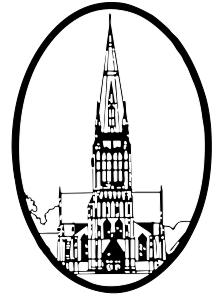


St. Mary's C. of E. Primary School
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Headteacher: Jane O'Brien



*"St Mary's... feeding the mind, body and spirit
so we can be the best we can be."*

3rd May 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re. Dilly Baker, Chair of Governors.

I have recently been elected as Chair of St Mary's School Governors and wanted to say what a privilege it is to continue to be serving this school community.

As you're only too well aware, we have just got through our Ofsted inspection and the governors and staff at St Mary's were very happy with the way it went!

I am writing to let you know, with a heavy heart, that our wonderful Head Teacher, Jane O'Brien will be moving on - she has been appointed as Head Teacher of another St Mary's - this time in Haringey. It is a larger school than ours but still a church school with close links into its local community. As you know, Jane has led our school over the last 10 years, doing a remarkable job in steering our school through highs and lows, always wanting the very best for all our children and achieving great results. She has been exemplary in living out our mission statement - enabling each and every child to 'be the very best they can be'. But now it is time for her to move on and face a new challenge as she embarks on a new chapter in her career.

I know like me, you will be very sad to see Jane go. She will be leaving our school at the end of this academic year and of course we will want to give her a great send-off ... but that's for another time.

You may be wondering what the future will look like for St Mary's. Overleaf, I have shared some information, 'what next?'

In the meantime, may I wish you and your child/children every best wish and thank you for all that you bring to the life of St Mary's.

Yours sincerely,



Rev Dilly Baker, Chair of Governors.

What next?

Below you will see one of many headlines, reported in the past few months.

*“Primary schools in London ‘may need to merge or close’ as intakes dwindle.
Report by London Councils says falling birth rate, Brexit and Covid-era flight from cities causing sharp fall in pupil numbers*

The forecast is that the number of four- and five-year-olds starting in state primary schools will drop from 96,000 last September to 89,000 in 2026 – a fall of 7%. Falling birthrates are said to be the main cause of the shrinking numbers.”

*Guardian
12th January 2023*

As you are probably aware from more recent news reports, Hackney have proposed closing four schools in the borough, two of them merging with others schools local to them. St Mary’s is NOT one of the schools affected by the proposed closures. This issue has arisen because there are not enough children to fill all the primary school places available, which means budgets have reduced. This is a London wide problem as you can see from the headline above.

Although we are sad to see our headteacher leave, it has opened up other great opportunities for the school, to support it financially during this period of low pupil numbers and rising costs. We have been exploring various leadership options for the future, including working under an executive headship. Governors are working closely with the Diocese and Hackney Education to identify the best option and will confirm the leadership structure for September, as soon as possible.

We understand that this may make our community feel uneasy, as change does that to all of us. However, this is a positive thing for St Mary’s as we have an opportunity to make some changes that will help us to continue to thrive, moving forward.



