



ST. MARTIN'S SCHOOL

LEARN TOGETHER - ACHIEVE FOREVER



NEWS UPDATE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Ionawr / January 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the new term. I hope all families have had a good Christmas, Governors, staff and I would like to wish you a happy New Year and as always, thank you for your support over last term, both for your children's education and the work of our school.

We were pleased to see many families at our carol service in December at St. Martin's church and appreciate you coming to support our pupil performances as well as join in the service. The pupil performances were outstanding, they were a pleasure to listen to.

Our choir and musicians also went to elderly residents' homes in December to sing carols and play seasonal music for the elderly of our community.

I was pleased to see our pupils safely back on Monday 6th January, all of whom have made a very good start to the spring term. I look forward to a term of strong hard work by all our pupils. Their progress shown last term tell us that they are making good progress and we want to see this continue, so that all pupils learn and achieve through this year.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM NEWS

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate both Mr Marc Yeoman and Mrs Jo Underwood who have successfully gained secondments at Abertillery 3-16 Community School.

Mr Yeoman will be on secondment until August 2020 and Mrs Underwood until April 2020. Their new roles will involve providing advice, guidance and support to the school, staff and the school community. This is a huge opportunity to make a difference to the young people in Abertillery and I hope both staff have a very positive impact on these young people.

I am sure that you will join me in wishing both Mr Yeoman and Mrs Underwood the very best in their new endeavour and thank them for the hard work and leadership they have shown St. Martin's. We very much look forward to welcoming both members of staff back to St. Martin's at the end of their secondments.

In the meantime, Mrs Claire Manson, Assistant Headteacher will be overseeing Wellbeing, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact her.

Mr Dan Furtek will become the schools complaints officer and can be contacted on furtek@stmartins.caerphilly.sch.uk, he will also be assisting Mrs Emma Watt as Deputy Safeguarding Officer.

UNIFORM REMINDER

We pride ourselves on the smart appearance of our pupils and expect them to be in uniform at all times. We ask parents for full co-operation in this matter. Our uniform means our pupils identify with the ethos of our school. It is expected that pupils are smart at all times. The school maintains a strict uniform policy.

Our uniform stockists are listed below and a full school uniform list can be found in pupil planners. We do not accept variations on uniform bought in other places.

St Martin's School Shop: bit.ly/stmartinsshop

YC Sports: YC Sports, 86-90 Crwys Road, Cathays, Cardiff, CF24 4NP

PARENTS' EVENING REMINDERS

This is an important term for parents' evenings, when you will have the opportunity to meet your child's teachers.

Please make the most of this opportunity so that you feel fully informed about your child's progress and what may be needed now to ensure the best possible progress through this year and in the examinations next term.

The dates for our parent / carer evenings are as follows:

Year 8 Parents' Evening	Tuesday 14 th January 2020
Year 9 Parents' Evening	Tuesday 11 th February 2020
Year 8 Options Evening	Tuesday 3 rd March 2020
Year 10 Parents' Evening	Thursday 12 th March 2020
Year 7 Parents' Evening	Thursday 19 th March 2020
Year 11 Sixth Form Enrolment Evening	Wednesday 25 th March 2020

Heads of Learning for each relevant year group will contact you separately about these evenings. Staff and I look forward to seeing you then.

WORKING TOWARDS SUCCESS: EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

This is an important term for all year groups.

Year 11 are working towards their final qualifications, Year 10 will be undertaking school examinations this term to support us in assessing their progress through their examination subjects to date and Year 9 pupils are working towards gaining their levels at the end of May.

All of Years 7, 8 and 9 will be undertaking examinations in the second half of this term and in May, they will also undertake the national tests in literacy and numeracy.

For all these reasons this is a busy and important term when all teachers will be working hard with your children to ensure they make the best possible progress, so that they learn and achieve this year.

We seek a hard working term from all our pupils. Homework must be recorded in diaries and parents are asked to regularly check the homework your child has to undertake and ensure this is completed. Check your child is organised for each day with the appropriate books, equipment and when required, sports kit. Working together, we can ensure the success and excellence of every learner in our school.

ATTENDANCE

We also seek the very best attendance of all our pupils. Every lesson of every day is key to their learning, their progress and their ultimate success. We look forward to the full attendance of all our pupils and the support of all parents and carers in achieving this.

As a rule of thumb, it is important that as far as you possibly can, all medical appointments are made outside of the school day so that these do not affect attendance. If such an appointment absolutely must take place, we ask that you ensure an appointment does not mean keeping your child off for a whole day and that it does not affect registrations, so that your child can still achieve full attendance. We have many of our pupils who have full or very near to full, 100% attendance.

PUNCTUALITY

Punctuality is equally important to the good progress of our pupils. A reminder that we start promptly at 8.30am every day.

The day begins with an assembly, moment of reflection, uniform check, equipment check, PSE activity, behaviour review, attendance review or a 'thought for the week.'

REGISTRATION

Following staff consultation the decision has been made to move registration to the beginning of the day. This means registration will now take place from 8.30am – 8.50am. Please note there are no changes to the start or end of the school day.

