

February 2023



St. Mary's CofE Primary School

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OUR VISION:

'Working together, growing together, for all to flourish.'



Rights Respecting Focus -
ARTICLE 13 (freedom of expression)

Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

Here are all the updates on things that we have been doing in school as well as news about some of the upcoming events for the coming month. As always, thank you for your continued support and hard work in supporting the school.

For more information, don't forget to check the school website.

www.stmarys-brixton.devon.sch.uk



Upcoming Events

March 2

World Book Day

March 17

Comic Relief Day

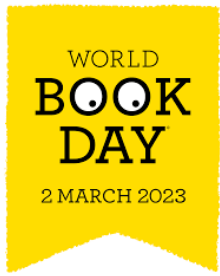
Before and After School Club

For anyone who needs to continue to use the before and after school clubs, please make sure that you book **in advance**.

For urgent bookings within 7 days, please continue to phone the office and confirm that we have space available before paying on ParentPay and completing a booking form.

REMEMBER - Friday afternoon bookings are no longer be available. Thank you

World Book Day - 2023



Thursday 2nd March is World Book Day which is the annual celebration of books and reading. You will have already received a letter from Miss Kinning about the day but as always, we are looking forward to seeing what sort of costumes children will be wearing related to their favourite book characters.

Don't forget that your child will also receive a World Book Day voucher which can be used to get a new story from your local book shop.

NSPCC- Speak Out. Stay Safe.



We are currently working with the NSPCC to deliver a short programme to all children in school.

'Speak out. Stay safe.' is a safeguarding programme available to all primary schools in the UK and Channel Islands. It aims to help children understand abuse in all its forms and to recognise the signs of abuse in a child friendly way. Children are taught to speak out if they are worried, either to a trusted adult or to Childline.

If you would like to know more about the 'Speak out. Stay safe.' programme you can find information on the NSPCC website www.nspcc.org.uk/speakout.

Mental Health Champions & Children's Mental Health Week

We have a really positive group of children in school called our 'Mental Health Champions' and they work to support everyone in school with developing a positive mindset, especially when things are being a bit difficult. They offer activities for children who need some quiet time at lunchtime and you will recently have seen them giving out leaflets and information as part of Children's Mental Health Week which was before the half term holiday.

Well done to all of our Mental Health Champions for this vital role which they carry out in school.



Children's Mental Health Week was an important part of what we do in school to support mental health and well-being. This year, the theme was 'Let's Connect'. Human beings are hard wired to connect with each other and this connection is vital for our survival and wellbeing. People with positive connections to friends, family and others often have better mental health than those who are less well connected.

When our need for rewarding connections are not met, or we feel we are not understood by others, we can feel lonely and isolated. This is why it is important for our mental health, that we connect with others in healthy and meaningful ways.

A huge well done and thank you to everyone who took up the challenge of doing one of the additional activities that I sent home as part of the week.

Online Safety and Safer Internet Day (7th Feb 2023)



Online Safety is such an important part of children’s learning and we work to promote the key messages to all year groups, about how to be safe online. There are many websites available to support you as parents and carers, in knowing the latest guidance and information to help support your children and keep them safe at home. As the technology and terminology of online activity constantly changes, please make sure that you keep learning yourself and take the time to talk to your children about their online activity and communications, and also the amount of time that they are spending online.

Here are some of those websites to help you find out more.

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/safe-social-media-for-primary-aged-children>

The following links are from the **Internetmatters.org** website which has advice for specific age groups.

Age 0-5 <https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/0-5/>

Age 6-10 <https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/6-10/>

Pre-teens (11-13) <https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/11-13/>

DON'T FORGET –

- Games have PEGI ratings to support age appropriate play.
- Devices have parental controls to allow you to monitor online activity and restrict access as well as time spent online.
- Social media platforms have age limits, eg WhatsApp is for 16+.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

Forest School – March 2023

Date	Classes
Wednesday 8 th March	Rosen and Potter
Wednesday 15 th March	Dahl and Morpurgo
Wednesday 22 nd March	Rosen and Potter
Wednesday 29 th March	Dahl and Morpurgo

Comic Relief – March 17th 2023



It's that time of year again when we support the Comic Relief campaign and this year we would like to invite children to dress in as much red as they can find or a funny outfit, and come to school armed with a good joke if they have one.

