

Autumn 2 Newsletter 2024

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A Message from Mrs Rought



I can remember this time last year, saying goodbye to my previous school, feeling nervous, but so excited about the move to St Martin's to take up my first headship. I can honestly say that becoming Headteacher here has been a joy, from the first walk around to now, everyone has been wonderful - the staff have gone over and above to help me, the children are a delight and as parents you have done nothing but make me feel valued and welcome.

We have achieved a lot in such a short space of time and I hope you and your children have noticed how we have tried to improve the school's curriculum, especially art, DT, PE, music, history and geography. The children tell us that they are enjoying these subjects so much more now and the work they are producing has been very impressive. We have also worked hard to improve their school environment, de-cluttering and modernising where can, especially in the early years with our new reception class room. I like to think we have listened to parents and that our community events, such as the Summer Fair and discos are putting St Martin's back on the map as a welcoming and happy school within the local area that we serve.

As you know, we have plans to improve things even further. Staff have decided on seven characteristics of learning that we want our children to develop, these will be called our St Martin's Super Seven and include being a: confident hero, resilient warrior, proud achiever, creative thinker, change maker, excited learner and an ambitious individual. We will show the children these characteristics in action via our chosen Inspirational Individuals, worship, our curriculum and extra curricular clubs. We really think that these characteristics will equip

them with the skills and attributes needed to move successfully through our school and on to secondary and beyond.

Thankyou for your ongoing support this term, we have been overwhelmed by your generosity with our fund raising events, the Wear Pink day raised more money than we thought possible, we sent a van full of food and toiletries to the Black Country Food Bank and most recently, the Sandwell gift bag appeal. Our Christmas Fair was also very successful, raising over £1070 for school fund.

We have enjoyed a lovely last week in school, we have seen nativities from Early Years and Years 1 and 2, which were beautiful and reflected the true meaning of Christmas. We also had our termly Rock Steady Concert, which parents and the whole school got to enjoy. We also heard some wonderful singing from years 3 to 6 in their singing performances. It has certainly made us feel very festive!

We could not make this school as special as it is without all of your support and I thankyou from the bottom of my heart. Have a wonderful Christmas and a very Happy New Year with your loved ones and I look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Monday 6th January.

School Development



As you know, the three main areas we are working on this year are **Motivation**, **Achievement** and **Pride** (MAP for short).

Motivation - this is why we are working hard on our curriculum, making it exciting and engaging, especially in art, music, history and P.E. We have worked hard to create extra learning spaces within school and have plans to develop areas to celebrate the children's work, we currently have a lovely art gallery in our corridor.

Achievement - this is ensuring all children achieve the best outcomes in all subjects. We have worked with external experts to develop our maths offer further, making good use of practical equipment to teach concepts, ensuring that children understand the maths they are doing - not just going through the process. We are also ensuring that basic skills are taught explicitly and any errors are picked up quickly in lessons by the staff.

Pride - this starts with uniform, thankyou for adhering to our expectations for uniform (including jewellery, nail polish and make up), there really has been a noticeable difference. I know that some of you are frustrated by our PE expectations and cannot see why we are being so strict about it. We are trying to ensure the children understand about conformity and that sometimes there are rules and expectations that we have to adhere to. The older children will be moving to secondary school soon and the expectations there are even more specific. There is no need to purchase anything special for PE, simply dark bottoms, a white t-shirt and their school jumper or cardigan is all we ask.

We are also working hard on handwriting and general presentation in books, the children are being taught to use kinetic letters as an approach to their letter formation and it is having a very positive impact on handwriting across school.

Hello and Goodbye

Mr Skitt, our new caretaker, has settled in really well and has been busy getting to know St Martin's. He has already made a big difference to our school environment and we have lots of plans for even more improvements.

On Tuesday 10th December, we said goodbye to Mrs Stanistreet, who has been teaching at St Martin's a very long time, we have also said goodbye to Mrs Hodgetts and Mrs Broadfield from our lunchtime team. As you know, Miss Shabir secured a promotion in another school and leaves us on the last day of term. We wish all of our leavers all the very best for the future.

In January we welcome Mrs Harris, who will be teaching year 2. Mrs Harris is an experienced teacher and has already enjoyed some time in school meeting her new class again and working with the leaders in school so that she is ready for her new start. Miss Smith joined our lunchtime team last week and is busy getting to know the staff and children. We will also be welcoming two more new lunchtime supervisors in the new term, who I am sure will make a positive difference to our children during this important time of the day.