Please see below times of the school day:

Key Stage 3 (Years 7 and 8)		Key Stage 4 (Years 9, 10 and 11)	
Registration	8.30am - 8.50am	Registration	8.30am - 8.50am
Lesson 1	8.50am - 9.50am	Lesson 1	8.50am - 9.50am
Lesson 2	9.50am - 10.50am	Lesson 2	9.50am - 10.50am
Break	10.50am - 11.10am	Break	10.50am - 11.10am
Lesson 3	11.10am - 12.10pm	Lesson 3	11.10am - 12.10pm
Lunch	12.10pm - 12.40pm	Lesson 4	12.10pm - 1.10pm
Lesson 4	12.40pm - 1.40pm	Lunch	1.10pm - 1.40pm
Lesson 5	1.40pm - 2.40pm	Lesson 5	1.40pm - 2.40pm

PUPILS RETURNING TO SCHOOL WITH BROKEN LIMBS / LIMB INJURY

Please note that if your child has suffered an injury to a limb that means he / she requires crutches or any form of support, please contact reception in order for you to meet with the School Nurse and your child's Head of Learning before your child returns to school.

The Nurse and Head of Learning will need to review your child's needs with you. This will include access to lessons upstairs, amongst other aspects. All decisions made will be recorded and agreed with you, in the best interests of your child in the circumstances of their injury.

A risk assessment must be in place before any learner is able to return to school.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

At this time of the year there is always the potential for snow. The school has set procedures in this circumstance.

It is important to note it is very rare for the school to close. This would be the extreme situation. The two possible situations are:

Heavy snow overnight: Parents and carers should check the Caerphilly County Borough website to see whether St. Martin's has put a closure notice on the system. This is important. If school is closed it is likely to mean that there will be no-one in the school to answer the telephone, the Caerphilly website is the designated way of finding out about closure for all Caerphilly schools.

If school closure has been necessary, parents need to check the Caerphilly site each day as to when we are able to re-open.

Heavy snow during the school day, when school is open: We will need to make a decision as to whether we release children to go home. This would only happen if absolutely necessary in the event of heavy snow. It is important we are able to contact you for this purpose. Parents should be sure we have up to date contact details.

Pupils living further away who catch buses would only be able to go home in the event that we were able to access our school buses early. The alternative is that parents attend school to collect their children.

However, parents should note this is a very, very rare occurrence. The most likely scenario is that overnight snow means the school cannot open, but even then this is unusual. We will be monitoring the weather forecast daily through this half term.

CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

In the spirit of Christmas, Friday 13th December, was Christmas Jumper Day for our pupils and staff, when lots wore a Christmas jumper to school, with non-uniform. Pupils and staff alike enjoyed the day. The day was held to support special charities, pupils and staff contribute a £1 donation for non - uniform. We raised a total of £533.85.

USE OF MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL

A reminder your child is only allowed to bring mobile phones to school to ensure their safety to and from school. They must be switched off in school and kept in school bags. Should this not happen, a ban will be placed on the pupil having a phone in school.

Pupils must not use mobile phones throughout the school day at all. This will result in an automatic ban. Parents needing to contact pupils during the school day must do so through the school office. I remind parents that use of mobile phones in school is a potential safeguarding issue.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

A reminder to parents and carers regarding the schools decision to close Hillside exit and filter learners out of school via rectory close.

We have identified that the issue is not as prevalent in the morning as pupils walk to school at different times and do not arrive en masse.

We deem this new exit plan to be a far safer route as the road is wider and has two large pavements which lead to a crossing on St. Martin's road. Additionally, there is a crossing at the bottom on Mountain Road for pupils wishing to go to the train station or town centre.

NATIONAL CATEGORISATION

St Martin's staff and learners are celebrating the attainment of green status in the national categorisation of schools. The journey from Red category and Estyn monitoring in 2014 to Green in 2019 along with a good Estyn inspection report in the summer and the highest pupil attainment in the school's history is testimony to exceptional efforts of teaching staff, support staff and pupils working in partnership with parents and carers.

COMMUNICATION

A reminder of the SIMS parent app which now includes behaviour. This is a very convenient way to share information with you about your child's school life. You can access the system from a smartphone, tablet or PC – anytime, anywhere.

- You will find the following information on the SIMS Parent App.
- Attendance
- School term dates, INSET Days and contact
- Child's school report
- Receive notifications to remind you about important information such as key dates for your diary
- Access to update your contact details
- If you have more than one child at school, you'll have access to information for all your children, from the same app.

SECONDARY SCHOOL OF THE YEAR AWARDS

I am immensely proud to inform all parents and carers on Friday 13th December 2019, we were informed St. Martin's School has been shortlisted in the Secondary School of the Year category at the South Wales Argus Schools & Education Awards 2019/20.

The awards will be held on Thursday 16th January 2020 in Newport, I will provide further updates following the event.



HIRE OF FACILITIES

The school is pleased to offer a variety of facilities available to hire. Further details can be found on the school website on the hire tab. We have a busy regular hiring community, but also host parties and one off events. St. Martin's School is open 7 days a week to hirers, please call 02920 858050 for details of availability.



