cola, Lucozade, and lemonade
- fruit drinks (eg. Ribena, Fruit Shoots), flavoured water, 'sports' drinks, squash or cordials as these include high levels of sugar or artificial chemicals used to sweet-

IDEAS FOR PACKED LUNCHES

Fruit & Vegetables	Include ***at least*** one portion of fruit **and** ***at least*** one portion of vegetables or salad in their daily packed lunch.
Meat & Alternatives	Include meat, fish or another source of non-dairy protein every day. Non-dairy sources include soy products, chickpeas, beans, hummus, nut butters and falafel.
Oily Fish	Include oily fish such as salmon, trout, sardines, Jack fish or fresh tuna regularly.
Starchy Food →	Include a starchy food such as bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or dumplings.
Milk & Dairy Food →	Choose a dairy item such as cheese, yogurt or fromage frais. (Watch out for the sugar levels in these products though.)
Healthier Drinks →	Free, fresh drinking water will be available at all times as this is the healthiest drink for your child. However, you could also add an extra bottle of water to your child's packed lunch as well.

An update from EYFS

The children in Reception have been having a fantastic time in the Early Years dressing as fire fighters, putting out fires, building their own fire engines and participating in role play activities.

Lunchtime Clubs

Children have lots of things to do during lunchtime and playtime. Many children use the fitness equipment in our Fitness Zone; younger children play on the Jungle Run; basketball has become increasingly popular as well as four square, table tennis and table football.

At St Mark's we also recognise that some children benefit from quieter lunchtimes and we run daily indoor games clubs, where children play a range of card and board games. Children in different year groups have the opportunity to attend on different days of the week.

SUNFLOWER GROWING COMPETITION

Every child, from Nursery to Year 6, has planted a sunflower seed this week during their outdoor learning session. The children are responsible for caring for their sunflower seed during the Easter holiday, checking whether it needs a drink or to be moved into the sunshine. They will then bring their sunflower seedling back to school after the Easter holiday to be planted out on the school grounds. We will measure them in June or July and the winner will receive a special gardening pack and mention during collective worship. Good luck, everyone!

After School clubs

From w/c Mon 26th April 2021 to w/e Fri16h July 2021 - £2.50* per session (£27.50 per term)

***First 2 clubs half price for Pupil Premium— please pay in full and a refund will be made back to your ParentPay account w/c 19th April 2021**

TENNIS (Mon) -Y3-6

Do you want to be the next Rafael Nadal or Selena Williams? Come and join the tennis club!

MULTISPORTS (Wed)- Y1-3

Mr Emmanuel will be putting together a range of different sports each week. Every week there will be something new to do.

CRAFTS (Tue) - Y1-6

Amazing projects are waiting for you at the Crafts club. Design your own bag, create a mosaic coaster, cardboard marble run... Join and discover what fantastic projects you will be able to create while you learn new skills in a fun class for all year groups

ART CLUB (Mon) - Y1-2

Come and enjoy an amazing ART club, filled with fun and imagination for you to explore. Painting, Drawing, Colouring, Moulding, Needlework, Free Design and much, much more.

SCIENCE CLUB (Thu) - Y1-2

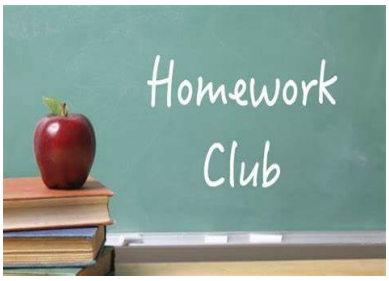
Do you want to create rain, to know how many teeth a mosquito has, to make a volcano? All this and much more in our Science Club! Never too young to be a scientific! Join and enjoy!

HOMEWORK CLUB (Fri) Y2-6

For help and support when you need it most.

DODGEBALL (Tue) - Y3-6

Dodgeball is a fun packed game of action and skills. You will be amazed how fit you can be running around and trying to get your opponent out! A team game of fun and laughter.



COOKERY (Wed) -Y3-6

Activities include making, painting, decorating and baking a range of sweet and savoury pastries, cupcakes and cookies. So what are you waiting for? Come join this popular club.

CHESS (Thu) -Y 4-6

Do you want to participate in chess tournaments and gain medals for the school? Join the chess club!

FOOTBALL (Fri) - Y 3-6

Our Football Team speaks for itself, great matches and winning GOLD! We want more Boys and Girls to join the team, so that we can keep bringing home St Mark's Trophies for the school!

BASKETBALL (Thu) - Y3-6

Join Mr Emmanuel and develop great skills in dribbling, passing, shooting, rebounding and defence and maybe become the next Michael Jordon!

PLACES ARE AVAILABLE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVE BASIS CLICK HERE TO BOOK ON PARENT PAY

Inclusion Quality Mark

Please read this summary of the school from our recent Inclusion Quality Mark Report that took place in February 2021

Inclusivity Permeates

Inclusivity permeates the character, ethos and practice of St Mark's C.E. Primary School. It is creatively led and driven by the Headteacher and Senior Team who have the respect and appreciation of staff, children, Governors, parents and the local community. The richness of diversity within the school's community and pupils is confidently presented as a positive experience and something to be valued and celebrated.

