



St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher Mrs. D. Linley



Friday 9th July 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

As you may know, Gavin Williamson made an announcement on Tuesday 6th July, about the upcoming changes schools can expect to see from September. We will be updating you the final week of term of the changes you can expect to see in September at St. Mark's. Until then, we will not be allowing any room for complacency and we still expect parents/carers on school grounds to wear a mask and keep a safe distance from others.

Please recognise that some members of staff and some members of the school community are vulnerable and so please be respectful of others who continue to wear face coverings from September. Yesterday, we had to isolate class 2 and class 3 and I am hearing that many schools locally are also having to isolate year groups due to a rise in positive cases.

We very much want to get to the end of term with every class in school full time. When class 2 and class 3 return on Monday 19th July, we have a special treat arranged for the whole school to enjoy!

Like many of you I am sure, I am hoping the England football team have a good win on Sunday, whatever the score though, it's great to see that they have come this far! The team work and dedication of all the players has been admirable and I think our children can learn a lot from them.

Have a lovely weekend,
Mrs. Linley and the St. Mark's Team

TOP STAR EARNERS OF THE WEEK



Well done to the following children for earning the most stars this week!!



(YR) Piotr	(YR) Julia	(YR) Tianne	(Y1) Mia	(Y1) Eva
(Y1) Imaan	(Y2) Ashnan	(Y2) Adam	(Y2) Skye	(Y3) Eline
(Y3) Shakur	(Y3) Elisia	(Y4) Victoria	(Y4) Raiyaana	(Y4) Sienna
(Y5) Elena	(Y5) Preeti	(Y5) Kimaya	(Y6) Summerpreet	(Y6) Tianna
(Y6) Zayaan				

Congratulations & Well Done!

We would like to say a big well done to the following pupils for receiving a Congratulations certificate this week. Keep up the great work!



Reception: Sabrina & Nishitha

Year 1: Marcelo & Kane

Year 2: Kaid & Chioma

Year 4: Zunairah & Savaun

Year 5: Kimaya & Anayah

Year 6: Arya & Sara-Maria

Wednesday Word - Sharing the Gospel

Please click on the following link to access this spiritual resource to share with your family and friends:



<https://www.paperturn-view.com/uk/wednesday-word/listening?pid=MTA101634&v=34.15>

Non-Uniform Day!

Children can come to school in non-uniform on Friday 16nd July for a £1 donation to the school.



Holy communion

The Holy Communion for Year 3 children on Saturday at Holy Name Church was beautiful.

Congratulations to all the children receiving the sacrament of First Holy Communion.



Musical News!



Next week each class will be showcasing a musical performance which will be recorded for both BGFL and Twitter. All videos/recordings will be on Twitter by Friday 16th for parents to enjoy.

Lost money

A parent has found some cash that had been dropped on school grounds and has kindly handed it in to the school office. If you think it is yours, please contact the school office.

Thank you for your kindness!

Thank you to thoughts, prayers and gifts that many of you have sent to staff who are absent.
It is much appreciated!

Parent Questionnaire Feedback July 2021

Please see the feedback from the recent parent questionnaire many of you completed. All feedback is much appreciated!



Diary Dates

For your
Diary 3 2 1

Dates for Diary: -

Wednesday 14th July 2021 Y6 Enterprise Event (after school)
Friday 16th July 2021 End of year reports will be provided to parents
Monday 19th July 2021 Y6 Treat day



School Term Dates

Summer Term 2021

Term Ends: Wednesday 21st July 2021

Autumn Term 2021

Thursday 2nd September and Friday 3rd September 2021 are Staff INSET days so school is **closed to all pupils**.

Term Starts: Monday 6th September 2021

Friday 22nd October – Staff INSET – school closed to all pupils

Half Term: Monday 25 October 2021 to Friday 29 October 2021

Term Ends: Friday 17 December 2021

Spring Term 2022

Term Starts: Tuesday 4 January 2022

Term: Monday 21 February 2022 to Friday 25 February 2022

Term Ends: Friday 8 April 2022

Summer Term 2022

Term Starts: Monday 25 April 2022

Half Term: Monday 30 May 2022 to Friday 3 June 2022

Term Ends: Friday 22 July 2022

All other INSET days to be confirmed.

