



# SCHOOL NEWS

ST. MARYS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, PUTNEY

DECEMBER 2023 ISSUE





### WINTER READING CHALLENGE

The Winter Mini Challenge is a free online reading challenge that tackles the holiday reading 'dip', encouraging children to keep up good habits or discover the joy of reading. It's easy to join in! Head to **wintermini.org.uk** to sign up, find fun activities, and earn rewards for reading. Read three books or more of your choice to unlock a limited-edition online badge and a special Winter Mini Challenge certificate to print off and keep. Please do tag us in your social media posts so we can see all the amazing stories and activities you are sharing!

**Winter Mini Challenge**

## Join the Ready, Set, Read!

### Winter Mini Challenge

from 1 December 2023

**Get rewards for your reading**

**wintermini.org.uk**

Supported using public funding by **ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND**

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD

I start my piece for this edition with the most exciting news! Thanks to the efforts of our amazing FoSMS Committee, we have reached our half way target of £50,000 for the next phase of our playground development project. Our Christmas Film night raised a whopping £5,000 and we are still awaiting the total from the Christmas raffle. Together with donations from parent/carers, children, governors and staff past and present we will have reached the half way point. I must admit I didn't think this was possible at the start of term, but now I am a believer! If we reach our total of £100,000 by Easter then it is hoped we will be able to start works on Phase 2 in the summer holidays! If you are able to donate to help us to reach the total then please see the QR code with the totaliser below... Huge thanks to Ruth and Rochelle, the FoSMS Committee and all of the parent/carers who have already donated their time to give us a fabulous Quiz Night and our first ever Film Night this term! We look forward to more exciting events in the Spring Term... Also hard at work this term, our governors have led the usual cycle of full board and committee meetings as well as the Faith Group. They have also attended their first working morning of the year which you can read more about in the governors update. I would like to take a moment to mention some of our governors by name. Judith Kennedy and Natasha Hume our current Co-Chairs are stepping down at the end of this term. Judith and Natasha have been at the helm for the last four years - steering us through the pandemic. We could not have wished for two better Chairs to see us through this challenging time. I am extremely grateful for the considerable amount of time and expertise that they give constantly to myself and the school and am delighted that they are going to continue to remain on the board. I am also delighted that Paula Greenwood, has stepped forward to take on the role of Chair and very much look forward to continuing to work with her. I would like to thank Lynda Donlon who has served as our staff governor for the last three years, she is stepping down from the role at the end of this term and will be passing the reins to Courtney Rinaldi and we thank Louise Mills who is also stepping down from the Board at the end of this term.

It's been another exciting term for our wonderful pupils with lots going on inside and outside the classroom. Our staff team have worked hard to ensure that the 'wonder' from our mission makes it into the day to day experience of the children and we hope you enjoy reading all about it in this issue. As we approach the festive season there is still more to come - our Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Dinner, our Christmas Pantomimes and one of the things I am most looking forward to is our Early Years and Key Stage One Nativity play at St. Mary's Church in the final week of the term. I hope to see some of you at the Church from 9.45am on the 19th December - all welcome! All that remains for me to say, is thank you Sarah for another great edition and a very happy Christmas to all of our families and friends! We look forward to seeing you for another term of wonder from the 9th January 2024!

**Miss Cheryl Payne**



## SCHOOL COUNCIL



Our Year Six Representatives have done a great job of leading and planning our School Council meetings so far this year. Individual Class Council meetings are held and councillors discuss the topics which are raised in class in full council meetings. Class Representatives have taken on being Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champions and hope to contribute to the achievement of the Equality Mark. They have decided to maintain our support for the British Red Cross and Christian Aid as our whole school charities. Also on their radar, is continuing to improve pupil behaviours in the toilets, by designing and distributing posters to encourage positive habits. They are hoping to support a toilet twinning charity though a book swap in the Spring Term.



**The Spring Term starts**  
**Tue Jan 9th 2024**  
(Mon 8th Jan - Inset Day)

**Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**

"When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him."

