

## St. Mary's Church of England Primary School



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### Report to PCC April 2017

#### Staffing

Miss Brown left St Mary's in July last year to take up a teaching position in Bournemouth and Miss Louise Etheridge joined us as her replacement in September.

Mrs Woods went on maternity leave from the beginning of December and I was delighted to announce that she had a beautiful little girl, Sienna Rose, at the beginning of January. Mrs Gemma Peal and Mrs Ruth McKay are sharing the teaching in Year R while Mrs Woods is away.

Sadly this will be my last term at St Mary's as I am retiring at the end of the summer term. I have enjoyed every minute of my time at St Mary's School and it has been a real privilege to work with so many wonderful children, staff, parents and governors as well as with many members of our local churches and community. I have been in the teaching profession for 36 years and am looking forward to spending more time with my family.

Mr Alex Bird has been appointed as Headteacher from September.

#### Funding

You may be aware that all schools are experiencing difficulties with their budgets this year. We have actively supported the Worthless Campaign which has raised awareness of the problems currently being faced by schools. I accompanied one of our Year 2 children, along with heads and children from other West Sussex schools, to hand in a petition to Downing Street in November.

Unfortunately the lack of funding has affected us and many of our support staff are having their hours cut from September in order to reduce costs. This is not an ideal situation as every member of our staff is very valued and this will obviously affect the levels of support that we are able to offer.

#### Pupil numbers

St. Mary's continues to be a very popular school. Once again we were oversubscribed for places in the reception class. All our places for September 2016 have now been allocated and we will soon be welcoming our new parents and children for their first official visits. We currently have no spaces and waiting lists for most classes.

#### The Curriculum

Our KS1 and KS2 SATs results were not as high as in many previous years but this was not unexpected this year. A majority of our children still made good progress from their relative starting points. We like to celebrate our achievements in other aspects of school life too.

Forest School goes from strength to strength and our curriculum is enriched by many different activities and trips including Blacklands Farm, South of England Showground, Chesworth Farm, Hever Castle, Fishbourne Roman Palace, The Sealife Centre, Drusillas, Bockets Farm and many more.

The children have also participated in several network schools' events including The Horsham Schools' Music Festival Y5, Dance Time Y3, Sing Up for Year 2 and the Country Dancing Festival for Year 4.

Most of the children in Year 6 went on our usual residential visit to France in October and enjoyed visits to a chocolate factory, a cheese farm, a bakery where they made their own croissants and a creperie where they enjoyed delicious pancakes as well as many outside activities.

Some of the children in Year 5 have, once again, been working on some quite advanced computer skills learning to use a gadget called a Raspberry Pi to control a robot. They entered a national competition and for the **fourth** year in a row we were selected as one of only three Primary schools in the final which is being held in London on April 27<sup>th</sup>. This is an incredible achievement as we are the only school to reach the final four years in a row and we were informed that this year there were more entrants than ever and that the judges had had to spend extra time choosing the finalists as the standard was so high. Thanks must once again be given to the team mentors Marcus Tyler-Moore and Angus Thomas.

Children have taken part in a range of activities including sports events, matches and tournaments. We continue to use money from our sports grant to fund different activities such as a Skip2Fit day, a Kidzfit Day, Beach Volley ball and multi-sports at Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre

### **Flower Festival**

We will be participating in St Mary's Flower Festival as usual and look forward to performing our Country dances on The Causeway on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Worship**

We are pleased to welcome different members of the clergy to lead our Worship each Tuesday and welcome parents to join our Worship on Tuesdays and Fridays, as well as for our half-termly Eucharist Service.

Our school and children's Worship Group still meets termly. This year we will be carrying out a full self-evaluation of our school as a Church Aided School in anticipation of our Section 48 Inspection due in autumn 2017.

### **Prayer Spaces for Schools**

We really enjoyed our fourth Prayer Spaces event just before Easter. The children enjoyed many different activities and time to reflect over the week. We have had very good support from several of our churches but special thanks must be given to Liz New, Fiona Prentice, Tracey Winter and Celia Hurren who worked so hard to ensure the success of the event.

### **Governors**

Governors give considerable time to the school voluntarily and we are very grateful for their seemingly endless time and support, particularly in times of great changes in education as there seem to be at the moment. Our Governing Body is very proactive and gives the school huge support in many ways.

### **Charity Work Community Links**

As usual we attended the Remembrance Service at The Carfax and our school councillors all planted crosses and the children sang several WW1 songs. Some of our children also sang Christmas songs on the Bandstand.

We have developed a close link with Lavinia House in Denne Road and the children have been visiting to entertain the residents with activities such as singing and reading. They also attended our dress rehearsals for our performances. We hope to enhance this link further in the future.

The children continue to be very active in their support for charities. The School Council, in consultation with Class Councils, decide which charities the children would like to support.

The children have supported The Salvation Army, Rise (a local women's refuge), The Children's Society and The National Society, Chestnut Tree House, Sports Relief, Children in Need, St Catherine's Hospice and Fairtrade.

We must thank all of our parents and families for supporting their children in these activities so well.

**Church Support**

As a Church-Aided School, the School does rely on and receive a great deal of support from the Parochial Church Council, our vicar and the Parish clergy team. The financial support by the PCC is essential to the operation of the School and I would like to record our thanks for that.

**Thank you also to:**

Our teaching staff and support staff who continue to work very hard to give the children high quality learning opportunities.

Our Home School Association who continue to put on fund raising and social events and offer other support to the school.

Our Governing Body who continue to support the school in many ways.

The school very much values its links with the Parish and is looking forward to developing them further in the future.

**Shelley Dutson**  
**Headteacher**