

St Mary's Newsletter

Spring Term – Friday 27th January 2023

Telephone 01799 523384

Email: info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk

Website: www.stmaryssw.org.uk



Attendance Weekly - 92.7%

Attendance Year - 94%

Let Your Light Shine... as You Grow Matthew 5: 15-16

Friendship

Trust

Truthfulness

Compassion

Perseverance

Respect

Dear parents, carers and friends of the school,

Welcome to this week's newsletter. This week we have included some information about the Indoor Athletics tournaments which took place at Dame Bradbury's school on Tuesday (for Year 3 & 4 pupils) and Wednesday (for Year 5 & 6 pupils). There is also some e-safety advice and information about attendance, and a further request for parents and carers to volunteer to come into school to talk to our pupils about their careers (in the Careers Advice section), as well as a further plea for Reading Volunteers—thank you if you have already been in touch. Don't forget the Diary Dates at the rear of the newsletter.

Finally, please do enjoy the Class Updates—where you can see what our children have been learning about in class this week!

Indoor Athletics tournaments:

On Tuesday and Wednesday this week, many of our Key Stage 2 pupils visited Dame Bradbury's school to take part in two separate Indoor Athletics tournaments. Over 70 boys and girls from our school were involved, competing against local schools which included: **St Thomas More, Radwinter and Dame Bradbury's** themselves. There were a large number of races—which included the Over and Under Race (which involved squeezing through tunnels and jumping over hurdles), the Obstacle Race (which required the children to use complex 'High Steppers' and Speed Bounces) as well as the 2x1, 2x2 and 4x1 relays and even the Parlauf Relay (which is the longest speed and stamina race). The children also took part in a large number of field events - Standing Long Jump, Standing Triple Jump, Vertical Jump, Javelin, Chest Push and Speed Bounce. Understandably the children were quite tired at the end and they had certainly been put through their paces. I was incredible impressed with how hard the children worked—they certainly displayed our 3 Key Words of: **Safe, Effort and Respect** throughout the tournament and their teamwork and behaviour was outstanding throughout. St Mary's pupils won quite a few of the events, reflecting all of the practise that had been going on during PE lessons leading up to the tournament.

Thank you to Miss Driscoll for organising and preparing the team—everyone had a great time and certainly did the school proud.



Attendance

September — February 1/2 term			
Percentage Attendance	Hours of education lost	Weeks missed at school	School days missed
100%	0	0	0
97%	15	0	3
95%	25	1wk 1dy	5
90%	50	2wks	10
86%	70	2wks 4dys	14
80%	100	4wks	20
75%	125	5wks	25
70%	145	5wks 4dys	29
60%	194.5	7wks 4.5dys	39.5
50%	247.5	9wks 4.5dys	49.5

We will be writing to you at half term with your child's mid-year attendance record. The overall attendance at St Mary's is currently 94.3%. Our school target is 96%.

We know children get ill, especially at this time of year with coughs and colds being spread in the classes. If your child is able to have prescribed medicine and come to school we would encourage you to do this. All medication must come via the school office in its original box and a medical form needs to be completed before a member of staff can administer medication. We are not allowed to administer eye drops or ear drops.

If you do decide to keep your child home due to illness it is really important you call the school office for

EVERYDAY that your child is off by 9am.

The NHS has a helpful page on school illnesses which can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Careers Advice:

As discussed in last week's newsletter...At St Mary's we are always eager to talk to our lovely pupils about all of the different careers and professions, so that the children can begin to think about their own future jobs—when they are older. Over the last few years we have had parents, carers and friends of the school, as well as members of the local community, pop into school to talk to the children about their jobs—including local police officers, nurses and more! St Mary's would really love to hear from you if you would be willing to come in to talk to the children about your own job so that you can share your own passion and also your path into your chosen career. If you feel that this is something that you would be interested in doing, please contact the school office on info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk and we will be in touch to explain more and (hopefully) arrange you to come into school to share your experiences with our pupils.

Vacancy

We currently a vacancy for a **Kitchen Assistant**. If you are interested and would like to apply you can find more information on the website [here](#).

Are you a screen zombie?

This weeks online safety guide focuses on how NOT to be a screen zombie. It's not always easy to tell if you've been spending too much time on your device. The guide takes a look at how to tackle a range of potential risks such as mental wellbeing, screen addiction and grooming.

For more advice or guidance please visit: www.nationalcollege.com

A GUIDE ON HOW NOT TO BE A 'SCREEN ZOMBIE'

It's not always easy to tell if you've been spending too much time on your device. Mobiles phones, tablets, games consoles, TVs; the list of devices you might have access to seems never-ending and switching between them can be seamless. However, too much time on your device could lead to certain problems and could be an indicator of an addictive habit. It's important therefore that you try and manage your screen time as much as possible and avoid becoming a 'screen zombie.'

TAKE CARE OF YOUR BRAIN

Spending too much time on social media, watching YouTube or playing games online can result in you becoming a screen zombie. This can affect your mood, how much sleep you get, how you perform at school and how you behave around others. Limiting your screen time will keep you alert, keep your mind focused and help to look after your own mental health and wellbeing.



BE PRESENT, NOT A ZOMBIE

Screen zombies often find that they spend a lot of time alone in front of their tablet or their mobile phone and reduce the time they spend with their friends or talk with their family. Zombies often lack communication skills. Always try to limit your screen time as much as possible – there's so much fun you can have with others!



