



# The Friends of St Mary's

*"It's fair to say that we are experiencing the most significant development opportunity in the school's history."*

It is undoubtedly an exciting time to be joining St Mary's. We are in the midst of a period of major investments having secured over £5million pounds in grants over the last three years. Some of that has already been invested with the balance allocated for use between now and 2020-and you can read more about that overleaf.

Underpinning all of this exciting news is the work of the Friends of St Mary's. Led by Chair Tony Davies, the Friends have been supporting the school for almost 20 years, making a huge difference to the education, spiritual welfare and opportunities for the thousands of pupils who have passed through our school.

We are proud of our past, grateful for the present and extremely excited about our future. Now it's your turn to experience the St Mary's community and we hope that you will wish to become a Friend of St Mary's too.

## A message from the Chair

It is my privilege to Chair the Friends of St Mary's. My own children were educated here many moons ago and I have continued to be a supporter of the school. Our focus has always been on both the immediate and the future needs of pupils, teachers and the very fabric of the school. Overleaf, you can see some of the things that have been delivered directly by the funds that the Friends have contributed, sometimes with support of grants.



Our official role is to assist the school in raising funds and much of that comes from the generosity of parents who make a monthly contribution by standing order. The vast majority of families choose to do that; some even continue after their child has left the school! That speaks of community and reflects the culture and values so important to us all. We do not take that generosity lightly and prayerfully consider how best to invest those funds.

We are thankful to our contributors because We absolutely could not have delivered so many enhancements without the support. There is an incredible opportunity available to us and we wish for everyone to catch the vision, to feel part of our journey and to share our enthusiasm. Everyone is welcome to join in.

TONY DAVIES - Chair, The Friends of St Mary's

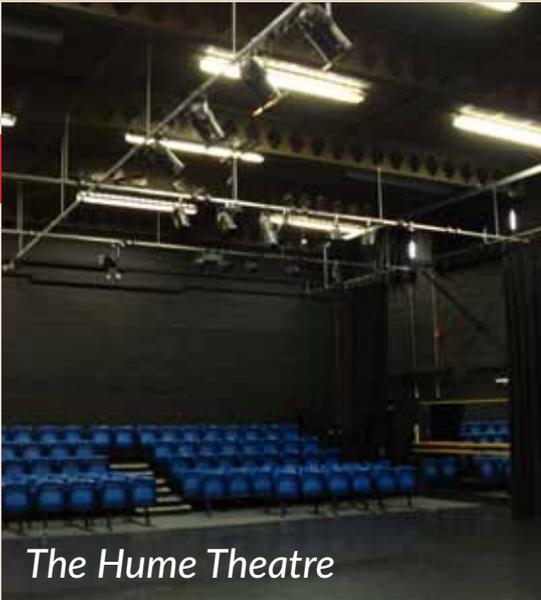


*Good chemistry between us. Find out why the new science labs are making people happy....*

# PAST

## The best of Friends

Over the last 20 years more than a million pounds has been raised through the generosity of the Friends, parents and supporters of the school. Here are just a few examples of what they have delivered....



# PRESENT

One of the most valued improvements in recent months are newly refurbished science labs that give students of all ages a vastly improved learning experience. We asked Doctor Bentley and some of her Year 7 students to tell us about the difference that the cheque donated by the Friends has made...

We popped in to Doctor Bentley's Year 7 lesson to find out the reaction to the new labs.

**Dr Bentley** *It's made teaching science a more pleasant experience because the whole lab is laid out well for experiments and learning. I think the pupils feel engaged and valued. You can tell from their interactions in class.*



**Michelle** *Inspirational, heart warming and welcoming! It's helping me enjoy science.*



**Conrad** *It's helping my studies. Before, equipment was often broken which was frustrating sometimes. Now everything is perfect.*



**Natalia** *My biggest memory of the old labs was the wobbly tables! Now I feel able to fully engage with science and it is encouraging to have new facilities.*



*“The staff and students at St Mary’s are world class. As governors, we are committed to making the facilities first class too.”*



*Qualified success: As Chief Scientist for the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, Gino knows a good lab when he sees one.*

As someone with a long career in the Pharma industry I think I am qualified to describe our new labs as excellent. British scientists have been at the forefront of the industry for decades and our new resources will help our young people to add to that list of achievements.

As a Parent Governor and a huge advocate of developing the school, I applaud and appreciate the work of the Friends and hope you feel that you want to become one too. They work hand in hand with the Parent Governors to move the school forward and we are looking to accelerate and expand our ambitions. The time is right, demand for places at the school is high and the need is obvious.

Results, pupils and teachers are outstanding. There's been some amazing improvements in recent years but there is much, much more to be done if we really want to have a first class environment for our first class pupils and teachers. They deserve them. An outstanding school needs outstanding facilities.

We offer a warm welcome to everyone who participates in our community. If you're new to St Mary's, I believe you'll quickly see that it is an outstanding school. "Outstanding" is a word I use a lot when I talk about the school. I think we have outstanding parents too!

GINO MARTINI - Parent Governor

*Having heard about the past and the present, what does the future have in store?*

# FUTURE



*K BLOCK SEPTEMBER 2018. An impression of our fully refurbished facility that will provide 10 extra classrooms.*

Dear Supporters of St Mary's,

What an exciting time to be a part of our school! We want everyone connected with St Mary's to feel part of our vision and to be confident that we are investing wisely, prayerfully and gratefully. Our ability to do that comes from the continued generosity of parents, governors, Friends and the Diocese and it is my prayer that you share our enthusiasm for all the blessings we are receiving.

We have used the theme of the past, present and future in this leaflet and that also reflects the time line for support and commitment from our community. We have come such a long way together and we simply cannot deliver our plans without you.

Hopefully you already have a sense of the overall Development Plan and of course we will keep you up to date but in describing the future, I want to talk to you about your role and the ways in which we need your help more than ever.

Let's take the ten classrooms in K Block as an example. Ten refurbished classrooms will be opened in September –and a further ten brand new rooms in February 2019 as part of our plans for the Victorian Building.

Sounds wonderful until you understand that we literally will have "rooms". No doors, no lights, no desks - no paint on the walls! It is the responsibility of "voluntary aided schools" to raise the funds for any and all equipment for those classrooms. Indeed, as those two sets of classrooms represent the culmination of a £5.1 million overall investment, we are mindful that we are required to fund 10% of that ourselves. Quite a challenge.

Our plans do not end in 2019. We have ambitious ideas and we will keep communicating and inviting you to be involved. I give thanks to God for His blessings, and to every person that has helped us in any way.

ANDREW CELANO Headteacher

## How you can help us

**There are a number of ways in which you can help us:**

**Prayer** – above all things, pray for God's guidance for all of us at the school.

**Finance** – the majority of parents generously support us each month and those contributions have provided so much.

**Time** – There is room for everyone to contribute to the life of the school. Do you have time to volunteer?

**Fundraising ideas** – we will need to increase our activities in this area. Some ideas are fairly obvious and we will be holding things like quiz nights to raise funds but perhaps you have thoughts and ideas.

**Sponsorship and advertising** – we are open to the idea of carrying appropriate adverts in our newsletter or perhaps you have access to a Corporate Reward scheme? Some organisations reward staff by offering them charitable donations.

**Contact us** - We welcome ideas and suggestions on how best to secure our development future. Please drop an email to [a.celano@stmarys.net](mailto:a.celano@stmarys.net)