Matthew 2:10



## SCHOOL GOVERNORS NEWS

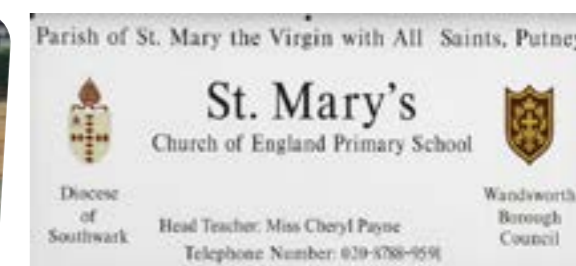
Our first Full Governing Board meeting began in September in the new part of the playground, which is absolutely fantastic, and is a tantalising glimpse of how the full redevelopment will look. Our two newest Governors, Sara Dolling and Ruby Vincent have experienced this term the full range of meetings that are held to ensure our oversight of the school, and we welcome their expertise and input.

Governors were recently invited into school to a working morning, where they were given a walk through all classes and year groups to watch the teaching of science - from its very practical applications in the Nursery and Reception (cooked and uncooked pasta featured - we were told by young scientists, very seriously, that we were not allowed to eat it), to more scientific investigations in Year 6 about the properties of light. Mr Lett then talked Governors through the very thorough and impressive investment the school has made in the teaching of science.

Governors also put a team into the FoSMS quiz night and were quietly shocked but very pleased to be one of the three teams tied in first place - showing a surprisingly diverse range of knowledge, ably boosted by three Year 5 parents. The Faith Group, which is led by Rev John Whittaker and includes Governors, has met this term and continues to work to enrich the life of staff and pupils at St Mary's.

And to conclude, this term is the final one for Natasha Hume and Judith Kennedy as our Co-Chairs. They have led our Governing Board over the last 4 years to support the school through an unprecedented period of upheaval and change (including an OFSTED visit), and their skill, empathy, commitment and attention to detail has been invaluable to Miss Payne and her team and the whole Governing Board. Both will continue to be Governors on the Board for a while longer, and keep an eye on myself as I take on the mantle of Chair. I have been shadowing Natasha and Judith all term as part of the transition into the hot seat and know I have very big shoes to fill. Many thanks on behalf of the rest of the Governing Board, to Judith and Natasha for their commitment and amazing leadership. It is also the end of the term of office of Lynda Donlon as the staff representative, and her contribution has been invaluable in giving a practical and front-line perspective within discussions about various issues. Thank you Lynda! And finally, we are losing Louise Mills as a parent governor. We thank her for her invaluable contribution and unique perspective which has been of inestimable use as issues have arisen. Wishing all St Mary's staff and families the compliments of the season and best wishes for a happy and healthy new year.

**Paula Greenwood, Chair-elect**



## Classroom Close-ups

### Y3

Year 3 have had a fantastic start and have settled well into Key Stage Two! One of their favourite topics so far has been in history, where they have studied the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages. The school trip to Butser Ancient Farm, a recreated prehistoric settlement, was really interesting and enjoyed by all. On this trip the children were able to experience what life may have been like in the past and even got to make their own jewellery! In English the class are currently reading the picture book *Winter's Child* by Angela McAllister. They are developing their use of rich and varied vocabulary, including the use of prepositions and noun phrases. In maths the children have so far tackled place value and addition and subtraction. They are now looking at their skills in multiplication and division. In RE the class have been learning about The Bible and it's 'big story'; they have also found out about monastic communities and the daily lives of some monks and nuns. They are currently enjoying the topic on Advent and Epiphany, which included an exciting school trip to the historic Westminster Abbey! Finally, we have to mention science! The children really engaged with the topic on rocks and fossils and found it to be extremely exciting; lots of practical experiments were conducted, including testing the hardness of rocks, finding out which rocks fizzed in acid and which types of soils were soakers and drainers!



