



SEND



bulletin



Spring



Term

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**Each half term, this bulletin will highlight what we are doing to make St Mary's even more inclusive for our children with SEND. It will also signpost you to resources and information that can support you and your family at home.**



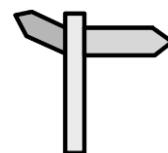
Bulletin Highlights

In our '[Frequently Asked Questions](#)' section, we have explained Masking & how we can work together to support children. The key messages are:

- No one is to blame for a child masking
- Parents are the experts in their child & school professionals have training, expertise & experience in supporting Neurodivergent children in school settings
- Communication, collaboration, understanding & respect between families & school professionals is key to positive outcomes for children
- A child develops trust through home & school following through with agreements made
- All parties should seek & engage with professional support & advice
- Children who mask want to please so a culture of positivity & praise is essential

In our '[Resources and Support](#)' section, we share the following:

- First steps to understanding masking in your child workshop
- Navigating the Maze Workshop
- Free parent/carer webinars from Parent Kind
- Cygnet Autism Support
- Masking questionnaire on website



For more useful resources and information, please visit the [SEND Provision](#) page of our website.



SEND



Training



and News

### **'Behind the Mask' Training:**

We hosted Parent Voice Surrey on 20<sup>th</sup> January for a parent workshop about masking. Thank you to the 5 parents who attended. You can see the training powerpoint attached to the Bulletin email or on the SEND section of St Mary's website. Teachers and TAs attended 'Behind the Mask for Schools' training.

### **Speech & Language Audit:**

On Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January, a specialist Speech & Language Therapist Kate Green carried out a Speech & Language audit in a Key Stage 1 and a Key Stage 2 Class, alongside Mrs Tongue & Ana Smith (ND advisor). Kate said "Thank you for a very uplifting visit. There was so much to celebrate and it even gave us new ideas!" This informative audit gave us a couple of targets to focus on to improve our SALT Support further through Ordinarily Available Provision further. This was part of the PINS project we are participating in this year (Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools).

### **Literacy For All:**

Miss O'Brien and Miss Barnes attended Literacy For All training offered by STIPS in January. This is an evidence-informed intervention to develop reading skills, which will help us to ensure no child is left behind.

### **Is the Total Communication Approach effective for children with Speech, Language & Communication Needs?**

Mrs Tongue co-researched a project at Meath School which has been published in Child, Language, Teaching & Therapy Journal. You can read it for free here:

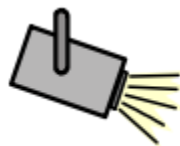
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/02656590251315598>

### **STIPS (Specialist teachers for Inclusive Practice):**

We have been very lucky this half-term to have had 2 visits from STIPS. Firstly, a solution-focused teachers' meeting, around supporting writing needs. Secondly, a behaviour-focused clinic for teachers. Next half-term, our STIPS teacher Hannah will be working with our TAs, ensuring everyone is confident to meet the needs of our Neurodiverse pupils.

### **One Page Profiles:**

Staff have been working with SEND children this half-term to create or update their one-page profiles. These have or will be shared with you – please feel free to add your views so we can work collaboratively!



# SEND Spotlight

## SEND Staff Spotlight



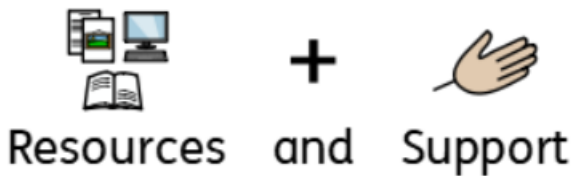
**Miss Frances O'Brien**

- I have been teaching at St Mary's since September 2015 – almost 10 years!
- I have taught in Year 3, 4, 5, 6 and currently in Year 2.
- I took on a new role last academic year to support Mrs Tongue with SEND in class. My role is to help implement resources, teaching strategies and activities to support SEND children across the school.
- I have helped introduce: individual timetables, visual, child friendly SAR targets, Clicker for writing and the use of Widgeits.
- I also have a role linked to Wellbeing and introduced the whole school to Zones of Regulation, Restorative Justice approaches, sensory boxes in each class and created the Sensory Room.
- I am very passionate about SEND and wellbeing and continue to attend training/read new materials where possible.

