

Our Headteacher has inspired the school staff and pupils with the picture book 'You be You'; our reception area is decorated, like the book, with a colourful mural of fish swimming in a shoal and each individual fish is the work of a pupil. Each fish is special, colourful and unique, just like our children, but they are part of a shoal, all swimming in the same direction, supported and valued. If our pupils at St Mary's are fish swimming in a shoal, then the nurturing and sustaining habitat they swim in is what makes St Mary's a special place to be!

Our School Environment

St Mary's staff, PTA and parents work hard to create an inspiring and welcoming school with excellent facilities which are well-maintained. Children enjoy twice weekly swimming lessons from Easter to October in our outdoor, heated onsite pool; Forest Schools area onsite with campfire and trees to climb and swing on; Outdoor Eco-classroom powered by wind turbine and solar panels; Extensive playing field and playground with 'Pirate Ship' and 'Trim Trail'; Quiet St Mary's Garden for reflection and quiet activities; Early Years' Garden for growing vegetables, playing and exploring their world as well; New Library with newly-stocked books and seating - all children visit every week and can take books out to enjoy; Outstanding Early Years & Foundation Stage.

The school environment extends beyond the boundaries of the school site as teachers make use of all that the local area has to offer: the RSPB at Pulborough Brooks, the River Arun, Roman archaeology, St Mary's Church and more.

Our School Curriculum

The curriculum at St Mary's is the spiralling strand of seaweed that is the habitat of our shoal; continually developing and flowing, inspiring and bespoke, it engages our children with so much more than the National Curriculum alone; tailored to the needs of our children and set in the landscape in which they live; vertical theme strands rise through the school including 'Water', 'Belief', 'Exploration and Innovation' and half-termly topic and subject work is connected to these strands so that cross-curricular links can be made and earlier learning is reinforced. Children are immersed in a vocabulary-rich environment and the school is engaged with the 'Oracy 21' project to encourage depth of spoken language to support this: 'if you can't say it, you can't write it'!

Our staff are encouraged to pursue professional development so they can incorporate best practice and new ideas; they work hard to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all children, regardless of need. A high value is placed on the wider curriculum, so there are many opportunities for children to enjoy drama, art, PE and music. Lots of exciting experiences are welcomed onto the school site so that children can visit a planetarium, learn to play an instrument, meet an owl or train with an athlete without even leaving the premises! The curriculum is extended with a range of clubs as well that encourage children to excel.

Our School Community

Our shoal of fish swims with an extensive network of support; teachers and the wider school staff are dedicated to the well-being and learning of the children at St Mary's and continually strive for improvement in all they do through professional development opportunities and a culture of learning from each other. Every child and family may need some extra help during their time with us and we have a fantastic SENDCO, an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant, Play Therapist, Articulate provision and skilled teaching assistants. We offer wrap-around care with 'Earlybirds' before school and 'Roosters' after-school club. Our PTA fund-raises tirelessly for enhancements to the school environment such as the swimming pool and their school discos, film nights and Summer Fair with

colour run, all of which are highlights in the school calendar. Our governors are a strong team who are engaged with strategic school development, oversight and monitoring as well as supporting the everyday life of the school at grounds working parties, school worship and parental events. Our relationship with St Mary's Church is fundamental to school life; class groups visit the church for worship and Father Paul is a frequent visitor once a week and leads Eucharist in school.

The school ethos speaks of establishing a secure foundation for each child so that they can flourish – this they can do in our shoal; a treasured individual who is part of our team.

Governor's Task Group

March 2022