Our Collective Worship



This half term we have focused specifically on our Christian values and ethos through stories from the Old testament.

The liturgical cloth has to be green for most time and reflects the 'ordinary' time in the church calendar. On Monday 2nd December, it changed to purple as we enter the period of Advent

Since half term, we have introduced the following bible stories from the Old Testament: Ruth and Naomi - linked to our value of friendship, Joseph and his brothers linked to respect and empathy and Noah and the Ark linked to sharing.

We also held a special Remembrance Day worship and a worship to mark the start of Advent. This children learnt about the four red Advent candles, which are lit in for the four Sundays before Christmas Day. Each candle has a special meaning:

Week 1 - Hope

Week 2 - Peace

Week 3 - Joy

Week 4 - Love

We also found out that the white candle is lit on Christmas Day and represents Jesus being born as the 'Light of the World'. We will light a new candle each week until Friday 20th December, when we will light all five candles.

Children in Need



Thank you to all those children and parents that supported Children In Need on Friday 15th November. Children came to school dressed in their own clothes or 'Children in Need' themed clothes to support Children in Need. We raised a total of £108.00

All donations will go to the charity that helps improve the lives of disadvantaged children and young people around the UK.

Year 6 Visit to Sandwell Council House

Despite the challenging weather, the year 6 children had a truly inspiring visit to Sandwell Council's chambers as part of UK Parliament Week. They thoroughly enjoyed learning about how the council is formed and were fascinated by the intricate process behind allocating and managing budgets. This unique opportunity not only deepened their understanding of local government but also encouraged them to consider the importance of decision-making in their community. It was an amazing opportunity. They even got to take part in a council debate. We're incredibly grateful to Sandwell Council for providing such an engaging and educational experience, which has left a lasting impression on the children.

As an extra special treat, they brought in the mayoral mace to show us. It is used in council meetings with the mayor. It is very unusual to show it to members of the public. The deputy head of the council, Mr Moore said he has never touched it and can only see it if the mayor uses it. He was quite envious when our school councillors got to hold it! What a unique and special day. The children really enjoyed it. We even got to see the knife angel on the way home.













Santa Visit



On Thursday 19th December, Santa came to visit the children during their Christmas Parties! All the children were very excited to see Santa and received a little gift.

Christmas Fair



We made over £1070 at the Christmas Fair this year, which is amazing! Thankyou so much for your support in making it a huge success and, more importantly, a lovely event for our school community.

Safeguarding



At St Martin's we take our safeguarding duty very seriously. Safeguarding children is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Every single person who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. If you have any concerns about a child's safety or welfare you can speak to a member of our safeguarding team.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Lees

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Rought

Deputy designated safeguarding lead: Miss Hunt

Spotlight on: Operation Encompass

Operation Encompass is a police and education early information sharing partnership enabling schools to offer immediate support for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse. Information is shared by the police with a school's trained Key Adult (DSL) prior to the start of the next school day after officers have attended a domestic abuse incident thus enabling appropriate support to be given, dependent upon the needs and wishes of the child.

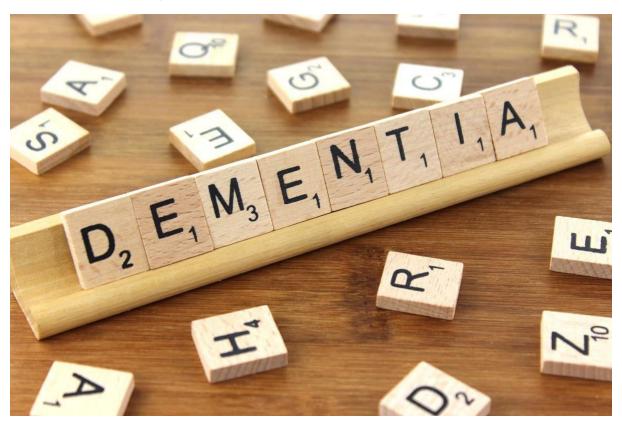
Children experiencing domestic abuse are negatively impacted by this exposure; domestic abuse has been identified as an Adverse Childhood Experience and can lead to emotional, physical and psychological harm. Operation Encompass aims to mitigate this harm by enabling immediate support, making a child's day better and giving them a better tomorrow.

Operation Encompass directly connects the police with schools to secure better outcomes for children who are subject or witness to police-attended incidents of domestic abuse. Rapid provision of support within the school environment means children are better safeguarded against the short-, medium- and long-term effects of domestic abuse.

If you are experiencing Domestic Abuse or require support, please speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead. We are here to help.