To support the campaign, we will be asking for donations to our Comic Relief Just Giving page which you can access by following the link below.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/rednoseday23-st-marys-c-of-e-primary-school-0402185f-cf9a-4ab0-acb4-8f83c673429e>

Or you can visit the Just Giving website <https://www.justgiving.com/> and search for *Brixton St Mary's C of E Primary School's Red Nose Day 2023*.

IMPORTANT

Make sure that you search for BRIXTON ST. MARY's as there are many more schools that are also called St. Mary's that have their own Just Giving page.

We'd like all your donations to go to the right St. Mary's! Thank you.

40 Acts of Kindness & Christian Value

Our focus Christian Value for the half term is COMPASSION. You can find out more about this value from our 'Church School' tab on the school website including a link to the story of 'The Kind Stranger' which we have already shared in assembly, to help demonstrate the idea of compassion to all children.



<https://stmarys-brixton.devon.sch.uk/our-christian-values/>

Linked very closely to the new value, is our Lent Challenge to everyone called the '40 Acts of Kindness'. Children will have recently brought home an activity to help them think about small acts of kindness that they can do every day throughout Lent (and hopefully beyond). Please support your child as they complete the challenge and colour in a leaf on their Kindness Tree in the run up to Easter.

3 Little Pigs (and a Wolf)



It was lovely to see the children in Rosen Class so excited as they were visited by a local storyteller who got into character to share the story of the 3 Little Pigs. They listened to the story and did lots of lovely activities to promote the love of the story as well as to develop their listening and communication. There was clearly lots of fun happening during the day, especially when the wolf made an appearance!

A message from Alix Harding our Federation Mental Health Lead

Years and years ago, we sat, as families and communities around the blazing orange camp fire each night telling stories, jokes, sharing ideas and going over each day.

We felt connected.

But our modern day campfire has turned into a blue light. Each night we sit around our digital camp fires (some separate, some together) and watch stories and laugh and are entertained, but despite connection to the whole world, we don't always experience that feeling of deep connection to others. Added to this disconnect, we know, the blue light at night can have a damaging effect on our sleep and health, so exacerbating the problem. And now, we all feel rather zoomed and videoed out!

There are 3 things we can do to help get ourselves and our families back to feeling calm and connected again:

Nature, Nurture and Nourishment

- **Nature** helps us feel more connected. Walking, scavenger hunts, breathing in fresh air, blowing on dandelions, getting exercise outside, sun rays and looking at greens and blues is all so, so good for your child's brain. This doesn't have to be big expensive days out - just a little more time in garden, your local park or town walks appreciating the nature peeking through pavements. Spend as much time outside with shoes off and feel the grass or earth between your toes!
- **Nurture** - giving your child attention, affection and lots of affirmation can literally help grow their brain and help empower them, building resilience.
- **Nourishment** – through sleep, good food, receiving love and giving love to others. Our relationships are so important for good mental health.

Find out more about how to help your child connect with their world and practise relaxation at www.relaxkids.com

Helmets



As the weather slowly begins to improve, we are starting to see more children out and about after school on bikes and scooters. Please make sure that your child wears their helmet at all times to protect them.

Anyone cycling or scootering to school must wear their helmet.

Attendance – A Reminder

In order for our pupils to achieve their very best it is of paramount importance that their attendance is good. Every lesson really does count for your child and catching up on lost time from school can be really difficult.



Good attendance is linked to achievement, better relationships with other children and overall better behaviour. Often, the reason that children are absent from school is due to illness and it is important that you contact the school on every day of your child's absence due to ill health. Please contact the school office on 01752 880436 and leave a message on the answerphone (option 1), **before 8.30am** so that our registers can be updated before registration.

We understand that sometimes absence cannot be avoided.

Punctuality: It is SO important that the children arrive to school on time, ready and willing to learn. The gates open at 8.45am. Any child who arrives after the gates are locked at 9.00am needs to be signed in at the main school reception.

Being late for school reduces learning time and can impact on your child being able to settle calmly into the school day. Children can be upset at entering a busy classroom after everyone else, and missing the initial morning instructions and register time means that they are having to play 'catch-up' for the rest of the morning.

If your child is 5 minutes late every day, they will miss approximately 3 days of learning in a year.
15 minutes late every day, equate to approximately 2 weeks of missed learning each year.

And finally... Diary Dates

Here is a reminder of upcoming dates for the diary...

Thursday 2 nd March	World Book Day
Friday 17 th March	Comic Relief Day
Friday 31 st March	Last day of term

As always, thank you for your continued support.

Adrian Clements

Head of School