



St Mary's

Catholic Primary School

WE LOVE | WE LEARN | WE LAUGH | WE LIVE

Prospectus



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“The school’s strong values and Christian ethos underpin the very positive learning environment. Pupils are well behaved and show consideration for others.”

Ofsted

St Mary’s is a thriving one-form entry primary on the outskirts of Brighton and Hove: a Catholic community with strong links between school, home and parish life.

The oldest part of the school was built in 1914; and, in the 100 years since, St Mary’s has developed to match the changing needs of our children and their families – and to move with the times.

Today, from Reception to Year 6, we welcome children from a wide range of backgrounds, offering them all a safe, stimulating and very modern environment in which to learn and grow.

Our school has a single Golden Rule: **‘Treat others as you would like to be treated’**. This is our core standard for children and adults alike and reflects the highest possible expectations for care, respect and mutual support.

We pursue academic excellence, but we are also passionate about developing the whole child – through sport, the arts, and a wide range of social, cultural and spiritual experiences.

Our Catholic Christian faith is at the heart of everything we do. As our school motto says, life at St Mary’s is about ‘growing together in God’s name’.



**WE LOVE ONE
ANOTHER, JUST
AS GOD LOVES
EACH ONE OF US**

**WE ARE
RESPECTFUL,
WELCOMING,
TOLERANT
AND KIND**



“St Mary’s is a fantastic place to work and learn. They hold lots of incredibly fun after-school clubs, and activities at playtime.”

Pupil

At St Mary’s, Religious Education (RE) inspires and unites all aspects of school life. Our RE syllabus is child-centred and developmental, based on the ‘Come And See’ programme which explores the search for meaning in life and covers all key aspects of the Catholic faith.

As well as learning about Scripture, the Liturgical Year and the life and work of the Catholic Church, the children are encouraged to ask increasingly challenging questions about their own faith and the beliefs of others.

Collective Worship means coming together in celebration of God’s love: in assemblies and classroom liturgies; through prayer, music, art and dance; and by participating in the Eucharist along with family members and parishioners. Children of all ages are encouraged to take an active part in worship and to take on roles such as RE Council Member and Worship Leader.

Faith informs all our expectations for behaviour, as well as the systems of rewards and sanctions we operate. Children have many different opportunities to gain credit for demonstrating their God-given talents, responsibility and hard work, while any behaviour that falls below our standards of respect and care is challenged immediately.

Forgiveness is a key element in our approach. Every new day is a new start and we aim to resolve any issues as quickly as possible, addressing underlying problems with the help of our Learning Mentor, family members and outside agencies as necessary.

Likewise, any barriers to a child’s achievement and wellbeing are identified early and clear, personal support strategies put in place.

Teachers adapt their lessons to suit the needs to all learners, and we offer a range of additional interventions run by a large and connected team of school staff. We also work closely with external professionals to provide highly individualised support as required.

At St Mary’s we are passionate about every child having the best opportunities to learn and grow.

We use our Pupil Premium allocation to provide extra teaching and run specific interventions, as well as funding children’s participation in Breakfast Club, after-school sessions, sport, music, trips and other enriching activities. We work closely with the children and their families to choose the right approach for them.



**WE LEARN
TOGETHER,
PASSIONATE
ABOUT USING OUR
GIFTS TO ACHIEVE
EXCELLENCE**

WE ARE CREATIVE
AND INDEPENDENT
IN OUR LEARNING,
AMBITIOUS TO BE
THE VERY BEST



“Literacy and numeracy skills are developed systematically through a variety of carefully planned, well-resourced activities.”

Ofsted

The school year is mapped out in a way that meets all the requirements of the Primary National Curriculum, while also providing us with a plan that is unique to our school. Themed, whole-school weeks allow us to focus on particular areas of learning or to explore key questions – about identity, for example, charity or culture – in different ways across the school.

We plan work around carefully-chosen texts; pay attention to important times in the Church’s year; and aim to provide a curriculum that is balanced, relevant, exciting and rich. We look for links between different areas of learning wherever possible, and use topics – like ‘Brighton’s Beginnings’, ‘Mind-Blowing Inventions’ and ‘American Discovery’ – to provide engaging contexts for gaining knowledge, deepening understanding and developing skills.

To make the most of all the opportunities in our school – and in the world at large – we believe that we all need strong learning skills. We have identified seven key attributes of a successful, life-long learner, and we work on each of these throughout the year: Curiosity, Bravery, Memory, Logic, Imagination, Co-Operation – and Stamina!

We show children how to be better in all of these areas, and celebrate examples of them in action.

We also know how important it is for children’s learning to be supported at home. We run workshops with parents and carers to explore the teaching of phonics, reading and calculation strategies, and provide a wealth of support materials and home learning tasks on our website.

Literacy is the gateway to so much learning, and St Mary’s has developed an original project called ‘Wonderful Words’ to promote all aspects of reading, writing and speaking. ‘Write Now!’ sessions use music, art, video and other means to stimulate creative writing. We run writing competitions, hold a writers’ club, and introduce the children to authors and illustrators.

Reading time is built into every school day. There are also lunchtime reading groups, events such as World Book Day, and a system called ‘Accelerated Reader’ which helps children choose the right books for them; sets online challenges to extend their reading skills and gauge their progress; and rewards them for their success.

