



Every Child, Every Chance, Every Day

St Mark's News

13th September 2024
Issue 1

www.st-marks.islington.sch.uk

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we step into this exciting new school year, we are thrilled to welcome each and every one of you back to St Mark's. Whether you're returning or joining us for the first time, we are so happy to have you as part of our school community. A new year brings fresh opportunities for growth, learning, and connection, and we can't wait to see all the wonderful things that lie ahead. Best wishes, Ms. Braithwaite

World Afro Hair

World Afro Hair Day is celebrated annually on September 15th to honour the history, culture, and identity of Afro hair. The day was founded in 2017 by British entrepreneur and hairstylist Michelle De Leon. This date was chosen to honour the UK Parliament's debate of a petition that called for the acceptance of Afro hair in schools. This represented a significant step towards addressing the discrimination and biases faced by people with Afro-textured hair.

As a school we will be celebrating the event on Monday 16th September. Every child is invited to celebrate their hair regardless of texture.

Year 6 secondary transfer

We will be holding our Secondary Transfer meeting on Thursday 19th September at 3.45pm in the Y6 classroom. As you may know, you will be expected to apply for a secondary school place for your child by the 31st October 2024. This meeting will provide you with the latest information and guidance. We will talk you through how to apply, and offer support with the process. Please visit this page to find out more about when you can visit different Islington secondary schools: <https://www.islington.gov.uk/-/media/sharepoint-lists/public->

[records/educationandskills/information/adviceandinformation/20232024/secondary-school-admissions-brochure-20252026-accessible-version.pdf?la=en&hash=DDDBC3870380062A1DF1BF64D528C3569DF7B29C](https://www.islington.gov.uk/records/educationandskills/information/adviceandinformation/20232024/secondary-school-admissions-brochure-20252026-accessible-version.pdf?la=en&hash=DDDBC3870380062A1DF1BF64D528C3569DF7B29C)

Term Time Holidays

It is regretful that the first page of our first newsletter for this academic year is regarding time taken out for holidays during term time. At the start of this year in particular, we had many no-shows on the first day due to holidays being taken in the first weeks of September. There have also been applications for more time off for holidays during the coming weeks and months of term time for holidays. We understand that prices increase out of term time, but it is vitally important that children do not miss any learning. This year, as all parents and carers were made aware, the local authority has instructed us to issue fines for any unauthorised time taken and the fine is issued to each parent/carer and each child. Please make every effort to ensure that your holiday is taken when the children are on a break.

School Ping

Please ensure you are signed into the School Ping App on your mobile phones as this is the only way we communicate with parents and send out updates regarding your child's class. All new parents should visit the school office to get their login details as soon as possible. If you are experiencing any problems with School Ping, please visit the school office for help.

Free School Meal Sign-Up

Children's lunch time meals are free at all Islington Primary Schools. However, parents and carers **must** register for the free meal by completing the on-line Citizens Portal via the following link

Psalm 119 Vs 105: Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/benefits-and-financial-support/free-school-meals-and-uniform-grant>

Once you have completed the application (**please note that applications need to be completed for each of your children as siblings will not automatically be registered for a free school meal, you will need to register them on the portal**) you will receive an e-mail confirmation which informs you of your free meal status, i.e. Eligible or Not Eligible. Parents and carers should then let the school office know their eligibility status once the email is received. Please rest assured that your child will receive a free meal, even if your status comes back as not eligible, as you are simply registering them on the Islington free meal portal.

School Vacancies

We have some spaces in a few classes at St Mark's. If you know of any families who would like their children to join our school, please encourage them to complete an in-year admissions form on the Islington website or to call the school office for information.

ASDA Schools Cash pot

We have recently signed up to Asda's new reward scheme for schools and would appreciate any parents' who shop at Asda connecting us to their spend. Customers simply select their primary school of choice within the Asda Rewards app and scan it every time they shop. After that, the supermarket will donate 0.5% of the value of their basket to their chosen school.

Pick-ups and walking home alone

The safety of our community is of utmost importance to us and, as a result, we have decided to tighten our processes and expectations around the safety of our school premises. We encourage all parents and carers to collect their children from school. However, as there is no set age at which the law allows for children to go home alone, we recognise that parents of children in Years 5 and 6 may want to support their children in developing independence. This being the case, we will allow children in Years 5 and 6 to walk home alone with the prior, written consent of a parent or carer, provided that the school and the parent have no concerns about the child's ability to keep themselves safe. They will not be allowed to take home younger siblings as they are below the age of 14.

Should their behaviour not be acceptable, you will be asked to accompany them or collect them until they have proved they can be trusted again. After School Clubs and Activities: If your child stays at school for a club and it is dark once the club finishes, you must make arrangements for your child to be collected. No child will be allowed to walk home alone after an after school club or activity when it is dark.

Flu vaccines

Flu vaccines are safe and effective. They are offered every year on the NHS to help protect people at risk of flu. The school nurse will shortly be sending out consent forms for all children at St Mark's to receive their jabs. Please complete the form and return it to the office.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Macmillan Coffee Morning is the biggest fundraising event to support people in the UK living with cancer. Since 1990, Coffee Morning has brought together millions of people from across the UK to have fun and raise money for a good cause. We will be celebrating this important day on Friday 27th September. Children are asked to bake it or fake it to contribute toward a whole school cake sale.

Open Door

Please remember that every Friday we have an open door policy which invites you into class for the first ten minutes of the day. Our class names this year are all focused around our vision strand 'Together we will lead you to live with the value of God's word'.

2yr	Nur	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Creation	Hope	Thankfulne	Friendship	Endurance	Justice	Trust	Koinonia	Wisdom

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 1 st October	Y6 Class Assembly at 10am
Tuesday 8 th October	Y4 Class Assembly at 10am
Tuesday 15 th October	Y5 Class Assembly at 10am
Tuesday 22 nd October	Y3 Class Assembly at 10am
28 th Oct to 1 st Nov	Autumn Half Term Break
Monday 4 th November	Autumn Term 2 begins
Friday 20 th December	End of Term – school closes at 2pm

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