



St Mary's C of E Primary School

Lansdown View, Timsbury, Bath, BA2 0JR

Executive Headteacher: Mrs M Parsons NPQH. M.A. B.Ed (Hons)

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1st July 2025

Dear Parents/Carers,

St Mary's September 2025 Class Arrangements

As we prepare for the start of a new school year in September, children will be spending **Thursday 3rd July** with their new class teacher.

At the end of term we will be saying 'goodbye' to Mrs Harrison and to Mr Smart. Mrs Harrison and Mr Smart have been dedicated to the school since joining us, but they have both decided to pursue other opportunities. Mrs Harrison will be starting a childminding business and Mr Smart will be moving to Norton Hill Primary School. We would like to thank these members of staff for their contributions to St. Mary's. We wish them all the very best for the future.

Mrs Munro will be spending more time as part of the EYFS team in place of Mrs Harrison. We are also in the final stages of recruiting an EYFS apprentice to ensure we have sufficient staffing to meet the ever increasing demand for places in Hedgehogs Nursery. Following our 'outstanding' Ofsted inspection this year we will have a 16% increase in pupil numbers compared to last year.

Year 3 and year 4 will continue to be taught as a mixed-age class in September. Due to increasing pupil numbers, we will also have a mixed year 4 and year 5 class. This means that some of year 4 will be a part of Foxes Class and some of year 4 will be a part of Lions Class. Foxes will be taught by Mrs Brown and supported by Mrs Stelling. There will be 25 pupils in Foxes. Lions Class will be taught by Mr Daniels and supported by Mrs Purnell. There will be 29 pupils in Lions Class. As always, the most important factor in determining the success of a class is the quality of teaching. Please be assured that excellent teaching will be the focus of every class at St.Mary's. Please see page 2 of this letter for further explanation about mixed age classes.

KS1

Reception	(Ducklings)	Mrs Gillard and Mrs Munro <i>Mrs Summers</i>
Year 1	(Rabbits)	Mrs Roberts and Miss Tolfree <i>Mrs Thomson</i>
Year 2	(Badgers)	Miss Heath <i>Miss Rhymer</i>

KS2

Year 3 & 4	(Foxes)	Mrs Brown <i>Mrs Stelling</i>
Year 4 & 5	(Lions)	Mr Daniels <i>Mrs Purnell</i>
Year 6	(Eagles)	Miss Woods and Miss Tolfree

We wish our leavers the very best of luck for their exciting next steps and thank them for their contributions to St. Mary's.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Jamie Thomson
Head of School

Michelle Parsons
Executive Headteacher



Mixed Classes at St.Mary's

At St.Mary's, our Pupil Admission Number (PAN) is 30. In a budgetary sense, schools usually work on an average class size of around 30 pupils with no more than 30 in an infant class (apart from in very exceptional circumstances). At St.Mary's in 2025-26, we will have just under 155 children from Reception to Year 6, which is a 16% increase on our pupils numbers from last year. We will have an average of 22 pupils per class. A mixed-age class is a class in which there are children who are from more than one-year group within the same classroom. For 2025-26, we will be mixing two classes: Foxes (year 3 and 4) and Lions (year 4 and 5). We have taken great care and consideration in this decision. There is absolutely no evidence to suggest that being in a mixed-age class has any detrimental effect whatsoever on the education of children in that class. For a school of our size, having at least one mixed class is very normal. There will be opportunities for year 4 to be taught as a single year group throughout the year.

Mixed age classes have the following benefits

- There are increased opportunities for flexibility in groupings, enabling learners to work with the appropriate ability, regardless of age.
- Children are viewed as unique individuals; a mixed age class lends itself specifically to this approach.
- Mixed-age classes encourage a spirit of co-operation where learners are more likely to support each other than compete.
- Giving older learners the chance to support younger learners socially builds their confidence and leadership skills. The younger learners also benefit as they see their older peers modelling positive, mature behaviours.
- Older children model more sophisticated approaches to problem solving, and younger children are able to accomplish tasks more effectively because of the modelling by older children. This dynamic also increases the older child's level of independence, confidence and competence.

Challenges and Solutions

Teachers of mixed age classes face the challenge of responding to a wide diversity of learners within their classroom - this is the norm in any primary classroom and high quality teaching and learning successfully addresses the full range of diversity.

Teachers will skilfully weave the curriculum together to cater for all learners, creating a bespoke experience that is tailored to the class and the individuals within it. Areas of learning are regularly revised and revisited in English and Maths - most themes having significant overlap between year groups. This is the case for the majority of the Maths and English curriculum. Where there is no overlap of content, specific year group objectives will be planned and delivered separately. Foundation subject expectations are set out over a Key Stage, with the additional flexibility to deliver content earlier or later, based on the learners' needs.

How do we achieve the best outcomes? High quality teaching every day!

- Learners in each age group engage in learning tasks appropriate to their level of learning, as appropriate.
- Flexible grouping is skillfully used: learning is flexibly organised in the whole class and includes adult-led groups, individuals within groups, collaborative groups, and individuals under the supervision and knowledge of the teacher.
- Formative assessment is used well: To observe and diagnose how a learner is learning and is intended to improve teaching and learning.
- Opportunities created for working with single age groups: where this is appropriate, both socially and academically.