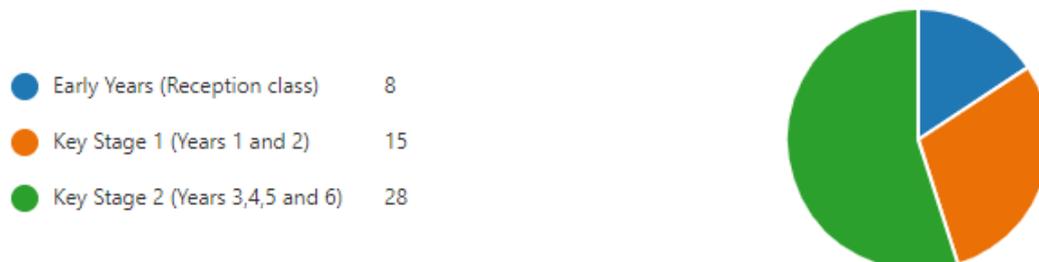


St Mark's Parent Questionnaire Feedback (July 2021)

Dear Parents,

Thank you to those of you who completed our parent questionnaire. Your feedback is incredibly important to us and below you will find a breakdown and summary of how your feedback has informed decisions made in school.

We received a total of 51 responses to our parent questionnaire. The responses from parents when asked which key stage their child/children are in is broken down as follows:



Out of 49 respondents who answered "My child(ren) feels safe in school we received an average rating of 4.65 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

We review our safeguarding curriculum plan annually, our procedures and our support to children, parents and staff. We adapt this support as and when necessary. For example, during Covid, when children were spending longer amounts of time online, we delivered sessions to parents to increase awareness of potential online dangers. Children learn how to keep themselves safe in school, online and outside of school.

Out of 51 respondents who answered "My children are confident that there is someone in school who will listen to them if they have a problem" we received an average rating of 4.2 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

All members of staff in school are supportive of children and recognise the potential signs of behaviours that may indicate issues related to safeguarding and/or child protection. We recognise that due to the pandemic some of our children and families have been significantly affected and we continue to offer a family therapeutic support service via Natalie Bowen (our Malachi support worker who is in school every Tuesday to work with children and families 1:1 to support their individual needs). Whilst staff have accessed and received training to better support children's emotional wellbeing in relation to the pandemic, as a school we identified that our behaviour policy needed to better reflect the changing behaviour and needs of our children in school. As a school, we will be implementing a 'Self-Regulation Policy' in the Autumn term, please understand that policies cannot be implemented effectively without practice in school changing. On September 2nd 2021, ALL staff will be receiving training on 'Emotional Coaching'. Emotion Coaching uses moments of heightened emotion and resulting behaviour to guide and teach our children about more effective responses. Through empathetic engagement, the child's emotional state is verbally acknowledged and validated, promoting a sense of security and

feeling 'felt'. The aim of this training is to better prepare children to manage and self-regulate their emotions and behaviour now and in the future.

Out of 51 respondents who answered "My child(ren) enjoy(s) school" we received an average rating of 4.41 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

In order for EVERY child at St. Mark's to thrive and achieve their God-given potential, it is crucial for children to enjoy school. As well as asking for your feedback as parents, we also ask our children for feedback. If children are happy, enjoying school and excited to learn then they will achieve excellence. We are motivated to not just give all our children a first class formal education but also a spiritual, moral, social, vocational and cultural one too. When issues arise, in any area of school life, whether it is related to friendship groups, behaviour, well-being or learning, we want to resolve this quickly and so working in partnership with you as parents is incredibly important. Mrs. Linley is regularly on the gate in the morning to welcome children into school and you can contact the school office to arrange to speak to class teachers or the senior leadership team. Despite not being able to see you as often face to face, we have adapted our links of communication and liaised via telephone, email, letter and Teams meetings to resolve issues as quickly as possible.

Out of 51 respondents who answered "Staff are welcoming and approachable" we received an average rating of 4.33 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

We pride ourselves on being welcoming and approachable to children and parents/carers. Due to Covid, we haven't been able to have as much face-to-face contact with you as parents/carers as much as we would have liked. Instead, we made telephone calls, sent emails, organised online Teams sessions and passed on reports/letters/newsletters/parcels home to keep in touch with you as much as possible. Once restrictions have lifted, we will be welcoming parents/carers back into school and bringing back some of the parent engagement activities we were leading before the Covid pandemic (such as breakfast reading mornings with parents and parents' evening). You can expect a warm welcome from us and no doubt Mrs. Beresford will provide some delicious cakes and cookies to enjoy at meetings too!

Out of 50 respondents who answered "I am well informed about my child's progress and achievements" we received an average star rating of 4 out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

Due to Covid restrictions in place, we haven't been able to meet you as parents face to face this year. We have reported to you on a termly basis your child's pupil progress and we held telephone consultations with parents in April, after children returned to school in March. We recognise, speaking on a telephone and meeting online via Teams is not as beneficial as meeting in person. In the Autumn term, you received a pupil progress report, and you will receive a more in-depth progress report on 16th July in relation to your child's progress and attainment for each subject for the year. This is to inform you on the progress your child has made since the start of the pandemic and to inform you of achievements and areas for development in preparation for September.

Out of 51 respondents who answered “I understand the homework expectations in my child’s year(s) group(s)” we received an average rating of 4.25 out of 5 stars.