### Y1

Year 1 have had a busy but fantastic term and have settled into Year 1 and the new routines well. We have had a lot of fun and are enjoying the learning! We loved celebrating Black History Month with a visit from Wendy Shearer who told us the fantastic Caribbean tale of Anansi and the talking watermelon! We also learned all about Altheia Jones-LeCointe and had a great time designing our own versions of the Black Panthers! We adored having the Year 6 children come and read to us. It was great getting to know them and hearing them read us stories. We had such a good time that we thought that they all deserved a sticker and we can't wait to do it again! Our absolute favourite day of this term was visiting the Tower of London. We looked at various artefacts, which gave us clues about what the Tower was used for and who lived there. We particularly loved the ravens, who live at the tower to ensure that the Kingdom does not fall! We are VERY excited about Christmas and have been having fun learning about the Christmas story, creating decorations, writing letters to Father Christmas and, of course, practising for and performing our Christmas show!



### Y4

It has been a wonderful start to the Autumn term in Year 4! In RE, children have been looking at the message of Remembrance and Peace across spiritual, cultural, and social topics. As a consolidation of their learning, after Remembrance Sunday, Year 4 attended the Cenotaph in Whitehall to commemorate our lost soldiers. In Geography, Year 4 pupils have been learning all about our local area, Putney, and taking note of key geographical changes over time. They also completed an audit of our High Street to seek out and propose changes to improve human features. In English, they have been very engaged in the book, *'Leon and the Place Between'*, then applying some of the adventurous vocabulary used throughout the text in their own story writing. Building from their recorder lessons this term they have been discovering the flute and performed in the Christmas concert. What a busy yet successful term!



### Y6

It is never a slow day at the top of the school in Y6. If we are not working hard in class, we are busy serving as school leaders, running the school council, setting an example as anti-bullying ambassadors, sharing our love of books as librarians and acting as family captains. On top of all that, we have been navigating the secondary transfer process with school visits and assessments. Despite all we have going on we have stayed focused on our academics. In English, we wrote a narrative story with a flashback and more recently, a hybrid text. In all our work, we try hard to ensure that our grammar is correct and we are drawing our reader in. Our problem solving and reasoning skills are improving in maths and the challenging long division, BIDMAS and fraction work were no match for us. In Geography, we have studied rivers and are learning much about the River Thames on our doorstep. We have been treated this term to RE lessons with Miss Payne, who has helped us to understand the Christian faith better. A number of trips and visitors have enhanced our learning this term. As part of our history study about WW2, we visited the Churchill War Rooms; we were amazed to see the close quarters where the UK war operation was run. A visit from a magistrate, helped us to understand the legal system with an in-class mock trial, unfortunately we found our classmates guilty. A Transport for London Workshop and the opportunity to take part in a cycle training course taught us how to travel safely whether on public transport or bike!



### Y5

What a whirlwind start to Y5! We have been exploring lots of interesting topics and diving headfirst into all of our work. In English, we have been learning all about fairy tales and how to create the perfect 'happy ending'. The question on everybody's lips is 'Does the villain deserve a cruel ending for a story to end happily?' As we explore new figurative language techniques, our writing is improving beyond measure and hooking the reader in. Science has been all hands on deck as we explore various forces and how they interact with and change our environment. With many of our lessons involving experiments, it's no wonder Thursday afternoon is everyone's favourite time of the week. We have also used our researching skills to identify and sketch the life cycles of different animals and compare what makes each animal unique. To finish up our time with the incredible Mrs Miles, we enjoyed getting creative with festive art. We have created shepherds from dolly pegs and tissue paper sunsets to resemble the Shepherds journey to Jesus's birth.



