

Chair of Governors Annual Letter

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you all had a wonderful family time throughout the festive season. The atmosphere at the PTA Christmas Fair was certainly that of family. It was lovely to see everyone enjoying the relaxed, festive atmosphere. We have already celebrated Candlemas as the first month of the New Year draws to a close it's been a chance to reflect on the busy year 2019 was for St Mary's.

As a school we have many wonderful achievements and activities to be celebrated this year. Already this term STREAM week was such a busy and creative time with the theme of Sustainability. The fabulous Reception Christmas performances were something to remember along with the Carol Service highlighting what talented children we have.

Reviewing the whole year, it is wonderful to see the arts at the centre of learning at St Mary's. The County Show was a superb example of everyone coming together with their own interpretation of 'Sunflowers', It was a privilege to work with Bob Sutcliffe who inspired the children. The final display was a triumph and attracted a lot of attention at the County Show. The Summer KS2 production of Rock Bottom was a surreal and inspiring performance in the summer heat, especially for the inflatable dinosaur! The KS1 production of 'Jonah and the Whale' was hilarious and highlighted the many talents of our children.

Science continues to be an important aspect of learning and Science week in March exemplified this as well as the STREAM events in Jan 2020. It was fantastic to see children representing the school at the Lego Challenge for the first time producing excellent presentations and problemsolving skills with their robot.

Sport also features highly on the school calendar from the various opportunities and clubs after school, inspiring coaches and many competitions and festivals. This ensures that children can access physical activity at their own level and also compete locally and nationally. The range of opportunities is very impressive from, cross country, football, fitness, rugby, tennis, badminton, golf, netball, hockey, cricket, swimming and many more. We are very fortunate to have the support of QES and Sedbergh Prep who enable us to take part in so many sporting opportunities.

The Geography and History curriculum are not neglected nor is the opportunity to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities. Year 5 took part in a packed residential to York exploring the Vikings and the life of Dick Turpin. The Rochdale visit in Y4 provided a great opportunity to meet with our friends at St Peter's Primary School as well as visiting the church and Neeli Mosque as well as Manchester and Rochdale. Hawes End always is a highlight for Y6 which consolidates their geographical knowledge and mapping skills. There are so many visits, for which your support is very much appreciated. Inspiring visits to Manchester Airport, Blackpool Zoo, Knowsley Safari Park, Kendal Museum are just some of the examples of the range of visits. Finally, the school council went to London and explored London, the Houses of Parliament and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. This was a whirlwind tour but one the children will never forget.

In addition to the many visits we have welcomed many visitors who have been engaging and inspiring to our children. Jenny Graham and Lee Craigie were most certainly welcome and enthralled the children with their stories of their adventures around the world. Equally, Goff Sommers shared his experiences in Antarctica. Linda Ngamlana talked about her school in South Africa and so many parents have shared their talents with us in so many lessons.

It is so important to value our children by ensuring their learning environment is the best it can possibly be. This is crucial with an aging and creaking 1980s building. This year we introduced a

second learning pod, trim trail around the school field, new playground markings and we developed the school office to make the school entrance and office more welcoming and accessible. We have also developed the Early Years area and established storage sheds in the grounds to make equipment more available and easy to reach. During the year it has also been possible to improve the computing technology and infrastructure.

It is also important to look outwards and beyond ourselves. As a result, we continue to support the Community Foodbank in Kendal throughout the year. We have generously donated funds to John's Hospice through the 'Elf Run' as well as Simba Primary School in Kenya. We of course continue to support Red Nose Day and Children in Need.

All of the PTA events contribute to supporting the children in our school now. These have included serving food at the Irish Fleadh, Summer and Christmas fair, film nights and so much more. Thank you to the many people who are continuing to work behind the scenes to support the PTA and to everyone who attends the events and the many businesses who donate to the PTA. The PTA have been very generous with the purchase of £2500 of books for EYFS and KS1, funds for each class, play equipment and other class resources. Many thanks.