The new curriculum emphasises the key role of information and communication technology (ICT) – PCs, netbooks, tablets, the internet – in children’s learning. At St Mary’s we invest in a wide range of up-to-date resources, allowing our children to develop the advanced skills they will need in order to use – and invent – the technologies of the future. The equipment is available for everyone to use as they research, produce and present their work, and we help all our children to be confident, skilful and safe users of ICT.

Sport is another central part of our learning at St Mary’s. As well as in their Physical Education (PE) lessons, the children can take part in a variety of sports and games before and after school.

We train teams to compete in a range of sports, and there are many opportunities to take part in outside events, such as ‘Run The World’, ‘Let’s Dance’ and the Schools’ Track and Field Championship.

**WE LAUGH, FINDING
JOY IN THE RICH
EXPERIENCES WE
SHARE**

WE ARE A HAPPY
AND CONFIDENT
COMMUNITY
OF LEARNERS,
READY FOR THE
CHALLENGES
AHEAD



“I like it here because I can be myself, without anyone making me feel upset – and everyone is really nice. Also I feel safe and not scared.”

Pupil

Happiness is a key ingredient in powerful learning, and we want life at St Mary's to be lively, positive and fun.

We offer 'wrap-around care'. Our popular Breakfast Club provides a healthy breakfast, sports, games and creative pursuits before school every day. At the end of the day, a programme of clubs, sports sessions and other activities allows the children to be active and involved in learning until 5.30pm.

We pay particular attention to the children's health and wellbeing. Healthy lunches are cooked on site every day and milk is available to every child. Our school nurse meets families to offer advice, and our school counsellor can offer extra emotional support to adults and children alike.

Children have many opportunities throughout the year, enriching their learning and giving them the chance to develop new skills away from school, at places such as Newhaven Fort, Herstmonceux Science Centre and the Natural History Museum.

We also invite visitors to come to us, bringing exciting new experiences into school – like an archaeology workshop, birds of prey display and mobile planetarium.

We enjoy developing and celebrating the talents of musicians and performers in school. As well as their regular music lessons and singing practices, the children can take guitar, violin and recorder lessons.

Every year a whole class works with the Soundmakers team to learn new instruments and perform together in front of an audience. Events such as talent shows, Christmas plays, carol concerts and end-of-year performances help children to develop their confidence as they share their gifts.

Our active Parents/Teachers Association (PTA) enriches the life of the whole school community. They organise dances, quiz nights and fairs; come into school to help the children prepare for Mothering Sunday, give to charity, make Christmas cards; and play a vital role in big community projects such as the annual Brighton Festival Children's Parade.

The PTA also links with the Parish to put on joint fund-raisers and festivities during the year, strengthening our community and providing new ways for us to enjoy working and playing together.



**WE LIVE WELL,
SEIZING EVERY
OPPORTUNITY
TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**

WE ARE ACTIVE
MEMBERS OF
OUR PARISH, OUR
COMMUNITY AND
THE WIDER WORLD



“Governors and leaders at all levels work as a team... At the heart of their ambitious plans for further improvement is the strong desire to ensure the potential of every pupil is fully realised.” Ofsted

We believe that school life itself should play a vital part in a child's development. Co-operation is one of our key learning skills; teachers use learning partners and group-work to encourage collaboration; and children are rewarded for the care they show to others.

Sport is used to demonstrate the skills required to be a good team-player. Our House Teams compete in different ways throughout the year, while many of our projects in music and drama also emphasise the strength we gain from working positively and considerately with others.

We want our children to take on important roles within the school. Each class elects two School Councillors, who – under the leadership of the Chairs of the Council – help the Senior Leadership Team and our very active Governing Body to make decisions about the life of the school.

The RE Council is also made up of children from across the school; other children form the Lunchtime Squad of helpers; Year 6 children are role models as Prefects with younger children; and every year we elect a Head Boy and Head Girl and their Deputies – children who can act as ambassadors for St Mary's, in school and out.

Our children have many opportunities to contribute to worship, equipping them with the skills and confidence to take on important roles in church: readers, altar servers and soloists. We work closely with our Parish – St Theresa's, Southwick – and one class a week attends Mass.

Every year we join with the other Diocesan schools in a fundraising event that culminates in a celebration at Worth Abbey. In school, each class has also adopted a charity of its own, giving the children a focus for important discussions and research as well as some very meaningful fundraising goals.

We love to take part in the life of our community – and the world beyond. We aim to create strong relationships with families, using a range of methods to communicate what we are doing and to involve them in school life.

We seize every opportunity to perform in public, to compete, to take part in festivals and competitions, and to wear the St Mary's uniform with pride, representing our school well, wherever and whenever we can.



We Love, Learn, Laugh and Live, growing together in God's name

Results

For our most up to date results please visit our school website or contact our school office.

Website

For more information about our school, including admissions, policies and inspection reports, please visit our website: www.stmarys.brighton-hove.sch.uk or telephone (01273) 418416.

Want to know more?

A number of websites have interesting information about school performance. Do visit them!

Ofsted Parent View:

<http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results/survey/result/10709/current>

Ofsted reports:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/114570>



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