

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Many thanks to everyone who attended our parent consultation meetings this week. This is the first time we have held these meetings virtually and hopefully, you appreciated being at home in the warm rather than rushing out to school on a cold, dark evening. Also, thank you to all the parents who found it tricky and phoned school for help when struggling to follow the link.

Welcome to Miss Hume... who will be joining our Key Stage 1 school team on Tuesday 1st December. We are very fortunate to have an additional member of staff who is just as passionate as the rest of us about Eco working, outdoor learning and she has expertise in forest schooling.

Sadly Mr Kelly will be leaving us... on 11th December to take up a new role as a caretaker. Mr Kelly has been with us for about three years and he will be greatly missed, especially by our younger children at St Mary's. I know he is looking forward to his new challenge and we wish him well in his new job.

We are now moving swiftly towards the Christmas season and although it will be very different, we have been working hard to find ways of still making it a very special and memorable time for all our St Mary's children.

KS1 Nativity... sadly this is one of the activities that will not take place as it has in the past with all our younger children sharing the Christmas story with you in a packed school hall. Due to coronavirus restrictions we have needed to think differently and so each class bubble will perform their own version of the Nativity. There will be photos and a video posted on our website (in the class areas) for you to see.

KS2 Christingle and Carol Service in St Mary's Church... sadly once again, this is something we have needed to change due to the current restrictions. Our older children will still walk over to St Mary's Church and their service will be with Rev Helen and Rev Liz on the morning of 14th December. However, parents will not be able to join us as larger gatherings are not permitted.

School Christmas Dinner... will be on 11th December. You should already have received an email about booking a Christmas dinner for your child. The meal only costs £2.15 and if you would like your child to have a school Christmas dinner, whether traditional or vegetarian, please let the office know ASAP.

Christmas Jumper Day... to make Christmas dinner even more special, we would like each child to wear a Christmas jumper or non-uniform instead of their uniform. The 11th December is also Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day so if you would like to send a donation in for our school chosen Christmas charity, please send your donation in on the day.

Christmas Trees in classes... will go up and start to be decorated from the 1st December. All the children will make their own decoration and hang it on their class tree. Before we finish for the holidays, each child's own decoration will go home, so it can be put on your tree, if you have one.

Christmas Cards.... will be made and shared across our community. We will be thinking about those who do not have their family to share Christmas with and who may be lonely. A card and little gift from St Mary's may help brighten their day and help them know they are not forgotten. There will also, of course, be a card for home!

Class Bubble Post Christmas Boxes... we will be able to have class bubble post boxes but any cards posted will need to go into quarantine for 72 hours before the Christmas Elves can deliver them. This means that the last post will need to be Tuesday 15th December.

Christmas Parties... will take place as they have in the past with games but there will be the slight difference because we need to maintain bubble. This means that each class will have their own party with fun and games. Class letters will be emailed to you with your specific class bubble party information. We have written to a very important person too and invited 'him' to join our younger children if 'he' can. I hope 'he' doesn't have to isolate!

Our school PTA... have been thinking of festive ways to raise funds for our school and the much needed additional laptops and chromebooks. There will be a raffle with many, many fantastic prizes including cash, sports holiday courses, an airsprung mattress, numerous vouchers including 'I Knead Pizza', Flowerland, Nail and Hand Wax, a Blow Dry, Body Shop, Avon, a Christmas Door Bow etc. etc... There will also be a name the giant carrot game for our children. More information will follow soon about purchasing raffle tickets for £1 each.

Advanced reminder... school will close to children for Christmas on Friday 18th December.

Take care and stay safe,
Mrs Irvin and all the staff at St Mary's