### YN

The first half term in Nursery has been nothing short of magical as our little learners embarked on their exciting journey into school life. Settling in seamlessly, the children dived into self-discovery, creating enchanting self-portraits and reminiscing about their baby days through adorable baby photos. A delightful highlight was the visit



from Aziliz's baby brother, sparking joy and curiosity. As the second half term unfolded, the Nursery class delved into the theme of "People Who Help Us." The classroom buzzed with imaginative role-play, complete with costumes and self-made emergency vehicles from the outdoor equipment. Our young heroes, adept at extinguishing imaginary fires, learned valuable lessons about community helpers. In the spirit of environmental stewardship, the children embraced the principles of "10 Things I Can Do to Help My Planet," engaging in activities like switching off lights, sorting recycling, and becoming conscientious water users. These early lessons in sustainability are sowing seeds for a brighter, eco-conscious future. Christmas cheer enveloped the classroom as Nursery transformed into a festive hub with a Christmas post-office. From sending cards to playing starring roles in their first Nativity at the church, our little ones revelled in the joy of the season. The adventures in Nursery continued with a trip to The Polka Theatre to watch *'The Night Before Christmas.'* The joyous experience added an extra sprinkle of magic to the festive season.

### Y2

The Autumn Term, as always, is a busy one! We loved celebrating this term with Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day, Odd Socks Day and, of course, our Christmas Production of *'Baarmy Bethlehem'*, which Year Two led spectacularly - showing their growth in skills and confidence and marking the end of a fabulous first term in Year 2! In October, we celebrated Black History Month and shared what we had learnt with Year Five and our parents. We were captivated by our visit from Wendy Shearer, a wonderful storyteller and author, who delivered the traditional Caribbean folktale of Anansi. We all got involved; she truly brought the story to life. A highlight was receiving and writing letters to our pen pals in Tilford, which was only topped by going to Tilford and meeting them! It was great learning about their school and it's surroundings and we can't wait to show them around Putney! Some more highlights were learning facts about owls in our English lessons, exploring living things and materials in science, and learning about Guy Fawkes in history. We love getting creative in Year Two so also enjoyed making Diyas lamps and discovering why Diwali is celebrated. We are all very excited for Christmas and have enjoyed getting festive with lots of different Christmas activities.



We've had a busy term of learning and it has been so much fun!

### YR

What a term it has been! For some, it has been their first term at St. Mary's, and it is wonderful to see how well everyone has settled in. During the first half-term, Reception had fun getting to know their new friends, exploring their new environment and getting used to routines. 'Bears' was our first topic. The children enjoyed reading a variety of texts and learning all about bears and found it particularly fascinating learning about hibernation and the different animals that hibernate.



Another highlight of the term was celebrating Black History month, we created some artwork inspired by Black British artists. As well as this, Wendy Shearer

visited our class to tell the story on Anansi the spider. This half-term we have been focusing on the story *Astro Girl* with 'Space' being the topic. We began by taking a trip to the Polka Theatre to watch *'The Star Seekers'* which we thoroughly enjoyed. The children have been responding to illustrations, making predictions and beginning to label and caption their work using their phonetic knowledge. We have also enjoyed learning about the planets in our solar system. We got creative by modelling and painting planets - experimenting in colour mixing. Non-fiction texts have been something we have delved into to find out information about the solar system and space travel. Preparing for Christmas at St. Mary's is great fun. We have enjoyed the pantomime, practising our songs for the Nativity and learning all about the Christmas story.



## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

This October, the school had a wonderful time exploring Black British History during Black History Month. This year we celebrated with the theme 'Saluting Our Sisters' and studied a variety of women from different backgrounds who have and are contributing to Black history.

Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 also had an absolutely amazing time with the wonderful storyteller, Wendy Shearer. Wendy shared with us some Caribbean tales of Anansi in a fun and engaging way. We could all join in and take part in the story and had a brilliant time learning stories from other cultures. Year 1 loved the story of Anansi and the Talking Watermelon so much that they made their own firebird masks and added their own parts to the story. Up in KS2, Bigfoot Arts came in and delivered a fantastic assembly and workshops for each class. This year's workshop theme was 'All Aboard the Empire Windrush'. They explored what it would have been like to travel from the Caribbean to Britain through the story of a young woman arriving aboard the Empire Windrush. They also thought about how it would have felt to leave the known behind and enter an unknown that was not as friendly as we would hope. It was a great month ending with classes sharing their learning with each other.



