

25th October 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

As we come to the end of the first half-term of the school year and my first as Headteacher. It has been a pleasure to serve the school community during this time, and I thank you for your support. I have loved meeting many of your children and getting to know them, and enjoyed meeting a number of you at the surgeries I am running after school. These continue up to Christmas and after, so please keep an eye on the website for details and contact Mrs Bundock for an appointment.

Next week is Halloween and, although we do not mark it as a school community, I am well aware it has a popularity in the area around us. I know that it can be a lively and, at times, dangerous festival for young people out in the towns so please talk with your child/children and ensure that they are not in situations that could cause them harm. Hertfordshire Constabulary have asked Headteachers to share the following message with parents/carers:

Dear Parents/Carers,

Hertfordshire Police will be conducting regular Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) patrols over the October Half Term; we will focus in particular around the busy period of Halloween and Guy Fawkes night. We would request that parents assist police in explaining to your teenagers the importance of making good decisions. Please help us by being intrusive with your child(ren) as to their whereabouts especially on Halloween. We do not want one silly night of revelry to impact on their future opportunities. Thank you for your assistance.

We celebrated Harvest in Collective Worship this week. I am grateful to you for your contributions, which we will send to the local food bank:



Fig 1: Harvest Festival Collection 2019, St Mary's CE High School.

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e: admin@st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk w: www.st-maryshigh.herts.sch.uk
Head Teacher: Mr Nicholas Simms B.Sc. (Hons), NPQH

'Students feel happy and safe at school' OFSTED 2019
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I was also really impressed with the choir and prayer reader – the singing was utterly beautiful and I was proud and moved that our Collective Worship was supported and enhanced in this way.

On Friday 11th October, 100 students from Year 11 and the Sixth Form visited the *What Career Live!* Exhibition at Olympia. Over 100 Universities and course providers, as well as 50 companies, attended the fair to talk to students about options available to them after Year 11 and the Sixth form. Students could also take advantage of free Careers Advice, listen to top employers giving presentations on career opportunities and speakers advising on Career Paths, Apprenticeships and navigating University choices. Many students found this a really useful event to help them on their future Career path. We take career progression of our students as a key priority, and have a well-developed CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance) programme that starts in Year 7, and this event was part of our work to prepare students for their next steps.

Year 7 have made an excellent start to secondary school life. Last week I presented the Form Prefect badges to 18 students (two per form) and this week Student Voice interviews were conducted. We received over 60 applications and I am delighted that we have such strong representation from Michelle, Jude, Sienna, Olive, Atahan, Filip, Leonah, Themoulla, George and Hasin. They will receive their student voice ties and lanyards in assembly after the half term holiday.

As part of our annual off site visits programme, students this year enjoyed a cultural visit to Rome and Sorrento. Students visited popular historical sites such as the Colosseum, Pantheon, Trevi Fountain and other parts of ancient Rome. Other places of interest visited included the Vatican and the Sistine Chapel as well as enjoying time to explore the wonderful city of Rome. Students then travelled to the Italian city of Sorrento on the Amalfi coast. From this base, students trekked up to the rim of Mount Vesuvius, an active volcano, and also enjoyed exploring the ancient city of Pompeii. A big thank you to all those students who accompanied the visit, their conduct was exemplary, as well as the staff team who supported and organised the trip. Next year will see us visiting Amsterdam, as part of our four-year cycle which also includes Barcelona and Berlin.



Fig 2: The group visit the Colosseum, Rome, 2019

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I have enjoyed being out and about, dropping in to lessons across the school over the last few weeks. I have seen a range of lessons, all excellent, from Year 7 rhythm-clapping in Music, to Sixth Form art lessons and KS4 Sport. Year 10 GCSE Music students were recording their work, and we wish them every success in those – my office is underneath the practice rooms and I often get to hear lovely music when I am in there, and it was a pleasure to actually see them perform.

News from the Sports Desk:

The Year 8 girls' netball team played the best game they have taken part in on Tuesday. Everything they have covered in training over the last year fell into place and they achieved their best result to date. Year 9 had a tough game for their first match, they did not win, but did play some excellent netball and showed resilience throughout. They have identified a few areas to develop following this match, and are looking forward to their next game.

The Year 7 and Year 8 girls had their first experience of competitive rugby recently at Cheshunt Rugby club as part of an emerging schools' rugby festival. They played three games and were able to put what they had learnt in PE lessons into practice. We linked with Broxbourne School and the teamwork between the teams was fantastic. The girls said that they learnt a lot and really enjoyed the experience. As it is a development festival, we don't keep scores: the focus is on the girls learning to play and enjoying it (however, Rosa did score her first ever competitive try though!).

The Year 9 and 10 girls braved the cold on Thursday 24th to attend Cheshunt Rugby club's development festival. Unfortunately, two schools pulled out but we had an excellent game against John Warner. After a 'shaky' first quarter, the girls gelled as a team and started to string their passes together, remembering what they had learnt at training and in lessons. Charis and Rachel made outstanding tackles throughout the game, with Samara and Sylvia running the ball quickly up the wing. Our try scorers were Samara (x2) Rachel, Emma, Rihanna. The game was played in fantastic spirits, and the girls from both teams displayed excellent sportsmanship.

The Year 7 boys' football team beat John Warner School, 6-3. They showed great resilience after being two goals down at half time to battle their way back in to the game. Three goals from Jake, two from Fin and a long range strike from Blessing in the second half won the game for us, but it is a team sport and they played well as a group and supported each other to get the win.



Fig 3: Y7 boys' Football Team, St Mary's 2019

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I hope you all have a great half-term; I am well aware that when we take a break you become much busier, but I hope you get to have some quality family time together. Please remember my caution about Halloween at the start of this letter and remind your child to stay safe.

Yours faithfully



Nicholas Simms
Headteacher

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