DONATIONS

The school welcomes any old good quality school uniform blazers ties and sports kit you may have at home and wish to donate. In addition if anyone has any good quality unwanted sports equipment, footballs rugby balls, tennis balls etc, you would like to donate, please send them into school reception.

SUCCESSFUL TERM - SUCCESSFUL LEARNING

Senior staff have the privilege of visiting lessons and we continue to be impressed at the excellent quality of teaching and learning taking place. In all lessons, the focus of our pupils is outstanding, the quality of their thinking is superb and the range of learning taking place is always a pleasure to see.

In lessons teachers make their expectations of all our pupils clear. They are guiding our pupils towards successful futures.

We have every confidence all pupils at St. Martin's School will achieve forever. The commitment of staff and of our pupils is outstanding. Quality learning takes place within our school every day and we continue to be rightly proud of St. Martin's School.

IN SUMMARY

We look forward to a very busy and hard-working term ahead and to continuing to work with parents and carers so that all our pupils make very good progress towards their success and excellence.

We look forward to a productive and hardworking term, when all our learners make great strides in their learning and progress.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mr Jarvis'.

Mr Jarvis
Headteacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

January 2020

Monday 6th January 2020: Pupils return to school
Tuesday 14th January 2020: Year 8 Parents' Evening 4-7pm

February 2020

Friday 7th February 2020: Y9 Vaccinations
Monday 10th February 2020: Netball & Water Polo Competition Week
Tuesday 11th February 2020: Internet Safety Day
Tuesday 11th February 2020: Year 9 Parents' Evening 4pm - 7pm
Monday 17th February – Friday 21st February 2020: Half Term
Tuesday 25th February 2020: Year 12 Geography residential fieldwork
Wednesday 26th February 2020: Year 12 Geography residential fieldwork
Thursday 27th February 2020: Year 12 Geography residential fieldwork
Half Term Week: Residential Trip to Madrid

March 2020

Tuesday 3rd March 2020: Year 8 Open Evening 5pm - 7pm
Friday 6th March 2020: Llangranog Residential
Tuesday 17th March 2020: Year 12 Geography Fieldwork
Wednesday 18th March 2020: Year 12 Geography Fieldwork
Thursday 19th March 2020: Year 7 Parents' Evening 4pm - 7pm
Monday 23rd March 2020: Swimming Gala Competition Week
Wednesday 25th March 2020: Y11, Sixth Form Enrolment Evening 5pm - 6pm

April 2020

Wednesday 1st April 2020: India - Departure tbc
Thursday 2nd April 2020: America - Departure tbc
Friday 3rd April 2020: INSET Day, School closed to pupils
Monday 6th April - Friday 17th April 2020 - Half Term

May 2020

Thursday 7th May 2020: Sixth Form Open Evening
Friday 8th May 2020: Bank Holiday - May Day, School Closed
Monday 11th May 2020: INSET Day, School closed to pupils
Monday 18th May 2020: Tennis & Rounders Competition Week
Tuesday 19th May 2020: HPV vaccinations Year 8 & Year 9
Monday 25th May - Friday 29th May 2020: Half Term

June 2020

Monday 26th June 2020: Transition Week

July 2020

Wednesday 1st July 2020: Year 8 all pupils Vaccine - Year 9 Girls 2nd Dose Vaccine
Thursday 2nd July 2020: Sports Day
Tuesday 7th July 2020: School Production
Wednesday 8th July 2020: School Production
Thursday 9th July 2020: Reserve Sports Day
Thursday 9th July 2020: School Production
Thursday 16th July 2020: Enrichment Day - Oakwood Theme Park
Monday 20th July 2020: INSET Day, School Closed to Pupils

SCHOOL TERM DATES 2019-2020**Autumn Term 2019**

Term Starts	Monday 2 September 2019
Half Term Starts	Monday 28 October 2019
Half Term Ends	Friday 1 November 2019
Term Ends	Friday 20 December 2019

Spring Term 2020

Term Starts	Monday 6 January 2020
Half Term Starts	Monday 17 February 2020
Half Term Ends	Friday 21 February 2020
Term Ends	Friday 3 April 2020

Summer Term 2020

Term Starts	Monday 20 April 2020
Half Term Starts	Monday 25 May 2020
Half Term Ends	Friday 29 May 2020
Term Ends	Monday 20 July 2020

SCHOOL TERM DATES 2020-2021**Autumn Term 2020**

Term Starts	Tuesday 1st September 2020
Half Term Starts	Monday 26th October 2020
Half Term Ends	Friday 30th October 2020
Term Ends	Friday 18th December 2020

Spring Term 2021

Term Starts	Monday 4th January 2021
Half Term Starts	Monday 15th February 2021
Half Term Ends	Friday 19th February 2021
Term Ends	Friday 26th March 2021

Summer Term 2021

Term Starts	Monday 12th April 2021
Half Term Starts	Monday 31st May 2021
Half Term Ends	Friday 4th June 2021
Term Ends	Tuesday 20th July 2021