All of our staff at St Martin's have regular safeguarding training updates. Safeguarding is also part of our induction programme for new staff. We are very lucky to have a Early Help Police Officer attached to our school. Her name is Shendy Blakemore. She will be working closely with us this year to provide important safeguarding sessions to our children. If you would like to speak to her or feel that you need any support from her then please let Mrs Lees know and we will be happy to arrange that for you. If you are concerned about a child, please talk to a Designated Safeguarding Lead or any member of staff in school.

Dementia Friendly School



We will continue to develop our 'Dementia Friendly School' work this year. We are looking forward to extending this work out in to the wider community. Our links with our local

residential home will continue and we will also be looking to to widen this too. We will be working to achieve the next stage of our award this year.

We are in the process of purchasing some dementia friendly books for children to help them to understand more about dementia. Mrs Lees will then be able to use these with the children that she supports.

Please remember - if you would like any support or would like to talk to anyone regarding dementia then please contact Mrs Lees. We are happy to support your family wherever necessary.

Celebrating Attendance Success at St. Martin's Primary School!



At St. Martin's, we believe that attendance is incredibly important, and we celebrate it with enthusiasm because good attendance is an integral part of a successful education.

Weekly individual attendance Prizes

Every Friday at St. Martin's, we come together to celebrate the amazing achievements of our pupils. One of the highlights of this gathering is the attendance wheel. A child's name is entered in to the attendance wheel if they have attended school every day of the week. They receive a special prize from the 'treasure chest'!

Class attendance prizes

Each week the class with the highest attendance is announced in our worship session. The class receives a trophy for their efforts and sometimes even an extra break time!

Winning classes this half term are:

Week Ending	Winning class	Percentage
8 November	Year 6	100%

15 November	Year 6	99%
22 November	Year 3	99%
29 November	Years 5 & 6	99%
6 December	Year 2	98%
13 December	Year 6	100%
20 December	Year 4 & 2	95%

Each half term the class with the highest attendance is also announced during our final worship session.

The class with the best attendance for Autumn 2 is: Year 6 – 97.9%

Well done to all classes!

Termly awards

Pupils also have a chance to win Bronze, Silver and Gold certificates throughout the academic year.

If you require any support with your child's attendance or any advice please contact **Mrs Lees (Senior Attendance Lead)** or **Mrs Breckell (Attendance Champion)**. We are happy to work together with you to ensure children achieve the best attendance possible. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in making St. Martin's a place where all of our pupils can thrive.

Go Play Sessions - January 2025



Universal Credit - Managed Migration

Please see attached information regarding Universal Credit and Managed Migration which will affect a number of residents within Sandwell.



Universal Credit - Managed Migration

Universal Credit is a working-age benefit which brings together the following six legacy benefits into one benefit:

- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income based Employment Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Child Tax CreditsWorking Tax Credits

Universal Credit provides support to residents with their daily living and housing costs, it can also help pay for childcare costs. Universal Credit can be claimed by residents in work on a low income, residents who are out of work and residents unable to work. Most people have to make their Universal Credit claim online and claimants are paid a single payment monthly in arrears. For more information on Universal Credit visit: https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/

What is Managed Migration?

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have begun the process of moving individuals who claim a legacy benefit onto Universal Credit. This process is known as Managed Migration.

Managed Migration is where the DWP advise you to claim Universal Credit even though your circumstances have not changed. It is important that if you receive a Migration Notice letter from the DWP that you contact the Council for advice. If you fail to claim Universal Credit within three months, then your benefits will end, and you will be left with no income.

Who is affected

The first group of households affected by Managed Migration in Sandwell are households where working tax or child tax credits are in payment and no other income-related benefit is in payment.

The process of Managed Migration in Sandwell began on 9 February 2024. The timeline below outlines when current legacy benefit customers will be invited to migrate to Universal Credit:



If you only receive ESA or ESA with HB, you will be the final group invited to migrate to Universal Credit. This is likely to be in 2028 though this date may be subject to change.

More information can be found on the Council's website - https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/benefits-support/universal-credit-2/3 or by scanning the QR code with your mobile phone camera.

Who can help

If you are a Council tenant and receive a migration notice, then you should contact the Council's Rents Team on **0121 737 5148** Monday to Thursday 9am – 5.30pm and 9am – 5pm on a Friday. Our Income Recovery Officers can advise you of the best time to claim Universal Credit.

If you are in the Private Rented Sector and receive a migration notice, then you should contact the Council's Welfare Rights Team on **0121 569 3158**, Monday to Friday 9am – 4.30pm where an advisor will be available to assist you.



