



Growing and Learning Together in God's Love

St Mark's CofE Primary School

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End of Year Newsletter – July 2018

There have been so many amazing moments and memories during the past few weeks, not to mention the past year! Drama performances, transition day, Sports Day, discos, amazing homework, Year 6 graduation party, trips, Ofsted, bug hotels, new learning behaviours, tea parties for great attendance and punctuality, and much more. All of these activities contribute to a healthy and positive school community, and over the year, ours has grown stronger and stronger. Of course, it doesn't happen on its own, and I'm grateful to our pupils, parents, staff, governors and friends of the school who help make St Mark's a place to grow and learn together.

Year 6 – Ready to go

It is that time of year when we say farewell to our Year 6 pupils. We know they are ready for the challenges and opportunities that Year 7 brings. They have been a fantastic group of pupils, and I wish each one of them the very best. Thank you for the example you have shown to other pupils, and for making these past few weeks so memorable, too. The leaver's assembly was a particular highlight, as was Peter Pan. Amazing. Remember, you are always welcome to come back and visit. Good luck!

Staff Changes

We say goodbye to... Miss Pett, Mrs Hiscock, Mrs Laws, Mrs Stone, Mrs Arrol, Mrs Hurcomb, Mrs Cameron, Miss Bentliff, Miss Murphy, Mrs Crawford, and Mrs Farebrother. We wish you all the best in the future, and thank you for all that you have given to our school.

We say 'see you soon' to Mrs Cooper, who goes on maternity leave this summer. Mrs Cooper has been such a support to me, and has helped our school transition between a change of head teachers- no small feat. She is immensely passionate about our pupils, and goes above and beyond on a daily basis. I am very grateful for all that she has given this year. *You will be hugely missed!* However, we look forward to seeing her around with baby Cooper in time, and wish her and the whole Cooper family all the best in the months ahead.

We also say goodbye to Fr Michael, who has been an integral part of our school since he joined Immanuel. It's been great to have a friendly, welcoming vicar who has really enjoyed being amongst our school community. We know he will be missed by all, and we send our best wishes for the future. (Thank you to everyone who has given to his leaving present, which will be presented on Monday.)

Coach Fletcher has also been a brilliant support to our pupils throughout the year, helping them to develop their rugby skills alongside sporting character. Thank you for your great attitude and your time and efforts given.

Over the year, we have had several parents and grandparents read with our pupils on a regular basis or volunteer in other ways. I know they have enjoyed doing this, but we certainly don't take it for granted. Again, thank you for taking time out to invest in our pupils and our school.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all of our members of staff. I know they have really appreciated your messages of support which have come via our online survey, our report response forms and cards. They work very hard, and are committed to giving your children a strong education. Put simply, they really do care, and we are grateful.

Head Teacher: Mr Charles Applegate
Deputy Head: Mrs Claire Cooper
Assistant Head: Mrs Nicola Ford
Assistant Head: Mrs Rebekah Alsey



Governors

I would like to commend the efforts of our Governing Body. They give up their own time to help support our school in this important role. In particular, I want to say a public thank you to Graham Robbins, our current Chair of Governors, who is stepping down in July. Graham has served the school since it was built, and has been involved in various different capacities. The school community owes him a huge debt of gratitude for the time, effort and care he has given to St Mark's. I would also like to thank Ena Bull, our current Vice Chair, who is also stepping down from that role. As well as being a dedicated governor, Ena also helps out each week in Year 2, and knows almost every child in the school. We are fortunate to have had them leading our Governing Body. Thankfully they won't be fully leaving our school community just yet 😊

Priorities for September 2018

We are already thinking about September! Our school priorities will be around:

1. Strengthening understanding and teaching of maths- particularly around number and place value. We'll be adopting a mastery approach, which is akin to Singapore Maths, but still includes strong elements of reasoning and problem solving.
2. Assessment – we are looking to refine our assessment processes further, with a standard 'NFER' test being introduced in every year group, three times per year. Parents will be informed of results alongside our teacher assessment system. We will avoid being a test-based school, but need to use the tests and results to ensure we have accurate teacher assessment judgments.
3. Reading – how can we further develop our children's vocabulary and inference skills? We also want to foster a greater love of reading, which is vital for more imaginative writing and understanding the high expectations in reading comprehensions.
4. Introducing HeartSmart – a resource to build emotional resilience and empathy in our pupils.
5. Helping parents help our pupils – how can we empower and educate parents with how pupils learn at each phase in their education? Be prepared to be invited into school more to learn with your child!

Need some ideas of what to do over the summer?

Visit the Discovery Centre, or the Willis Museum. Go for a walk. Read 6 books. Check out www.spotlightuk.org or www.basingstoke.gov.uk/streetz. Have a picnic. Walk in the woods at the Vyne. Practise times tables! Write an imaginative story. Most of all, avoid too much technology.

Star Learners last week – well done to...

Year R	Year 1	Year 2
Ashley, Ayden, Ruby, Bethany	Isabella, Harry, Lucas, Bethany	Kai, Ollie, Nathaniel, David, George
George, Sophie	Cameron, Logan	Bella, Samuel

Curriculum Evenings for September

You are invited to a brief meeting to learn more about your child's year group. They will be held on the following days and times:

	Weds 12 th September	Thurs 13 th September	Weds 19 th September
6:30pm – 7:00pm	Year 2	Year 1	Year 4
7:15pm – 7:45pm	Year 6	Year 3	Year 5

I also wanted to say thank you to the whole school community for welcoming me at St Mark's. It's been a great year- full of challenges, hard work, and little sleep- but more memorably, a wonderful group of staff to work with, pupils to teach and been amazed by, and of course supported by a team of volunteers, governors and parents. Thank you everyone.

Finally, may I wish you and your family a fantastic summer break. Enjoy the weather, enjoy the time spent together, and we look forward to seeing you on Tuesday 4th September.



Charles Applegate
Head Teacher

A few final reminders!

Remember, **school shoes** should be **completely black**. Please remember when buying shoes over the summer! Also, hair should not have shaved designs or be dyed.

Have you returned your **feedback forms** from the reports?! We value your thoughts and suggestions!
Also our survey –
www.stmarksprimary.net/survey

Please pick up any **lost property** from the school. Anything left will be given away.

We are a no-nuts school!

Please use a permanent marker for labelling school clothes. There are a lot of items of clothing in our lost property boxes without names on!

Healthy snacks and lunchboxes really help children to learn more effectively!

Holidays will not be authorised, including any taken in September. Penalty notices (fines) are still in place, including for families where general attendance is not good enough anyway.

Remember, absences aren't based on academic years. If someone took 3 days holiday in July and then 2 days holiday in September, this accounts to 5 days in total, which results in a penalty notice being issued.

Please do look out for our school over the summer. If you notice anything suspicious, please phone the police.
Thank you.