### Neurodiversity Advisor

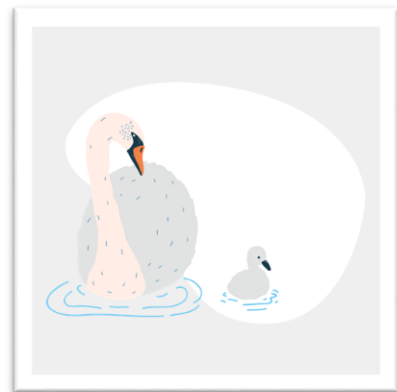
This year we are very grateful to be receiving support from Ana Smith, a Neurodiversity Advisor for L-SPA. Ana is working closely with our school to facilitate the PINS Project, attending site visits regularly, organising support and sharing resources with us. Thank you Ana!





**Cygnets Autism Support** (Free Support Programme)

<https://barnardos-parenting.org.uk/>



### First Steps to Understanding Masking in Your Child Workshop



This is a **FREE** online workshop designed to provide parents and carers with an understanding of the concept of your child's masking. This course is aimed at parents with children and teenagers.

#### What will I learn?

- Explore the different ways and environments in which your child may mask.
- Discuss some expert views on masking – is it a useful strategy for your child to use?

For course dates, more information and to book your place please click on [this link](#) or scan the QR code



Web : [www.surreycc.gov.uk/familylearning](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/familylearning)  
Email : [family.learning@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:family.learning@surreycc.gov.uk)  
Tel : 0300 200 1044



#### Free parent webinars on:

- EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance)
- From Meltdowns to Mindfulness
- Helping your child communicate confidently
- Coping tools for children's big emotions
- How to talk so kids will listen
- Helping your child achieve in school
- Helping your child cope with exam stress
- Nurturing healthy online behaviour
- Helping your child succeed in KS2 English
- Helping your child become an independent learner



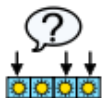
<https://www.parentkind.org.uk/your-pta-expert/parent-webinars>

## Navigating the Maze – free online workshop for parents/carers of Neurodivergent children:

<https://www.mindworks-surrey.org/advice-information-and-resources/neurodevelopmental-needs/navigating-maze-toolkit-strategies-parents-neurodivergent-children>



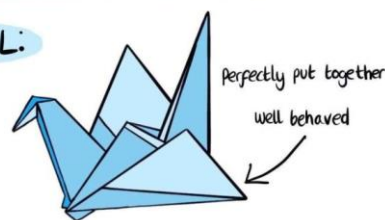
Masking questionnaire is on the [SEND Provision](#) page of our website.



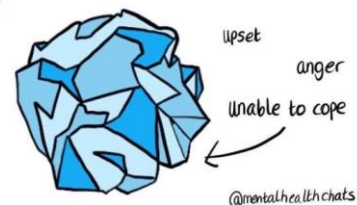
## Frequently Asked Questions

### What masking looks like

IN SCHOOL:



AT HOME:



**My child masks at school & explodes at home. How can we stop this?**

What home can do	What school can do	What everyone can do
Masking is exhausting – ensure your child gets plenty of time to rest/relax and sleep	Be <b>flexible</b> & make reasonable adjustments e.g. arrangements for arrival at school, uniform, lunches	Seek & engage with professional support & advice
Have a simple, clear & <b>consistent</b> routine before & after school – prepare children for any changes	Use visuals to lower anxiety e.g. visual timetable, social stories, whoops symbol for changes	Don't blame the child, home or school for the child's masking
Respect alone/quiet time & don't overload your child with questions about their school day – accept they may not want to talk!	<b>Understand</b> all behaviour is communication & try to work out triggers/patterns behind behaviours	Communicate & collaborate <b>respectfully</b> & honestly
Be prepared with a favourite snack for after school & allow plenty of time for movement!	Offer strategies to support sensory regulation e.g. movement breaks, sensory tools & safe spaces	Follow through with agreements made
Be <b>patient</b> , allow time & don't be disheartened if your child goes through a rocky patch	Use strategies to support children's emotional wellbeing e.g. a Worry Box, Zones of regulation, check-ins	Contribute to a culture of positivity & praise; be understanding, empathetic & <b>kind</b>