



St Mark's CE Primary School

Newsletter 1

Autumn Term
15th September 2023

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,

Diary Dates

21st Sept	Individual Photographs
5th Oct	Census Day
6th Oct	Thoughtful Stand on Playground
9th Oct	Thoughtful Workshop
9th Oct	Laurel at Hindleap
11th Oct	Full Governors Meeting
17th Oct	Bluebell And Fern Washbrooks Farm
23rd Oct	Half Term
27th Oct	INSET day
30st Oct	Year 5/6 Girls Rugby - AM
1st Nov	Year 5/6 Boys Rugby PM
	Parents Evening
2nd Nov	Parents Evening
2nd Nov	Staplefield Bonfire Night
8th Nov	KS 2 Cross Country
15th Nov	Year 5/6 Football Tournament
1st Dec	FOSM Christmas Fayre
7th Dec	FOSM Wreath Making
11th Dec	Flu Vaccination
12th Dec	Pantomime
14th Dec	Christmas Lunch
15th Dec	Christingle Service
2nd Jan	INSET Day
16th Jan	Young

Welcome Back

We have had a wonderful start to the school year and it has been so lovely to see all our families on the playground. For some of our children, this is the first time at school, we wish to congratulate them all on how well they have they have joined our school.



Christmas at St Mark's

I know this is very early but we will be sending home the Christmas Cards your children have made at school so you can order them in the next couple of weeks. This means you will receive your order in plenty of time for Christmas so look out for them.



Communication

Please remember to enable the MCAS system as this is the way we will be contacting parents. We no longer have any form of access to Parentmail. This will enable you to consent to trips/swimming/forest school/parents evenings etc Also it will enable you to book your child onto any Wraparound Care you require.

New behaviour policy

Thank you to all the families that filled in our survey about what they thought of the school's reward system last term. We have been thinking about how to improve it and would love to set up a steering group to get feedback from families—we are also getting children's views! If you are interested in joining the steering group, get in touch with Ms Kelsey on the gate or via head@st-marks.w-sussex.sch.uk.

This term, we are trailing using 'praise postcards' so look out for your children bring these home to celebrate the amazing things they have achieved in school.

Peanuts: Can please remind parents not to put any item of food in their child/ren lunch that contains some form of nut. We have a few children in our school suffer with nut allergies.



Staplefield Bonfire Evening

Thursday 2nd November—
Tickets will be available from the school office from 1st October.

FOSM (Friend's of St. Mark's)

Friends of St. Mark's do a great deal of fundraising for the school so we can do amazing things with your children. Please come along to the AGM on 3rd October at 8pm (online) to hear about the plans for this year and to see how you can get involved—however big or small!



Together, in God's love, we will shine



Volunteers needed for reading

Do you have the odd half an hour to an hour that you could spare to hear children read in school? It makes such a difference to children's reading to read aloud to an adult everyday and we are looking for people who could give a little time each week to volunteer their time to listen to children. If you are interested, please contact the school office so we can arrange the appropriate checks.

Wraparound care

We have had some people ask why we are not running football club after half term so I thought it might be useful to give some context for this decision. Before we offered wraparound care, we used to run ad-hoc clubs until about 4pm run by volunteers. These tended to be seasonal and different clubs ran each term based on availability and the weather. Winter sports clubs were often cancelled when the weather was bad and parents informed during the school day. As we now have people needing wraparound care for childcare, it would not be right to cancel clubs in this manner. As you know, after half term, the days get shorter and it is harder to run outdoor clubs which rely on the light. We do not have enough outside light at school to run them at school. Last year, we ran football club at Brantridge school but this was tricky if people needed to pick up early as well as if the weather turned bad—especially for the children using the club for childcare who don't want to play football. Football club will be back as soon as the days get lighter and we will be running other exciting clubs after half term to replace football and woodland club.

Walking around the football pitch

Quick plea that if you are coming into school when children are playing on the playground pitch, please could you walk around the outside to avoid being knocked by the ball.

Help your children love maths

Thank you to everyone who came to today's workshop! There were great conversations and you can find the [powerpoint used in the session here](#).

There were also great [free resources to use with you children at home which can be accessed here!](#)



Funding for Schools

If your child is eligible for free school meals, they may also be entitled to sum of money paid to their school to boost their learning. The money the school receives for this will go directly to support your child in their education. Even if you're not sure if you're eligible, please check to see if you are entitled as this will have a positive outcome for your child. These children bring funding to the school that helps towards teaching support, school trips, resources for your child etc. and free school meals in Bramble and Laurel.

Eligibility Criteria

Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)

Income Support

Income based Jobseeker's Allowance

Income Related Employment and Support Allowance Support under Part VI of the 4 Immigration and Asylum Act 199

The guaranteed element of state Pension Credit

Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)

Working Tax credit run on paid for four weeks

Please see the link below to apply. Don't hesitate to contact the school office you need support with applying.

https://westsussex-self.achieveservice.com/service/Free_School_Meals_application

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