



Newsletter 11

Friday 29th November 2019

December

Tuesday 3rd Y6 SATs information session for parents/how to support your child - 3.45 pm, Willow Class
Thursday 5th School Disco (5.30 – 6.45 pm for Y3/4 and 7.00 – 8.15 pm Y5/6) £2 per child
Wednesday 11th MUFTI – In lieu of money we ask for donations to the Christmas hampers
Thursday 12th Carol Service 7.00 – 8.00 pm St. Mark's Church
Friday 13th Y3 Nativity 10.00 am in school hall – All Y3 parents are cordially invited
Christmas Jumper day (free – no charge) instead of a school sweatshirt/cardigan
FoSM Christmas Draw in school hall from 3.30 – 4.30 pm
Tuesday 17th Christmas lunch for the children
Friday 20th End of Term Assembly
T2 Ends

January

Monday 6th TD (Training Day) #6
Tuesday 7th T3 starts – children back to school after the holidays
Friday 31st FoSM Quiz for parents – more details later

Scout Post

Do you send any local Christmas cards? Save money and support your local scout groups. 30p each. Local delivery (from Amesbury to Whiteparish - check posters for details). Last post Tuesday 5 December. Norma is selling stamps and collecting post from her Snack Shack - all funds from these stamps will be split equally between 3rds and 23rds.

Carol Service

Please note that the Carol Service will now be held at St Mark's Church on **Thursday 12th December** at 7.00 pm. Many thanks for the wonderful folks there for our last minute switcheroo of venues. Please note that the toilets will not be accessible from inside the building. Any visitors would need to walk around the outside of the building as there is a letting in the annexe.

Christmas lunch

Tuesday 17th December – no need to pre-order, order on the day. £2.30

School Uniform

Brigade are offering a Black Friday deal, 20% off all orders placed between Friday 29th November and Monday 2nd December when you use the offer code: BCBLACK19.

Easyfundraising for our school

Please remember to use easyfundraising every time you shop online. Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate to us, including all the big names like eBay, John Lewis & Partners, Argos, ASOS, Expedia, M&S, Just Eat, uSwitch and many more! This means you can raise FREE donations for us no matter what you're buying. If you haven't signed up to support us yet, it's easy and completely FREE. These donations really help us, so it would be great if you could take a moment to get started! You can find our easyfundraising page here:

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stmarksschool/?utm_campaign=raise-more

Also, look for the easyfundraising Advent Calendar! WIN £500 worth of prizes for yourself and donations for St Mark's C of E Junior School - Salisbury EVERY DAY! Plus, be in with the chance to WIN £10,000 in donations and prizes courtesy of John Lewis & Partners on Christmas Day. If you want to find out more, visit: <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/advent-calendar/> Thank you!

New Mindfulness after school club starting in January 2020 – Mr Philip Anderson

I am delighted to be offering an after school mindfulness course for children of St Mark's. I have taught mindfulness classes for years 5 and 6 within normal lessons for the last three years and for pupils at Wyvern St Edmund's over the last five years. You may well have heard about the benefits mindfulness can bring or used it yourself. It can help people deal better with downs and ups of life; allowing us to cope better with the hard times and more fully appreciate the good ones. Due to the nature of an after school club, I will be able to work closely with your child and explore issues such as anxiety, worry, friendships, exams, family changes and many more together with your child using a variety of child friendly approaches, and showing them tools they can use to lessen the stresses they may be experiencing both over the next few months and possibly into adulthood too. The course will be five sessions on Fridays from 15:30 -16:30 beginning on Friday 10th January 2020 (venue to be confirmed at St Mark's) at a cost of £50 for all sessions.

If you think this course would benefit your child please contact me via

e: Philip@trustingmind.co.uk w: <https://trustingmind.co.uk/> f: <https://www.facebook.com/trustingmind/>

You will also find details there of adult mindfulness classes should you wish to take one yourself.

St Mark's Vision and Values: the journey

St Mark's C of E Junior School has a newly expressed Vision – one that is clear and child friendly, one that was developed by a cross-communities team, and one that is based on some wonderful bible verses. It is a vision that speaks of hope and love. The children have enjoyed their role in the process of building this vision and values statement. Even the process of re-visiting our 'whys and hows' has been beneficial, so we are looking forward to embedding this vision and seeing its impact across the school.

There in the middle of the school name are two little letters 'C' & 'E'. It is apt that they sit at the heart of the school name. This last few months, many people across the school – children, staff, parents, governors and local church leaders – have enjoyed spending time reflecting on what it means to be a Church of England school today – and how that translates to our vision for St Mark's.

Although most church schools are now state schools, that connection with the Church remains important to many schools, including ours. We hope that goodness, mercy and compassion show in everything we do, even more, because of our connection with the Church.

We are supported by advice and guidance from the [Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education](#) and their vision for church schools in the area. It is not for nothing that church-appointed governors are known as 'foundation' governors – we believe that firm foundations help us to reach higher and further. We want our Vision to be deeper, more meaningful, and of benefit to everyone (children, staff, parent, communities).

Many parents may remember St Mark's: 'Reaching in, reaching up, reaching out'. This vision helped and shaped us for many years and our new vision builds upon all that we learned in that time, and all the ways we grew.

We are not a faith school (we are not teaching children to **be** Christians). What it means to be a Church school is that we do everything that all state schools do – offering our best, always. On top of this, we enable children to better develop their spiritual, cultural, social and moral understanding, so that they can live 'life in all its fullness'.

The process of developing our vision and values involved children – from conversations with children in school, to the wonderful 'Prayer Space' event in June 2018 – children spent time reflecting on what they would like God's vision for the school to be. We learned that children would like this vision to be clear and kind – and for it to be worded in a child-friendly way.

The process also involved our lovely local churches – St Mark's and St Francis. Together with their vicars, we looked at God's Word, in the Bible, for inspiration. We read many beautiful and inspirational bible verses. We compiled a shortlist, and used these to inform three different visions. The school leadership team then took these three visions to the staff, groups of parents, and the children. All three found support. All three were good – but the one selected was the one that meant the most to the children.

We can all believe in becoming better than we are now – no matter where we start. We should all hope for a better world. And, by using an ACROSTIC approach, we can draw on more bible verses, to go deeper into what it means that we are **believing in better**. The teachers value the way they can use this vision, daily, to embed and strengthen the golden thread of God's love that runs through everything we do at St Mark's. The children like the clear guidance this vision provides.

The impact – even the process of developing this Vision has had impact. The time we have all spent in reflection and development has touched us all. It has allowed us to reflect more deeply on what we do, why we do it and how we achieve our goals. We have developed a quiet space for prayer and reflection at the heart of our school. The children are valuing this space and using the prayer box to reflect, to express gratitude, their hopes for the future and to ask some deep questions.

I am looking forward to tracking the further impact of this vision over the coming months and years.

Mrs Ali Bailey (Foundation Governor)