What we have to say about this:

This year, the home school agreement has had to be adapted since it was implemented in the Autumn term of 2020 because lockdown in the Spring term 2021 led to changes from face to face learning to online learning. Each time we have experienced a lockdown, our home learning expectations and procedures have been adapted to cater for the growing needs of your children. We have not been afraid to change practice to improve the quality of education for our children but we also recognise that in doing so, our homework procedures have not always remained consistent across all classes due to an increased expectation of online learning and staffing change over the academic year. You will receive a new Home School Agreement, which will clearly state the homework expectations for your child in September 2021 for the academic year 2021/22.

Out of 51 respondents who answered “I am given information about ways I can help with my child's education, including information on their wellbeing and how to keep them safe” we received an average rating of 4.14 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

Pupil progress feedback has been given to you as parents on a termly basis but from September 2021, we aim to have a face-to-face parents evening whereby we can show you your child’s books and answer questions face to face. Your child’s social, emotional and health wellbeing will also be discussed at the parents’ meeting. We will continue to signpost you to wellbeing resources and support available from the school and other agencies via the school newsletter/parent noticeboard/safeguarding newsletters and emails. We will be sharing with you as parents our new Self-Regulation Policy that will be implemented in the Autumn Term and tips on emotional coaching so that you too can support us in working with children on emotional coaching too.

Out of 51 respondents who answered “I am given sufficient information about the school’s policies and plans” we received an average rating of 4.18 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

We recognise that whilst we have updated you on plans in school related to Covid, from September, we will inform you of policies that have been updated on the school website by including a note of these in the school newsletter.

Out of 50 respondents who answered “The school has high expectations of my child(ren)” we received an average rating of 4.30 out of 5 stars.



What we have to say about this:

We believe we have high expectations of ALL children and we want the best for each and every child. This year due to unforeseen staff absence, on occasions, we have had to employ some temporary staff, where possible, we have tried to ensure that staff remain consistent. We recognise that some children have struggled with the challenges that the Covid pandemic has presented and for some children, overcoming these challenges involves specialist support and

time, particularly where emotional wellbeing and behaviour are concerned. We have implemented some tailored behaviour and learning strategies where appropriate and we have identified individual and groups of children to receive additional learning support, however, we have much more planned to further support your child in their learning at St. Mark's, particularly with improving Reading and Writing.

Out of 51 respondents who answered "I have a clear understanding of the behaviour the school expects from children" we received an average rating of 4.53 out of 5 stars.



4.53 Average Rating

What we have to say about this:

It is pleasing to see that as parents you recognise our expectations of behaviour at St. Mark's, we will not tolerate unruly or disruptive behaviour that affects the learning of children.

Out of 51 respondents who answered "The school deals with inappropriate behaviour effectively" we received an average star rating of 3.98 out of 5.



3.98 Average Rating

What we have to say about this:

Our aim as a school has always been to have a consistent approach to behaviour in school, recognising at the same time that there is always a context in relation to the behaviour. Some parents have expressed that some behaviour in school is handled strictly and some parents have complained that the behaviour of other children is a concern. There is no doubt that the Covid pandemic has affected a high proportion of children's behaviour in school. After all, their routines, learning, friendship groups, hobbies and wellbeing have all been affected by the national and local lockdowns. Our high expectations of behaviour are clear and with the implementation of a self-regulation approach in September to further support behaviour, we are confident that standards of behaviour will remain high. The additional training for staff on emotional coaching will better support children to recognise their own emotions and how to self-regulate their behaviour. This is a very inclusive approach as it enables every child (regardless of their individual needs) to be able to self-regulate. One size simply does not fit all where behaviour is concerned, as there are many factors that can affect behaviour. Based on the behaviour needs of the children in some classes, we have implemented behaviour strategies to improve attitudes to learning and behaviour and we have always kept parents of those children informed about new strategies implemented.

Out of 51 respondents who answered "I know how to contact a member of the School Governing Body if I need to" we received an average rating of 3.31 stars out of 5.



3.31 Average Rating

What we have to say about this:

We recognise that we need to better inform you as parents about our school governing body – who the members are, what they do and how you can find out more about the important work they do to improve our school. In particular we will share details of our parent governors so you can pass on any concerns/questions you would like discussed at the governing body meetings. Please look out for an updated section coming soon on our website of the Governing Body.

Out of 51 respondents who answered "Please rate the home learning resources you received from the school during the most recent Lockdown to support your child's learning at home including online



3.73 Average Rating

sessions, work provided on BGfL and learning packages collected from school.” We received an average rating of 3.73 stars out of 5.

What we have to say about this:

Our approach to home learning has been updated regularly to improve children’s learning at home. We gathered feedback from you as parents in May 2020 on your experiences of home learning so that we could provide a better service and your feedback resulted in more online learning sessions taking place as well as many other changes to better improve your child’s education and home learning experience. Hopefully, we will not experience another lockdown but if we were to, we would review and improve the quality of the home learning resources (just as we did this time round) again. We thrive on reviewing and reflecting what works well and how we can continue to improve further.