Getting us in the mood for Christmas, Year 2 led Key Stage 1 and Early Years in an epic adventure across Bethlehem to a humble stable where Jesus was born. We followed the hilarious "party sheep" through the busy town on a fun and engaging search for a party...why else would all those people be in town? The Christian message of our Saviour, the Son of God, born in humble surroundings, and the triumph of good over evil was portrayed effectively, with strong visual and emotional impact. The song 'Mary and Joseph', which was truly moving and had many of us holding back tears! Luckily the concluding song 'We Wanna Shout' with its up tempo beat brought joy to us all (the party sheep included!) and reiterated the true essence of Christmas. A huge well done to all the children who took part - you spoke clearly, sang beautifully and told the Nativity story brilliantly. What a joy to see you all perform so well! A special thank you to parents, staff at St Mary's School and Church. All your support is appreciated and it was wonderful for us all to gather together and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas as a school community.

## NATIVITY



## CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME

Panto season came early to St Mary's this year. "Oh no it didn't!" There was much laughter and thigh slapping as Early Years were treated to 'The Littlest Christmas Elf' by Big Foot Theatre on Dec 13th and KS1 and KS2 enjoyed 'Sleeping Beauty' by Outside the Box, on the 14th Dec, kindly funded by FoSMS. The annual Christmas panto is always a special treat and this year's did not disappoint. The unique version of Sleeping Beauty, included a bit of love, some evil baddies and a few silly jokes. The giggling could be heard throughout the school, especially when Mrs McCarthy found herself a new boyfriend - Mr Muggles! This year's highlight was singing along with the current pop songs that were interspersed throughout the story. We are so thankful to FoSMS for giving us this opportunity.



## MUSIC

The children have created some fantastic music this term, with all classes composing on percussion, singing their hearts out, and working on their staves and notation. We have also been making good use of the new piano in the Music Room, and have had some lovely solo performances during lessons, on piano and violin. Nursery and Reception have enjoyed coming into the Music Room, and they have been tapping the beat with their claves, singing plenty of fun songs and listening to the William Tell Overture. Key Stage 1 have continued to develop their knowledge of rhythm, pulse and pitch, with plenty of singing and percussion playing, and Key Stage 2 have covered a variety of topics including Film Music, the life of Beethoven, The Nutcracker, Carnival of the Animals and Grieg's Hall of the Mountain King. Pupils have composed their own film scores, learnt Vivaldi's Four Seasons and Beethoven's Ode to Joy on the glockenspiels and acted out the battle scene from the Nutcracker! Year 4 are enjoying their flute lessons, and Year 3 have begun learning recorder in our Whole Class Ensemble Tuition classes, which is wonderful for their musical development. All pupils have enjoyed learning some Christmas music, and Yr5 and 6 performed their percussion pieces and songs to parents at the end of term, in a festive Christmas Concert!



## ANTI-BULLYING AMBASSADORS

This term we have inducted a new group of Anti-Bullying Ambassadors - or ABAs, as we call them in school. The ABAs have been through two sessions of training which aims to develop an understanding of why and how people bully others. The ABAs noted that bullying often occurs in a cycle and that it is important we disrupt that cycle in our school, as the lasting effects of bullying can be far reaching. The next job for our ABAs is to create an action plan for the remainder of the year and beyond and to ensure they are ready to lead the last AB day of the year in June. We look forward to seeing what the ABAs will achieve this year!



Odd Socks Day For NSPCC

## ART

Christmas came early to the St Mary's art room as every class worked with ink to create their colourful Christmas card designs. The children were then inspired to respond to a wide range of artists in a variety of media. A particular highlight has been the fine monochrome self-portraits painted by Y6.



## STAFF UNCOVERED

**Michelle Barham**  
Administrative Assistant

### Background.

I was born and raised in Roehampton and am a mum to one son, Jude, who is 14. I am one of six children and am the third youngest.

