

St Mary's Church of England Primary School & Nursery

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we are nearing the end of this academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for supporting your children and the staff at St Mary's.

It has been a challenging year for everyone with a national lock down at the start of 2021. This not only disrupted personal lives but also our children and their education. I am sure that you will agree that the staff at St Mary's have worked incredibly hard with the home learning provision and maintained a strong connection with the pupils and their families throughout this time. Each member of the team has fulfilled a vital role in ensuring that a high standard of education has been maintained throughout and that the school has been a clean, safe and nurturing environment to be in.

Despite the challenges of the year there have been some fantastic achievements to celebrate. The teaching staff have shown exceptional teamwork and have worked together utilising their individual skills and the result is that a varied and engaging curriculum has been formed to help children to move forward with their learning journey during their time at St Mary's.

In June 2020 the Government announced that it would provide schools with Covid Catch-up Funding to help their pupils to catch up on missed learning caused by Covid-19. St Mary's planned how best to use this funding and bought into a Maths Tutoring Programme called Third Space Learning. The result has been wholly positive with children showing increased confidence in Maths and 100% of the children making progress in the NFER assessment. All are now working at accelerated expectations and 2 children have reached Greater Depth. Phonics and reading interventions have been offered to children who would benefit from the extra support and staff have undertaken training where appropriate to boost their quality first teaching further.

St Mary's is particularly proud of the success with phonics (Letters & Sounds). Phonics attainment in Year 1 is particularly good and the phonics scheme within the school is proving to be hugely successful. Monitoring of Phonics in the Early Years and KS1 has helped St Mary's to implement good teaching and learning throughout the school and enabled them to make changes to provisions where necessary.



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Reading across the school should also be highly commended as a huge amount of work has gone into this area during the academic year. Children now have access to a wide range of stimulating and exciting books to both read in class or individually at home with reading books matched appropriately to the reading scheme. Accelerated Reader has worked very well across KS2 and has been an ideal platform for this particular age group.

There have been improvements to the IT provision within the school so that St Mary's is keeping up to date with technology and has the iPads and computer trolleys that it needs to support children's learning further.

The pupils at St Mary's have enjoyed all the extra sports provision that have been secured this year which have enabled the children to learn new skills, have fun and improve fitness and resilience. There have been sessions with an external dance coach, visits from Bath Rugby and cricket coaching plus 80% of Year 6 Pupils are now able to swim 25 metres.

Sports Days were held this year for the first time in two years. I know it was sad for parents and carers not to be present, however, given the rise in Covid-19 cases locally it was the right decision to make. The children really enjoyed the Sports Day experience and I saw a number of smiling faces and lots of stickers showing their achievements at the end of the school days.

Year 6 were able to go on camp to Great Wood in June and had a fantastic time. I've heard that as a year group they were a joy to be with, worked as a team and just simply got on well together! Year 6 have also just performed their play 'Alice in Wonderland' with the support of the Year 5 choir. They had obviously worked so hard and delivered an excellent performance which they should all be very proud of.

St Mary's has also had a successful first year as an academy as part of The Partnership Trust. Staff and governors have learned and embraced new systems, been able to work with other colleagues within The Partnership Trust which has enabled the school to constantly strive to 'be the best it can be'. Emily Massey CEO of The Partnership Trust visited St Mary's recently and had some very positive words to say:

"The school and grounds are amazing and like I said yesterday, I saw happy, engaged, friendly and purposeful children all enjoying being at school with their adults supporting them. The staff I spoke with and saw working with the children were passionate about the school and the children. A real privilege to spend time with you all."

I would like to thank all the staff at St Mary's for their hard work and dedication and to wish the Year 6s all the best for the future as they move onto secondary school. I hope that you all have an enjoyable and relaxing summer holiday and as a school we look forward to welcoming you back in September 2021.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Gilliam
Chair of Governors



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