4 Community Trust - Wraparound Care Provision



We are thrilled to be able to let you know that we have wrap around care for St Martin's children.

It is run by 4 Community Trust, who run many breakfast and after school clubs in the local area, they have a great reputation and are competitively priced. They offer lots of flexibility in how many sessions you need to book, they have an app where you can manage your bookings and payments and they accept childcare vouchers, so hopefully this answers all the queries that you shared on the questionnaire.

The clubs will take place in our old year 5 room, which has been upgraded over the summer. It now has a kitchen area fitted, so that meals can be prepared on site. Parents can access the room without coming onto the main school reception before and after school office hours. This will be via a bell or a phone call to the staff on duty. If your child gets space in a school run after school club, they can be taken to this club by school staff if needed. Please remember that there is no guarantee of your child gaining a space in a school run after school club each half term, so please do not rely on this for childcare.

In order to book a place you will need to call the number on the flyer below, you will then find out how to register on the app and how to set your child up with access to the wrap around care. As 4 Community Trust is an independent organisation, any queries about booking and payments will need to go through them please, not the main school office.

We really hope that you are pleased with this offer and it makes managing work and the school run that little bit easier.

To view 4 Community Trust's Prospectus, please visit our website:

<u>4Community Trust - Wraparound Care Provision | St Martin's C E Primary School (st-martins.sandwell.sch.uk)</u>

Easy Fundraising



We're now registered with easyfundraising, which means you can help us raise funds for FREE.

Over 7,000 brands will donate to us when you use easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! All you need to do is sign up and remember to use easyfundraising whenever you shop online.

It's easy and completely FREE! These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us at:

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/st-martins-c-of-e-primary-school-tipton

Road Safety



Can parents and carers please be vigilant when crossing the roads. You are the one who will be with your children at the roadside every day. When you are out with your child you will have good opportunities to reinforce road safety messages. Please think about telling your child about the importance of finding safer places to cross, stopping behind the kerb, looking, listening, and thinking, holding their hands even if using a lollipop person or pedestrian facility. Making sure they have good visibility, taking their hoods down and no distractions with phones or friends when near roads. This will help your child to develop good road safety habits at an early age and reinforce your own road safety awareness.

School Dinners - Spring 2025 Menu



Please remember that if you would like your child to have a school dinner, regardless of whether it is chargeable, you must order before **8.45am** each day or you can book many days in advance. If you book a meal, please do not send your child with a packed lunch as you may still be charged. Please remember to cancel any pre-booked meals if your child is absent. All meals need to be booked and paid for (if applicable) on the School Grid app. If you need any help, please contact the office.

My Clothing - Uniform Supplier

We are delighted to inform you that you can now buy uniform with our school logo on from My Clothing:

St Martin's Primary School – My Clothing

Uniform can also still be purchased from The School Uniform Merchant





About Our Products and Services

- Our cotton is ethically sourced cotton from Better Cotton Initiative (BCI), farmers who use less water and chemicals in cotton production.
- The polyester used in our garments is from 100% recycled plastic bottles.
- · Our Polo Shirts are made to be stain resistant.
- · Our Sweatshirts and Sweat Cardis are made to feel soft and durable
- Our delivery bags are 100% recyclable and made from recycled materials.
- · A wide range of plain garments and accessories for school.
- · Register on our website to receive information about promotions and offers
- We have over 800,000 garments in stock and offer industry leading customer service
- · Financial hardship schemes for school uniform are available
- Our customers rate us excellent on * Trustpilot

sales@myclothing.com

01902 936 388

Measles and the MMR Vaccine

Healthier Futures Black Country Integrated Care System

Measles and the MMR Vaccine

Measles cases in the Midlands are rising. Measles is an infection that spreads very easily and can cause serious problems in some people.

Having the MMR vaccine is the best way to prevent it and protect our communities.

Symptoms of measles include:

- •a high fever
- rash
- cough
- •runny nose
- •watery eyes.

If you have symptoms of measles, stay at home and phone your GP or NHS 111 for advice. Stay away from GP surgeries and A&E departments

Stay off nursery, school, or work for at least 4 days from when the rash first appears.

It's never too late to be vaccinated. You need two doses of the MMR vaccine to be fully protected against measles, mumps, and rubella.

For more information on the MMR vaccine, visit the NHS website

Office Post Box



There is now a blue post box located outside of the main reception doors. Please feel free to put any correspondence you have for the office in this post box such as reply slips, etc. The post box is checked twice daily.

