



**St Mary's CE Infant School**  
19 Church Green  
Witney  
Oxfordshire  
OX28 4AZ



**Executive Headteacher: Ms Deborah Seccull**  
**Deputy Headteacher: Mrs Emma Dunstan**  
E-mail: [office@stmarysinfants.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarysinfants.co.uk)

(01993) 702387  
[www.st-marys-witney.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.st-marys-witney.oxon.sch.uk)

Dear Families,

11th January, 2024

Happy New Year! I hope that you have all enjoyed a lovely festive season.

It's been wonderful to see the children returning to school this term with a real Spring in their step and eager to take on the challenges of a new term.

### **Leadership Changes**

We obviously start this term without Miss Atkinson and instead the leadership team at St. Mary's now consists of myself and Emma Dunstan, in the role of Deputy Headteacher. As I wrote before Christmas, this is an exciting opportunity for both St. Mary's Infants and The Batt, as Mrs Dunstan will be able to extend her enthusiasm for early education, her compassion for children and families and take a lead in developing the infant curriculum across both schools.

This closer connection between the two schools, we believe, will also allow for the sharing of expertise, resources and experiences for children which will be of benefit to both settings.

I hope that you have all had an opportunity to meet Mrs Dunstan this week, and I know she has felt really welcome as she joins the St. Mary's community of children, families and staff.

From next week, we expect our usual pattern will involve Mrs Dunstan being at St. Mary's Monday to Wednesday lunchtimes and me being with you from Wednesday lunchtime to the end of the week – though there will undoubtedly be some occasions when we change this so we can attend specific meetings etc.

In terms of contact with leadership, can I ask that you continue to contact the school office and Mrs Costley will forward messages and emails onto both Mrs Dunstan and myself and whoever is best able to deal with your issue soonest will be in touch. Of course, if you would rather speak to one of us specifically, then let Mrs Costley know.

### **Staffing Changes**

We were, unfortunately, unable to recruit someone of the quality we are seeking to teach our Year 2 classes into the future and so are currently re-advertising the Year 2 teacher position. However, we feel really fortunate to have secured Mrs Kate Wilson to work once again with St. Mary's in the interim period.

We have also welcomed Mrs Heather Armson as a lunchtime supervisor to St. Mary's working alongside Mrs Cable and Mrs Gudem. As Mrs Armson also has experience as a teaching assistant, you may also see her occasionally covering staff absence.

Mr Stuart Wells from Club Energy is also joining us on Thursday afternoons to work as a sports coach with Year 2.

### **New Year, New Rules**

We have begun the New Year with the children thinking about New Year Resolutions and how we might make changes so we can be even better this year.

As part of this we have discussed with children a new approach to how we are thinking about behaviour in school and that rather than having sets of school and class rules we are just going to ask children to be **Ready** to Learn, **Respectful** towards others and to act in a **Safe** way.

This message of Ready, Respectful, Safe will be reiterated in the conversations we have with children about their behaviour choices and we will be continuing to explore with children what these behavioural expectations look like across the school day.

### **Rewards and Consequences**

Alongside this simple message we will be encouraging children who make the right choices by introducing some new 'rewards' in the shape of Headteacher Award wristbands (which are given immediately when we notice children making very good choices), Golden Certificates in our Celebration Worship on Fridays (which recognise particular positives noticed by class teachers during the week) and Postcards home when we want the whole family to know how proud we are of one of the children.

Where we feel children are not making good behaviour choices we will also respond in a timely way using a series of stepped consequences as outlined below:

Level 1 Behaviours	Level 2 Behaviours	Level 3 Behaviours
Questioning or refusing instructions, shouting out, being disrespectful, excluding others, unsafe actions	Kicking, hitting Fighting Damage to property Spitting, biting Swearing Putting self and/or others at risk of physical harm	Bullying Repetitive intentional hurting (physical and emotional) Intentional vandalism Creating unsafe environment for self and/or others On-going persistent level 2 behaviours, despite support, individual behaviour support plan
↓	↓	↓
Reminder of expectations	Dealt with by senior member of staff	Dealt with by senior member of staff
↓	↓	↓

Reflection time in class	Reflection time with senior member of staff	Separated from rest of school and parents contacted immediately by senior leader
Work completed in a different classroom	Work completed with senior member of staff	↓
↓	↓	Possible risk of suspension Engagement of external support services
Time to repair	Time to repair	↓
	↓	Suspension
	Recorded and same day contact made with parents	↓
	Persistent Level 2 Behaviours Parent meeting with senior leader	Possible alternative provision put in place
	↓	
	Behaviour support plan put in place	

We know that as parents you too will want to support positive behaviour messages, and so we will also ensure that behaviour choices that really impress or concern us are fed back to you at the earliest opportunity.

These changes to the approach to behaviour management in school will be reflected in the school's behaviour policy which we are currently updating with staff and which we will share with you as soon as possible. Using Ready, Respectful, Safe as our central approach will bring St. Mary's in line with behaviour messages given at The Batt CE Primary School and so children will be familiar with behavioural expectations there, when they move to Year 3.

### **Parent Meeting**

Given the changes that are taking place this term, we welcome parents to an informal meeting on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January at 2.45pm. As well as providing another opportunity for you to meet Mrs Dunstan we also hope to share current school development plans for St. Mary's, discuss further new approaches to behaviour and address any other concerns you may have.

Please note that for those of you who have to pick up children from The Batt, but would like to attend the meeting, we will make arrangements to hold them at The Batt until you have picked up your child from St. Mary's. Please let Mrs Costley know, by Monday morning, if you would like to take up this offer.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Yours faithfully,

Deborah Secull  
**Executive Headteacher**