I left school at 17 to pursue an Art Foundation course at Epsom College of Art. Work soon beckoned and I have not looked back since.

I have had a good few roles in my 44 years including being a professional layout artist, sales assistant and working as an office manager in the City. I joined St. Mary's a decade ago.

**What do you like best about St. Mary's?**

I love the way we are one big team.

**Who is your favourite actor/ actor?**

This is tough one.... but I would have to say Richard E Grant as Withnail and I is my favourite film of all time.

**What human trait do you dislike?**

Bad manners

**How do you like to relax?**

Long walks (especially at the seaside) and listening to music, particularly live bands.

**What is your greatest extravagance?**

Has to be purchasing my three bedroom static caravan in Arundel West Sussex - I also have a thing for lovely sparkly jewellery.

**What is the most important lesson life has taught you?**

Be kind, as you never know what someone else is going through. Enjoy life as time is precious and take each day as it comes.

**How would you like to be remembered?**

As someone who tried to make a difference and gave it her best shot.

**What is your favourite meal?**

As a very fussy eater, I would have to say a roast dinner with pie and mash a close second but I can't forget to mention my love of a plain cheese sandwich on white bread!

**What is your favourite pastime?**

Has to be spending time with the family and friends in West Sussex by the sea, also singing on the terraces at Tottenham Hotspur FC with my son Jude.



## Christmas Greetings From our church

Christmas Greetings to St Mary's School Families

Some of us love chaos, some prefer order. Some of us are introvert, others extrovert and others still, somewhere in-between. Some of us are excited about Christmas months in advance, others dread the thought of overwhelming socialising and celebration.

Who ever you are and however you fit in those stereotyped personas, I hope and pray for all of us, that Christmas brings the assurance of God's love, the knowing that God is with us and the joy that as a community our call to generously give of ourselves to others echoes the abundant generous goodness of God and brings transformation and life to us and to our school, church and Putney.

St Mary's school, St Mary's church and the wider community of Putney celebrate in each other, support each other and cherish the close relationship we enjoy. And so as we journey towards Christmas together, may we all encounter the transforming, life giving message of the birth of Christ in our midst. Emmanuel. God with us.

Do visit [www.stmarys.parishofputney.com](http://www.stmarys.parishofputney.com) to see a huge welcome to our Christmas services and God bless to you all.

Rev'd John Whittaker  
[John.whittaker@parishofputney.co.uk](mailto:John.whittaker@parishofputney.co.uk)



### Christmas 2023 at St. Mary's

December

3rd	10am	Christingle
17th	6pm	Christmas Carol Service
24th	4pm	Children's Crib Service
24th	11.30pm	Midnight Eucharist
25th	10am	All Age Christmas Eucharist



## SPORT AT ST MARY'S

Here at St. Mary's we are continually trying to increase the number of opportunities for the children to develop their learning outdoors especially in sport. The autumn term has seen us participating in a number of events across the year groups and against other schools in the borough.

The term began with Trinity Cup Football tournaments at Trinity Fields. The Y5/Y6 girls were up first and enjoyed playing against a number of other Wandsworth schools. The girls (Daisy, Issie, Amelia, Eilise, Indie, Alice, Iris, Olivia, Hannah) played brilliantly as a team, with some particularly impressive goal keeping skills by Issie, managing to come third after a nail biting penalty shoot-out. The Y5/Y6 boys (David, Rubin, Ted, Ralph, Euan, Leo, Dawid, Ciaran, Rayan, Teo) then followed and continued the excellent play demonstrating fantastic skills and again great teamwork. After many close games, they came a respectable fourth.

October saw the Wandsworth Schools Cross Country Championship at Tooting Bec Common. Ted (Y6) was invited to join the event and impressively won the Y6 race, which included over 100 children! This makes him Wandsworth Y6 boys champion and gives him entry into the London Youth Games.

Y3/4 girls and Y4 boys took part in Football Festivals held at Southfields Academy as part of the Wandsworth Schools Games. Coaching and 7-a-side matches formed part of the festival, which were football filled afternoons of active, friendly fun! Both groups of children were a delight to take and seemed to relish every moment.

