Unique and Valuable before God

The St Mark's News
22nd January 2016
Weekly Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers

Another week has flown by here at school and we are already halfway through Term 3. There have been a number of highlights, which include children from Year 3 attending a special Lambeth awards ceremony at the Southbank Centre, for excellent achievements in their end of Key Stage 1 tests. Also a team of children took part in their second competitive sports competition against other Lambeth schools and did exceptionally well. Finally a small group of parents participated in a healthy food workshop and enjoyed interacting, food tasting and sharing ideas.

Parents' Evening

During the first week in February, there will be a further opportunity to meet with your child's class teacher. A letter was sent home yesterday explaining the process of either signing up from Monday 25th January or returning the request form back to school as soon as possible. Please speak to a member of staff if you are unsure. If you would like someone to interpret for you please let your child's teacher know.

Read For My School

Earlier in the week you should have received a letter outlining the Read For My School competition that will be running for the next month or so. Please can you support this at home and help children to access online books and then write reviews and also read and log paper books. Prizes and resources can be won for the school if children read and review their books.

School Collective Worship

Theme: 'The School Values'

Wk 3– Kindness

Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablets of your heart

Proverbs Chapter 3 verse 3

Diary Dates for next week

Monday 25th—Friday 29th January

Year 6 are involved in an Into University Project, which aims to give children the aspiration of going to university in the future.

Tuesday 26th January at 9.00am
Establishing a Parent & Staff Association 2 (PSA) all are welcome

Tuesday 26th January at 9.00am
Parents' working group on developing a healthy food policy for St Mark's Primary School

Friday 29th January at 9.00am
Early Writing workshop for Reception and Year 1 Parents

Excellent Achievement

A big well done to Jacob, Juanita and Lauren, who all achieved level three grades in their end of Key Stage 1 Sats. They attended a special ceremony on Monday and were awarded a medal and a certificate from Lambeth's Director of Education.

We continue to invest in whole school resources that will provide your children with a wide range of experiences and opportunities to develop many important skills, including sporting, musical and computer skills.

Mrs Rust working wonders with the children in Year 3, who are playing notes and little tunes are only a few weeks of learning the recorder.

Reception children are thrilled to have wood chippings in their setting, which will enable them to make use of the grass area during the next few months

Our increased music provision covers guitar tuition with groups of children in Year 6. All other year groups across the school receive high quality music provision.

Children in Year 6 work using the school's new laptops. Which will enable us to teach computer coding across the school and develop and challenge children's thinking skills.

Year 5 and 6 Athletics Tournament

On Wednesday, 18 of our pupils from Years 5 and 6 visited St Martins in the fields school for Girls. They took part in a range of different activities and events as they competed against other schools in Lambeth. Here are some of the reflections of the experience:

"I really enjoyed it, even though I was a little nervous about competing against other schools." Rebecca– Year 5

"We worked together as a team and I feel we achieved a lot."

Mardiya & Enitan – Year 5

Special Leave Requests

Taking your child out of school during term time for holidays or extended visits not only impacts on a child's achievement in school, but it also has a significant impact on the school's attendance data. Due to the negative effect that this has already had on the school attendance data this year, it is necessary to reiterate the school's policy and activate the council's consequences for unauthorised absences.

Please read the guidance below which outlines the process for obtaining special leave.

1. **All applications of special leave need to be made to the head of school using the school Special Leave form two weeks in advance and prior to making arrangements or bookings.**
2. **Decisions about special leave will be made with the child in mind and based on your child's attendance history, previous requests and individual circumstances**
3. **Special leave will be granted on the basis of exceptional circumstances only and this does not include extended holidays.**
4. **Authorised special leave cannot go beyond 10 days**
5. **Unauthorised leave could lead to your child losing their school place and you receiving a council penalty fine.**
6. **Please ensure that holidays are taken within the 13 weeks of school holiday**

Our recent inspection says that we need to continue to work together to ensure that all members of the school community understand the full effects of taking holidays during term time and we hope that you will support our efforts to improve this area of the school. Many Thanks Mr Ingram 22nd January 2016

Attendance and Punctuality

In our most recent Ofsted inspection, one of the areas identified as an area of improvement was pupil attendance.

"Attendance is around the national average but varies from year to year, particularly in relation to persistent absence."

It is very pleasing that the attendance during this past week has significant improved with Year 2, Year 4, Year 5 and 6 all obtaining attendance levels of over 96%. Please make sure that children are in every day they can be and in their class line by 8.55 am. A small number of absences can impact the class and the school data significantly. Classes have been busy saving the money they have won in the autumn term due to good attendance and punctuality and will be award more based on their good attendance and punctuality this term.

Low Cost/No Cost Family Fun in London

Pop-up Performance: The King, the Parrot and the Cat - V&A Museum

FREE (All Ages)

Cromwell Road, SW7 2RL / 020 7942 2000/ www.vam.ac.uk

Nearest tube: South Kensington

Sat 23rd, 11am, 1pm & 3pm

Experience the amazing sights, smells and tastes of the King's banquet and meet his beautiful parrot.... Just watch out for the cat!

Digital Dress-up Workshop - British Museum

FREE (Age 5+)

44 Great Russell Street, WC1B 3DG / 020 7323 8000 / www.british museum.org

Nearest tube: Holborn/Russell Square

Sat 23rd Jan, 11am-4pm

Dress yourself in amazing outfits from different cultures in time using green screen technology. Turn yourself into a Samurai Warrior, an ancient Greek or another character from another time. Activity takes 30-45 minutes.

Trading Stories - Museum of London Docklands

FREE (Ages 5+)

Hertsmere Road, West India, E14 4AL / 020 7001 9844 / www.museumoflondon.org.uk

Nearest tube: Barbican/St Pauls/Moorgate

Sat 23rd Jan, noon-1pm, 2pm-3pm & 3pm-4pm

Design your own ships and cargo, then recreate some of the world's famous trade routes in this fun digital workshop. FREE, tickets allocated on arrival.

St Matthew's Project Junior Football - Brockwell Park

FREE (Ages 6-13 All abilities)

Brockwell Park, (Tulse Hill side, by the swings) / www.thesmp.net

Every Saturday at 10am-12am

Free, structured football and coaching sessions for all young people of all abilities with exit routes into league football and direct referrals to Fulham FC Talent Recruitment for gifted players aged 6 -10 years.