



Mary's Christmas Newsletter 2017



At Mary's, we have enjoyed an exciting and successful 2017, including developing our services for children and young people, opening our new community gym, and renovation work.

At Mary's, we work across two sites: St Mary's Crypt and the Neighbourhood Centre. Hear from our Bookings Manager about our groups, and from our Premises Manager about the building development work taking place.



In Mary's Meeting Rooms, both in the Crypt and the Neighbourhood Centre, over 50 groups use the spaces weekly, including children's dance and sport classes, support groups, and parent and child groups. Visitors to

the venue enjoy how light, calm, and serene the spaces are. This year, former Labour MP the Rt. Hon. Lord Boateng was guest speaker at the Ghana School Aid group.

Yvonne talks about her role: "I feel as if I am a Jack of all trades—officially I am the room hire administrator, but I am that and more—making bookings, getting rooms ready, and welcoming people at reception."

In 2018, the team is looking forward to welcoming a new role, which will see more reception cover, including help at the busy weekends. *Bookings Team*

2017 started with the completion of our beautiful new gym, as part of a project developed by young people, situated in the Neighbourhood Centre, which is open for membership. A joint team from Mary's and St Mary Islington Church are working together on the Heart of Islington project to complete renovation work on the Neighbourhood Centre. Work has taken place on the roof, and we are very pleased with the new windows which update the look of the building, as well as providing much better insulation. Over the Christmas and New Year period, the main door will become automated, a new floor will be laid in the Johnston Room, and the Sports Hall floor will be deep-cleaned, repaired, and resealed. A major refit to improve the lift* in the Church and Crypt building will also take place the first two weeks of January.

Be sure to take a look at the improvements taking place! We hope they enhance your experience of the facilities and spaces.

Kate Tolson, Premises Manager

*please note that the lift will be out of action during the works, with entry for buggies via the north Crypt fire exit, and no access for wheelchair users.



Mary's Community Gym

Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
£10 joining fee
Standard member £15/m
Subsidised member £7.50/m
Visit: www.marys.org.uk/gym



Mary's Youth Club 2017 highlights

- ★ Opening of Mary's Gym—a project developed by our young people with Sport England.
- ★ Celebrating 130 years of London Youth.
- ★ BBC Women's Hour came to speak to us, with some of our young people's views being heard on the radio.
- ★ Working with all of our Co-Producers, young people, volunteers, and other partners.
- ★ The young people hosted a Talent Show.

In 2018, we look forward to continuing development of 'MaJYC' - Mary's Junior Youth Club, which runs Tuesdays 4-6pm. This transitional work supports young people between primary and secondary school. It began in partnership with St Mary's Primary School and has grown to now include young people from four primary schools. MaJYC mirrors what is happening in the wider youth club themes, and young people have begun to successfully transition between the two. MaJYC will expand in the new year to also run on a Monday. *Sally Baxter, Youth Worker*



Young people at MaJYC

If you are interested in **volunteering** with Mary's Youth Club, please contact Volunteer Co-ordinator Tony Tran about our varying roles:

tony.tran@marys.org.uk

: 07495 605521



Hear from our Youth Development Manager, about the four values at the heart of our youth work:

Mary's Youth Club's **four values** shape all we do, from activities to long-term strategy.

Share We share many things—most obviously the building; for example, on a Tuesday afternoon, you will see that there are many people, young and old, from all walks of life, sharing the Neighbourhood Centre. Young people attend Mary's Youth Club for different reasons, but are united around our core values. When a member introduces and welcomes a newcomer, they are in a sense sharing the youth club. We want young people to be generous and considerate; to be good at developing friendships, sharing new experiences, and making the most of opportunities. Our Social Action programme is designed to facilitate young people giving back to the community, so young people experience the value of caring.



Grow Young people learn so much at school, with focus on good grades often coming at the cost of growth in other areas. Youth clubs enable young people to grow confidence, develop good networks, and foster their curiosity. At Mary's, there are no set standards of achievement: we help young people grow on their own terms, in their own time. For some, this means being mentored by a volunteer to develop skills and insight to the world of work; others may need additional support while experiencing difficulty in their life. Whatever support they need, our members can be sure that Mary's Youth Club will be with them, standing shoulder to shoulder. →

→ **Learn** Young people often tell us they do not feel prepared for real life, coming to Mary's to learn new things. Our Skills for Life programme covers many things, from cooking to voting.