Paperless Communication



A reminder that we are now paperless. The transition has worked very well, so thankyou for working with us on this and using Dojo and our MS forms for communication.

School car parks



We have been receiving a number of complaints regarding parents parking inconsiderately. If you do need to drive to drop off or collect your child please park considerately and ensure you are not obstructing drives, garages or access to roads.

School car parks are for the use of staff and official visitors ONLY at all times. INCLUDING WHEN COLLECTING CHILDREN FROM AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES and NURSERY.

Please find alternative parking away from the school premises When parking, please respect our neighbours by parking considerately and not block driveways or park on double yellow lines.

Key Dates (including term dates for 2024/25)



Please note that we have added in statutory assessment dates for Year 1 phonics, Year 4 multiplication testing and Year 6 SATS for 2024 and 2025. It is vital that your child attends school during this time, in order to take the assessments.

Key Dates

2024/25

SPRING TERM 2025

Monday 6th January - school opens to pupils (no INSET day)

Tuesday 11th February - Parents' Evening 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm

Thursday 13th February - Parents' Evening 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm

Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February - half term holiday

Monday 24th February - Training Day 3 - school closed to pupils

Thursday 25th February - school opens to pupils

Monday 7th April - Years 1 - 6 Bring in a Decorated Egg from Home - Competition

Tuesday 8th April - Rocksteady Concert at 9.00 am

Wednesday 9th April - Years 1 &2 Easter Celebration Event at 9.15 am

Wednesday 9th April - Spring Disco

Thursday 10th April - Reception and Nursery Easter Bonnet parade at 9.15 am and 2.15 pm

Friday 11th April - Year 3 & 4 Easter Celebration Event at 9.15 am

Friday 11th April - Year 5 & 6 Easter Celebration Event at 2.15 pm

Friday 11th April - last day of term - school closes at the end of the day

SUMMER TERM 2025

Monday 28th April - school opens to pupils

Monday 5th May - Bank holiday - school closed to pupils

Monday 12th May - KS2 SATs week for Year 6

Monday 26th May to Friday 30th May - half term holiday

Monday 2nd June - Training Day 4 - school closed to pupils

Tuesday 3rd June - Year 4 Multiplication Testing window (two weeks)

Monday 9th June - Year 1 Phonics Screening week

Wednesday 2nd July - Years 1 & 2 Sports Day at 1.15 pm - 2.15 pm

Wednesday 2nd July - Year 3 & 4 Sports Day at 2.15 pm to 3.15 pm

Monday 7th July - Reception and Nursery Sports Day at 9.15 am and 2.15 pm

Wednesday 9th July - Year 5 Sports Day at 1.15 pm - 2.15 pm

Wednesday 9th July - Year 6 Sports Day at 2.15 pm to 3.15 pm

Thursday 10th July - Year 6 Prom at 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm

Tuesday 15th July - Rocksteady Concert at 9.00 am

Friday 20th July - last day of term - school closes to all pupils at the end of the day

Monday 23rd July - Training Day 5 - school closed

Covid/Infections Reminder

Please do not send your child to school if they have a temperature and are too unwell to be in school. They should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people until the temperature has gone. If your child is well enough to be in school then they should be in school as their education is important to their wellbeing and attainment; we will give you a call if they feel unwell, don't worry!

The latest guidance about what you should do if your child has symptoms will always be on the NHS website (below).

For further information, please visit the NHS Website <u>here</u> or call NHS 119.



Operation Encompass

St Martin's is part of Sandwell's Operation Encompass. This is an initiative that enhances communication between the police and schools where a child is at risk from domestic abuse.

Operation Encompass has been established to help schools provide in-school support to children who have been present at, exposed to or involved in any domestic abuse incident.

We know that children can be significantly harmed, physically and/or emotionally, during these situations, and that it also negatively affects their learning and behaviour in class.

Therefore, as part of the Operation Encompass procedure, and to help mitigate the resulting negative impact, school will now receive a confidential information from West Midlands Police or Children's Services regarding any child or young person has been witness to, or involved in, any reported domestic abuse incident.

Here at St Martin's, we have a dedicated and child-focussed Safeguarding Team. They are specially trained to effectively use the information the Police share, in confidence, and enable the school to provide the right support to any child and their family.

We always endeavour to offer the best support possible to our pupils and believe this will be extremely beneficial for all those involved.

More information can be found at https://www.operationencompass.org/

However, if you have any concerns or questions regarding Operation Encompass, please do not hesitate to speak to a Designate Safeguarding Lead.