Out of 50 respondents who answered “Do you believe your child/ren’s learning needs were met during home learning? We received an average of 3.56 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

Despite adapting and improving our home learning resources during a time when all schools were learning new ways to do things, we recognise at the same time that our children’s learning needs cannot be met in the same way at home as they can in school. You as parents/carers did a fantastic job in supporting your children with their home learning. Again, your feedback during this time was incredibly important to helping us improve our home learning approaches and resources.

Out of 51 respondents who answered “How well informed do you feel the school have kept you in relation to changes that have taken place in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic?” We received an average rating of 4.41 stars out of 5.



What we have to say about this:

Keeping you informed as parents about the changes that were implemented due to the changing status of the pandemic was crucial to ensure that your children, yourselves and all members of staff and the school community were kept safe. Thank you for your co-operation during this time.

Out of 39 respondents who answered “What would you describe is your biggest concern as a parent in relation to your child’s learning/development as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic?”

The most popular response centred around worries that your child/ren’s missing important time in the classroom with their teachers and peers;

“Due to less physical class room time concerned they may fall behind with School work.”

Another common response was around parents worried that their child/ren were not receiving the same quality of learning at home;

“The home atmosphere is much different than school therefore children get distracted constantly and don’t concentrate enough so they could understand what they hear.”

What we have to say about this:

As a school we have used the catch-up funding to pay our support staff to work from 8.30am to 9.30am (they start work at 9.30am). From 8.30am, support staff have led before school activities with small groups of children to improve reading skills. From 9am, all members of support staff have led phonics lessons in school with the children so that we can accelerate progress in reading in Key Stage 1 as well as with some children in Key Stage 2. Support staff have targeted reading of children in Key stage 2 and all children in Key stage 2 have been heard read 1:1 at least once a week and for some this has been 3x a week. We have provided after school additional learning sessions which will continue in the Autumn term (more information to follow on these). Our focus has not been on after school sessions but rather using the Covid catch up funding to improve the quality of learning in lessons/interventions during the school day when children are most alert. Some parents have expressed concern that other schools provided after school homework sessions for children much sooner than we did at St. Mark's, however, hopefully you will recognise that quality first teaching and learning during the school day has been our priority and each week we have had 5 members of support staff work an additional hour which in total is 25 hours a week of additional support.

Out of the 27 respondents who answered "Please add what you feel we as a school could do to improve the quality of education for your child even further"

The most popular responses were around homework being set more regularly and consistently;

"I think more homework should be given, including homework booklets to work on during the summer break."

Also improved communication between the school and parents, for example:

"Better communication between home and school for things such as their weekly spellings, being informed which ones they got wrong and how many they got right to practice further at home with them."

What we have to say about this:

In response to your feedback on homework, every child will be taking home a Reading comprehension work book and a Maths activity work book to take home to complete over the Summer holiday. These books are expected to be brought back to school fully completed in September. A school reading challenge will also be shared with children and families and we hope that we can continue to engage children in reading over the Summer on our school Twitter account. To engage children in their new topics in the Autumn term, children will also have a piece of topic homework to complete. As previously mentioned, our Home School Agreement will be sent out to you in the first week of September which will clearly state the expectations of homework for your child/ren.

We received 23 responses to the question "Is there anything else you would like to add, or tell us that we do well as a school?" to which we received some very helpful and constructive feedback which we very much appreciate, with an example of a common theme being:

"I know every person at school works very hard for our children and I do appreciate that. However, I don't understand why summer fayre and sports day had to be cancelled. School has plenty of space

to accommodate parents for both events. It will be very disappointing for our children not to be able to share those moments with us, especially when we didn't have them lately".

We also received some very positive feedback, for example:

"St Marks is a great school, my daughter loves going and she talks about her teachers and friends alot which shows me the school provided a happy and safe environment."

What we have to say about this:

We understand that many parents were left disappointed to learn that some special end of year events such as sports day and the school fayre would not be able to go ahead this year as planned. The safety and wellbeing of your children and the school staff has and will always remain a priority, and whilst we understand some decisions will not always be gladly accepted – it is the safety and wellbeing of everyone that is at the forefront of decision making. We have instead planned many enriching and engaging activities to make the final few weeks of the Summer term as exciting as possible for all our children.

Lastly, when asked "How do you rate St Mark's Catholic Primary School?" out of 49 respondents we received an average of 4.29 stars out of 5.



4.29 Average Rating

Finally, thank you for your support and feedback over the last year. Together we have overcome many challenges and we continue to strive for the highest standards of education for all of our children. We look forward to seeing you in school and working with you in the new academic school year!

Mrs. Linley and the St. Mark's Team