Mary's Kitchen teaches young people to cook, along with real life learning about shopping and budgeting. We support young people in learning how to obtain ID documents, NI number, bank accounts, and

registering to vote. We travel around London so young people see different parts of



the capital, not just where they live or go to school. We want young people to recognise the benefits in learning from life, and develop good judgement; we want young people to be explorers, discovering the world around them, and considering their place in it.

Enjoy Young people should have the chance to be happy, but are up against the odds, with no income, little sense of control over their lives, and often marginalised simply for being young. It is important that young people have fun, with Mary's ensuring time and space for this to take place. To make growth and development an everyday experience, we make it engaging and fun; to learn about the world and each other, we share meals and go away as a group. We know that having fun, with friends, helps make us happy. We are committed to 'being there' for all young people, and our doors are open.

Aston Wood, Youth Development Manager

Youth Club thank yous! 📣

Angie | Glynys & Nic | Harriet | Agatha | & other members of St Mary Islington | LDN Youth | London Village Network | Matthew at MiCycle | Euphorium Bakery | Camish | | SMMA | EGA | Wimex | The Peel Institute | | Metropolitan Police | Every Voice | 3 | and all of our volunteers and supporters

For all of your time, support, and donations



Mary's Play Scheme operates during school half terms, Easter, and for four weeks during the summer, enabling parents to continue working, and giving children aged 6-12 years a wide range of interactive and creative

activities, both indoors and outdoors. Over 100 children attended during summer, with up to 54 children attending at any one time. October's play scheme supported 50 Islington children, and four children from neighbouring boroughs, enabling 45 parents to stay in work, and one parent to begin work. *Sharon Ellis, Childcare*

Hear from some play scheme attendees:

"I come to play scheme because my mum and dad work. It is very fun and enjoyable, and I want to join the youth club next." Shireen, 10

"I have been coming for three years because my dad works. I like the activities and have lots of fun." Lucas, 9

"I like coming to play scheme because we get to go on fun trips and I've got friends." Ines, 10



Some good news for Mary's Play Scheme:

London Borough of Islington will continue to provide funding to run the Play Scheme for at least the next calendar year, enabling costs for the Play Scheme to remain as low as possible, and ensuring parents and carers can continue or start work or study.

'Good' news for Mary's Pre School and Play Scheme!

In November, Mary's Pre-School had an Ofsted inspection—we are pleased to report that we have been rated as 'Good'. Our particular strengths were special educational needs, safeguarding, and meeting personal, social and emotional needs. Congratulations to our hard-working childcare team!



Mary's Pre School has had a busy year, welcoming 32 children in the autumn term, with a further eight joining in January 2108. Earlier this year, the preschool said goodbye to one of our team who moved on

to pastures new—we have successfully recruited another level 3 staff member who we look forward to welcoming to the team in 2018.

The preschool team has developed and run two parent workshops supporting parents with information about childcare and development. Parents found them really useful, particularly preparing children for school; we will continue to run these once a term, incorporating ideas from parents. *Sharon Ellis, Childcare Manager*

Parents say...

"Thank you very much for the kind welcoming and the help and support. Not just to my daughter but for me personally too!"



Congratulations to our Early Years apprentice Alison Palmer on completing her childcare level 2 and 3 qualification over the last two years.

Thank you from the Pre School!

A special thank you to Barbara from St Mary Islington congregation for her hard work collecting Sainsbury's vouchers for us.

Mary's needs new Trustees!

Do you have a heart for working to support the local community, and a head for sitting on the Mary's Board of Trustees? Mary's was created by St Mary Islington to run community work based in the Crypt and Neighbourhood Centre. We are looking for 1-2 people with time, energy, and enthusiasm to join our current eight trustees who meet about 8 times a year. We are particularly keen to recruit new trustees with experience and expertise in education and working with young people, fundraising, and running charities. It would be great if we could find new trustees from the congregation of St Mary's. If you are interested, please contact Chair of Trustees Helen Mylam:

📧 Helen.Mylam@blueyonder.co.uk

A message from our CEO 🗨️

In 2017, we have worked with hundreds of children, young people, and community groups. The best part for me was seeing and hearing some of the interactions between Mary's staff and service users. They were passionate, caring, vibrant and transforming. I am looking forward to carrying on these conversations in 2018.

Balazs Csernus, CEO



Thank you for your support in 2017!

If you would like to donate to Mary's, please visit our website: 🌐 www.marys.org.uk

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We look forward to seeing you in 2018.