

Dear Parents/Carers

I cannot believe that I have been at St Mark's for half an academic year already! There is never a completely perfect school and there will always be areas to develop; apart from having the privilege of working with young children, it's another reason why working in education remains exciting - it's forever evolving. St Mark's is no exception to this. Behind the scenes, the staff are busy working on curriculum development and I am pleased to report the new behaviour policy has definitely had a positive impact on ensuring the school is a calm learning environment. We are really pleased that we have been able to reinstate some group music lessons, community links such as the Hampshire Music Service Youth Choir visiting to give the children a choir experience, as well as the many St Mark's events that continue to take place. The revised Sports4kids clubs have attracted great participation and the other clubs run by teaching staff, both at lunchtime and after school, remain popular.

In the short time I have been at the school, I have realised what a special place it is; however, I would really like to gain an up-to-date insight into your views on St Mark's as parents/carers. To help consider the school's priorities, I would be grateful if you could complete the short parent survey that can be accessed via this link <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=CaaaPo2ssEW4sIZAz96qmkgUH5jAdY5FtBPSWFvREbpUMjFORUNBVik5Sk9ET1NDRIFLWFdFUEQ0VC4u> The survey link will be accessible until Thursday 7 March.

I am planning on running a couple of parent forums, early in the summer term and can pick up on themes from the survey, following analysis of the data. In the meantime, you will have the opportunity to meet with teachers to discuss your child's progress the week commencing 18 March. We will be hosting a virtual (on Microsoft Teams) 'How to support your child with Reading in Key Stage 2' workshop, at 18:30 on 14 March, and a 'SATS Briefing' for Year 6 parents, in the school hall, at 08:15 on 14 March. Further details of these events will be sent separately.

Thank you for your patience and understanding following the sudden closure of Jigsaw. It has only been a couple of weeks, however, the initial feedback from both children and parents about our new wrap-around care, provided by SLC, has been really positive. I appreciate some families will have made alternative arrangements for the remainder of the term, but please do make use of this service.

It is a busy rest of the term but we are all enjoying the days getting longer and afterschool clubs not finishing in darkness. I look forward to welcoming you to our Easter Service at St Mark's Church during the afternoon of 27 March.

Best wishes

Miss Ellis

*Headteacher*