Back at school our new trim trail and climbing wall have been thoroughly enjoyed - the children's skills on these are already impressive. The rest of the playground continues to be used for a range of activities including basketball, netball, football, cricket, tennis and generally lots of active play - which is fantastic to see not only in PE lessons but during our break times too!



## ECO-COMMITTEE

We began the year celebrating our achievements from last year with the unveiling of our Eco-Flag representing our new status as an Eco-Friendly School!

We received over 50 applications for our 2023-24 Eco-Committee, which is fantastic and demonstrates how children at St. Mary's want to actively support environmental issues and make a difference! We now have a very dedicated group of twenty children who aim to build on the good work from last year.

We began the term encouraging everyone to take part in 'Cut Your Carbon' throughout November. It was fantastic to hear how many children (and staff) were inspired by the challenge and set about completing the nine small carbon-cutting activities at home helping to reduce emissions to benefit the planet.

The Eco-Committee's main aim this year is to raise awareness, change behaviours and take action on making our school a more environmentally aware and sustainable

place to be. We are currently auditing the school to enable us to write an action plan for the year ahead with a focus on ACTION not just words! Look out for more initiatives next term!



## GODLY PLAY

When Year 5 went to Godly play we listened to the story about Abram and Sarai and how they travelled on a long journey through the desert. It made us think about what it must have been like.

We learnt they had a son when they were really old, nearly a hundred years old, and I liked how when God changed their names they listened and so were then called Abraham and Sarah. I also liked how they called their son Isaac, which means hope. We were told that Abraham means 'Father of Nations' and as every family passes a new family takes their place and life just continues, and that we are all like the grains of sand in the desert, all coming from the same place.

It was like we were travelling like Abraham and Sarah did when we looked around the Godly Play room at all the stories of the bible from the Old to the New Testament.

Andrea Year 5



## FoSMS News

Round-up of FoSMS events - we've had a blast!

**WINE TASTING** - We kicked off the academic year with a Wine Tasting event organised jointly with St Mary's Church on 13th October, with funds raised split between FoSMS and Parish Action charities.

Rev'd John led a fantastic Eurovision-themed wine tasting tour, which was a lot of fun (and resulted in a few sore heads the next day!) whilst raising £752 for FoSMS.

**QUIZ NIGHT** - The St Mary's Quiz Night returned on 9th November, with an incredible new venue in the Ballroom at Winchester House. We were extremely grateful to Winchester House for generously offering use of their beautiful space at no cost. Chris Carr and Nick Green did a great job as Quizmasters once again, with 10 tables of parents battling it out over 6 rounds of questions and became increasingly confident in their answers thanks to some rather potent jelly shots! The table decorations were definitely stepped up a notch this year, with some brilliant efforts and Miss Payne awarding the Best Decorated Table to Y2 for "Parents of the Caribbean". At the end of the night there were 3 teams in equal first place - Governors, Y5 and Y3 - and the traditional "buy-out" to avoid the task of setting the Quiz for next year resulted in the Teachers agreeing to take on that mantle for 2024. Particular thanks to Rochelle Pearson and Daniela Severino for leading the organisation of this event, which raised £2,251 and also brought lots of parents together for a really fun evening.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS** - With time flying by and Christmas round the corner, Mrs Adams did a fantastic job helping the children to design their own Christmas cards, with parents then able to purchase cards as well as other items such as tea towels and tree decorations and a percentage of the profits being passed to FoSMS. This raised £437, as well as creating lots of proud and happy faces!

### CHRISTMAS MOVIE NIGHT

Instead of the usual Christmas Fair, the FoSMS Committee organised a new Christmas event in the form of a Christmas Movie Night. On Saturday 2nd December the school was transformed into St Mary's version of "Backyard Cinema", with over 140 children watching their choice of classic Christmas films - The Grinch, Arthur Christmas and Home Alone - alongside various stalls and activities in the Hall. Parents were able to enjoy mulled wine, international Christmas food, and make their own Christmas wreaths in relative peace!