As governors we have been active this year in supporting PTA events and importantly moving the school forward with an ambitious development plan to continue to improve the outcomes for the children. We are welcoming new Governors as various Governors retired at the end of the academic year. The governors have prioritised investing in staff, in particular teaching assistants enabling a rich and broad curriculum and supporting children in each class to reduce gaps in learning.

A huge thank you to all staff in school, both teaching and nonteaching who channel all their enthusiasm and energy into school to make St Marys the happy, vibrant place it is. Mr Jones and his team of dedicated and passionate teachers ignite an excitement for learning throughout the key stages. When I speak to children they can tell me so much about the learning journey's they are taking. They tell me of adventures that they have had within a subject with eloquence and rich vocabularies. Our children are very clearly engaged and in control of their own learning. They know how they are learning and how they can reach for the next step. The curriculum that St Mary's offers is interlocked with so many facets of a child's development whilst supporting a positive mental health, Outdoor learning and environmental awareness contributes to this and encourages good friendships, empathy and socially aware children. In a time of global environmental crisis, media images of recent bush fires and reporting of significant global changes in our environment, that cannot be ignored, it is important to give children a sense of enablement and empowerment so they can see how they can help strive towards change. St Mary's curriculum explores this and encourages debate and reflection on current world issues.

A longstanding member of staff Ms Loy, will very much missed having left at Christmas. Her contribution to the Music legacy of our school has been invaluable. We have valued and appreciated her contribution to children with Special Educational Needs. We also have welcomed various staff supporting learning, who are contributing greatly to support our children.

Please find attached to this letter the data for our external tests. Huge congratulations to all staff and children involved for a set of outstanding results.

Many thanks for continuing to support our school and congratulations to everyone involved in making St Mary's a very special place to learn.

Jo Gill, Chair of Governors

EYFS – Children achieving GLD (Good level of Development)

St Mary's School
79%

Year 1 Phonics

St Mary's School	National
95%	85%

Key Stage 1 SATS – Those children achieving the expected standard

	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
St Mary's School	73%	73%	87%
National	75%	69%	76%

Key Stage 1 SATS – Those children achieving the higher standard

	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
St Mary's School	23%	13%	27%
National	25%	15%	22%

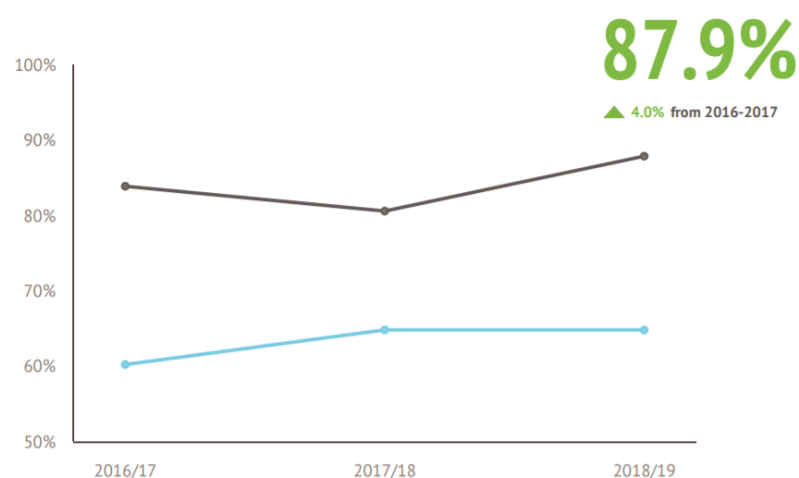
Key Stage 2 SATS – Those children achieving the expected standard

	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	SPAG
St Mary's School	97%	88%	97%	97%
National	73%	78%	79%	78%

Key Stage 2 SATS – Percentage of children achieving the higher standard

	Reading	Writing	Mathematics	SPAG
St Mary's School	59%	16%	47%	41%
National	27%	20%	27%	36%

Overall Outcomes for Pupils – KS2



Key	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Trend
School	83.9%	80.6%	87.9%	▲ 4.0
National	60.2%	64.8%	64.8%	▲ 4.6
School vs. National	23.7%	15.8%	23.1%	