Teachers Feel Appreciated

In this context, despite the range of barriers to learning experienced by many of the school's pupils (75% EAL, 52% Pupil Premium), there is a clear commitment to ensuring that all children will be supported in achieving their very best outcomes.
Communication between stakeholders is strong, ensuring that all share the values, understand the character and contribute to the direction of the school. Teachers strive to provide the very best for their pupils and feel appreciated and well supported by the Senior Team and Governors.

Supporting Individuals and Learning

Structures and systems facilitate a clear and transparent approach to identifying needs and the implementation of a wide range of support strategies to support individuals' learning. High quality teaching is prioritised and staff participate in a range of training and professional development activities to become as skilled as possible in meeting the needs of all. Staff seek out and create high quality concrete and virtual resources, which they judiciously use to motivate and appropriately challenge their pupils. Teachers and Teaching Assistants plan tasks and activities together to enable children to meet their targets. Professionals from other agencies and organisations are engaged to work with pupils, parents and staff to support children's wellbeing and learning, ensuring that inclusivity is at the heart of school practice. This reflects the Chair of Governors' description of the school culture as one of 'togetherness'.

Compassion, Respect and Kindness

Standards are robustly monitored and there is clear action planning to further develop the school's capacity to effectively provide for its pupils and community. Academic learning is skillfully interwoven with personal development within a stimulating, calm environment which promotes inclusivity through displays and classroom conduct. The breadth of curriculum and learning activities offered recognises that all are unique in their skills and talents and provides opportunities for children to develop these talents and skills in a wide variety of areas. Children are simultaneously encouraged to take on a range of responsibilities and become positive, confident and accountable individuals, showing compassion, respect and kindness to their peers and their community.

Achievement is Celebrated

Achievement is regularly showcased and celebrated in a variety of forms. Rewards are linked to core and school values endorsing the importance of individual, personal qualities and attitudes for children. The importance of teamwork and mutual support is emphasised as groups and classes are also rewarded. Consequently, pupils have positive attitudes towards school, enjoy learning and are rarely distracted in lessons.

Inclusion Quality Mark pg 2

.Parents Feel Listened to and Respected

Parents have every confidence in St Mark's C.E. Primary School and it was warming to hear how appreciative they are for the education which their children are receiving and the support which they, themselves, receive from the school. They feel welcome, listened to and respected, acknowledging that the school goes 'the extra mile and more' for the benefit of their children. They highlighted the range of workshops provided, helping them to be the best parents they can be in supporting their children and working in partnership with the school.

Approachable Staff

The approachability of all staff means that parents feel confident in raising any difficulties, concerns or questions which they might have, knowing that they will be received empathetically, taken seriously and addressed appropriately. Parents were particularly complimentary about the ways the school is managing the challenges of COVID-19 in striving to provide good quality teaching and learning experiences for pupils, alongside pastoral care in 'scooping up' children to prevent any 'falling through the net'. They consider information and communication to be excellent and are both grateful and proud that their children attend St Mark's C.E. Primary School, frequently referring to it as 'a family' where 'everyone supports each other'.

All Pupils are Included

A major strength of St Mark's C.E. Primary School is the leadership's determination to provide a wealth of experiences for children which they might not otherwise have, by drawing upon institutions and organisations within the community, which it perceives as a rich and diverse resource to enhance the learning of pupils. Strong collaboration has resulted in children receiving expert tuition, coaching and high quality learning experiences in a range of sports, arts, academic and community activities where they can all explore and develop their knowledge, skills, particular talents and interests. Timing and funding of the vast majority of these means that all pupils are included. The enthusiasm of the children I met in discussing their activities and trips was almost tangible.

Contributing to Their Community

All children are encouraged to contribute to their community through charitable collections and gifts, performances and environmental activities in their school garden. The resilience and determination of staff to cope with the current restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic are to be commended. The school's capacity to provide its normal menu of school life has clearly been diminished but the staff have developed organically and have adapted to current circumstances. The Leadership Team is fervently focused on keeping children hooked into learning, whilst also ensuring their wellbeing during this difficult time. It recognises the importance of caring for staff and supporting parents in steering through this crisis period, which is much appreciated by both.

A Rich Inclusive Experience

It was a pleasure meeting children, staff, parents, Governors and members of the local community virtually and I am so sorry not to have been able to visit in person. However, the achievement of St Mark's C.E. Primary School in creating a safe, stimulating, environment where its diverse community can be happy, motivated and supported to learn and achieve was very evident. The capacity of a small school to provide such a rich inclusive experience for its pupils is highly creditable and testament to the passion, innovation, determination, strength of purpose and focus of those involved in making it happen. St Mark's C.E. Primary School lives its Christian values, seeks and shares expertise and, as described by the Head of the local Learning Cluster, is "generous-hearted, open-minded and open-doored".