This event proved to be a resounding success - both children and adults had a fantastic time and it was a relief to be in the warm as temperatures plummeted close to zero. Thanks to the phenomenal amount of effort put into the organisation and set-up by a team of volunteers led by Sophie Campbell, Rochelle Pearson and Ruth Allen, as well as the generous support of a large number of local businesses. **We raised a record-breaking £5,128!**

### CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Thanks to generous support from a mix of local businesses and companies linked with St Mary's parents, we were able to offer 8 incredible raffle hampers entirely from donations. Ticket sales were launched at the Christmas Movie Night, with the Fortnum & Mason hampers proving particularly popular. The amount raised will be announced shortly.

### Thank you for all your support!

A big thank you to everyone who has donated financially this term - every contribution really does make a difference, whether monthly or one-off. If you are in a position to donate, please do add gift aid if eligible to do so, and get in touch if you have any questions about how to make a donation as tax-efficient as possible. We are half way in our fundraising - please help us reach the goal for the next phase of the playground project.



## What we spent

We talk a lot about the Playground Project but it's important to remember that FoSMS also funds a wide range of resources and activities to enhance the learning and overall experience of St Mary's pupils. This includes contributing to some of the core running costs of the school every year, such as a key Learning Resources subscription, teacher resources, books and equipment (typically around £4,000 a year), as well as funding various additional extra-curricular activities - this term a particular highlight has been the Christmas Pantomime performances enjoyed by all of the pupils at the end of term. The bake sales raise money directly for each year group with the money funding such items as skipping ropes, clip boards, chess sets, craft materials and classroom learning aids.

**A huge thank you to all our wonderful volunteers!**

We rely entirely on volunteers to put on FoSMS events, which are so important for both fundraising and nurturing our amazing sense of community at St Mary's.

## Big goals for 2023/24

FoSMS began the new school year in a celebratory mood with Phase 1 of the Playground Project completed over the summer. The FoSMS Committee hosted drinks for parents on 5th October alongside a tour of the new playground area from Miss Payne, giving parents a chance to see the new multi-sports pitch, trim trail and climbing wall up close. Updated plans for Phase 2 of the playground were also shared with parents, including an eco-classroom and outdoor learning area which will provide a host of new learning opportunities for all pupils across the school. The FoSMS Committee has set an ambitious target of raising the estimated £100,000 needed to undertake this work by early summer 2024, so work can be carried out over the next summer holidays. There is no shying away from the fact that this will be a huge challenge, but we have hit the ground running with a fantastic programme of fundraising events, and an appeal to all parents to consider how we can all work together to achieve this goal. Please visit our Just Giving site for details of how to donate.

<https://checkout.justgiving.com/7kqljjvq6t>



**We've raised an incredible £50,135, half-way to our £100,000 goal.**

## Leavers and Starters to St.Mary's

### Welcome!

#### Pupil Starters this term

Scarlett Cawley Y2  
Amelia Jameson Y2  
Ava Dixon Y2  
Alice Lim Y5  
Yara Hani Y3  
Harry Jameson Y3  
Rufus Cochrane Y3

#### New staff this term

Ms Rowan Fenner - Music Teacher  
Mrs Joanne Lane-Wood TA

### Goodbye's

#### Goodbyes

#### Leavers this term

Ollie Mills Y1  
Harry Crews Y2  
Noah Jacquin Y3  
Olivia Crews Y4  
Yaelle Jacquin Y5

#### Staff leaver/s this term

Sylvia Miles - Teaching Assistant



Our wonderful class Christmas Trees containing all of our lovely handmade decorations! Thank you FoSMS for our treat!





## Mission Statement

**VISION:** Delivering excellence,  
allowing all to flourish

**MISSION:** Creating a culture of  
wonder, guided by Christian faith

**CORE VALUES:** Endurance •  
Compassion • Thankfulness