SCREEN-FREE BEDROOMS

Keeping your phone in your bedroom means that it can be tempting to check every notification you get. Your phone could be the last thing you see at night and the first thing you see in the morning. This can contribute towards poor sleep and a lack of focus the next day. Try to keep your phone out of your bedroom or turn off all notifications before bedtime. This will mean you'll get a good night's rest and be ready for the next day.



DON'T GET TRAPPED INSIDE

Screen zombies usually find that they spend a lot of time inside as they lose interest in other things that don't include their device. It might seem obvious, but meeting your friends outside or doing outdoor activities like playing sports, trampolining, camping or just going for a walk are all healthy replacements for screen time and can help keep your mind fresh and active.



ZOMBIE-FREE MEALTIMES

Mealtimes can be seen as a good time to sit down, relax and switch on your tablet or phone as you eat your food. But it can also mean that you're not interacting with others, sharing jokes at the dinner table or just talking about your day. Keep mealtimes for family time. Eating your food and staring at a screen means you're turning into a zombie.



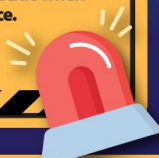
BEWARE OF OTHER DANGERS

Spending too much time on your device and online can increase your chances of potentially encountering other online dangers. This could range from viewing inappropriate or harmful content to online bullying, grooming or fake news. Controlling how much time you spend online will reduce your risk of exposure. If you do see anything that makes you upset or if you're concerned about contact with others, always report it to a trusted adult.



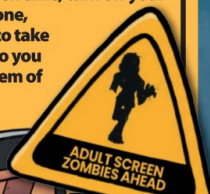
BEWARE OF SNEAKY TRICKS

A lot of apps and games use certain ways of keeping you online and using their platform for long periods of time. This can include simple things like unlimited scrolling on a newsfeed, 'streaks' or uncovering hidden levels. Be mindful of how much time you're online and try to remember you're in control. You decide when you've had enough, not your device.



SAVE YOUR PARENTS!

Even though your parents will often be the ones telling you to limit your screen time, turn off your tablet or switch off your phone, sometimes they will forget to take their own advice. So it's up to you to make sure you remind them of the dangers of becoming a screen zombie!



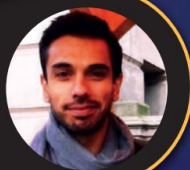
UN-ZOMBIFY YOURSELF

If you think that you've already become a screen zombie, then don't worry, it's never too late to get help and support from your friends and family. Talk to your parents if you feel you've become addicted to your device, try to understand why and work with them to help you limit your screen time so that you can leave your zombie character behind.



Meet our expert

Pete Badh is content specialist with over 10+ years in research and analysis. He has written various expert pieces around online safety for children and parents and previously worked in a specialist role for the police, contributing work which was pivotal in successfully winning high profile court cases and writing as a subject matter expert for industry handbooks.



National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Reading Volunteers (or as we call them... Champions!)

Thank you to all of the parents, carers and friends of the school who have kindly volunteered to come into St Mary's on a weekly basis to hear our children read. Over the years this is something that has proven hugely successful at St Mary's, as the children enjoy nothing more than sharing a book with a friendly place- plus, it helps us to ensure that children are progressing as fluent readers— and they get to practise the key skills that they have been learning in school.

Thank you so much to the parents who have already volunteered and are currently reading with our pupils in school. We are always on the hunt for more parents to join us so if you are interested and you have some availability please email the school office on info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk. Ideally, we would like to have at least 2 or 3 Reading Champions per class – from Reception to Year 6. If you have any time in the week that you would be willing to spare and join us as a 'Reading Champion' then please email Xenia in the school office. Please note that you will need to have had a DBS check completed by the school or already have a transferable DBS. Thank you so much in advance for your help, we really appreciate your time.

I hope you enjoy the class updates as well as this newsletter—have a lovely weekend!

Kind regards

Mr C. D. Jarmain

Headteacher of St Mary's Church of England Primary school, Saffron Walden

Diary Dates



Week Commencing

Monday 23rd January

Tuesday 24th January

Wednesday 25th January

Friday 27th January

- Sportshall Indoor Athletics tournament at Dame Bradbury's School

- Sportshall Indoor Athletics tournament at Dame Bradbury's School

- Holocaust Memorial Day Service at St Mary's Church
Year 6

Week Commencing

Monday 6th February

Wednesday 8th February

Friday 10th February

Monday 13th February to

Friday 17th February

Monday 20th February

- Children's Mental Health Week

- Road Safety Training (Reception & Year 5)

- Safer Internet Day

- Half term holiday

- Pupils return to school (from 8.30am)

Week Commencing

Monday 20th February

Friday 24th February

Tuesday 28th February

Thursday 2nd March

Thursday 2nd March

Monday 6th March

Friday 31st March

Friday 31st March

Monday 3rd April to

Monday 17th April

Monday 17th April

- One Plan Meetings

- Book Looks (8.30am to 9.00am and 3.15pm to 4.00pm)

- Parents/Carers Consultations

- Parents/Carers Consultations

- World Book Day

- World Book Day Workshop

- Easter Service in St Mary's Church (all parents/carers welcome)

- Last day of Spring term

- Easter break

- Teaching staff INSET Day

** new items added are in blue*

