

# St Mary's Newsletter

Spring Term – Friday 11th October 2024

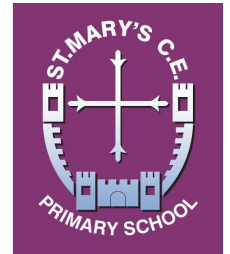
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Attendance Weekly 93.3%

Attendance Year 96.1%



*Our motto: Let Your Light Shine... as You Grow inspired by Matthew 5: 15-16*

**Compassion**

**Friendship**

**Perseverance**

**Respect**

**Trust**

**Truthfulness**

Dear parents, carers and friends of the school.



## **Harvest Festival and Foodbank**

On Monday this week we all went to St Mary's Church to celebrate the importance of Harvest for our annual Harvest Festival Service. Reverend Jeremy talked about the meaning of Harvest and how pupils in our school 100 years ago would have actively involved in this process and would even have been sent home early for the Summer holidays to help the local farmers to harvest all of their crops and other produce! No lovely trips abroad then, I'm afraid! Members of the Worship Council also helped our Worship Leader, Mr Clarke, to introduce different parts of the service. Each class shared some of their harvest art and craft work with the rest of the school, parents and carers and friends of the school who had come along to watch. Children also shared some lovely and thoughtfully written poems and prayers. I am delighted to say that this beautiful work is now on display in the school (see accompanying photos). I am sure you will agree looks absolutely amazing!

Thanks also to everyone who donated items for our Harvest collection (see photos). All of these items were picked up on Tuesday, with our new Worship Council helping to take the bags to the van which were immediately taken to the Uttlesford Foodbank to be distributed to those in need — another excellent example of 'Courageous Advocacy' in action here at St Mary's!



## **School Council GROW 10!**

### **Grow 10—School Fundraiser:**

A HUGE well done to all of the pupils who are cracking on with their Grow10 Fundraisers! As of lunchtime today, our amazing pupils have already

managed to **raise 45% of our Fundraising target of £2,100, with £959 already pledged!** WOW! Thank you to everyone who has helped their pupils with the creation of their fundraising concepts and helping them to put them in motion. There are still 6 weeks to go—so very exciting and many pupils have managed to smash through their personal Grow £10 target, raising considerably more already!

In addition to the amazing pupils who we mentioned in last week's newsletter we would like to give a massive St Mary's shout-out to the following children who are finely honing their entrepreneurial skills by doing the following

fundraising activities:

**Ranveer Rattan (in Year 3)** is raising money by running a mile every day after school! Ranveer has grown his initial £1 from the school to a whopping **£162.50**

**Phoebe Goddard (in Year 1):** has been cleverly writing letters to businesses and has already raised £70!

Other fundraiser's in the pipeline are: **Blake Colgan's** car washing (which has already started collecting funds) and **Kathryn Mynott's** home-made calendars.

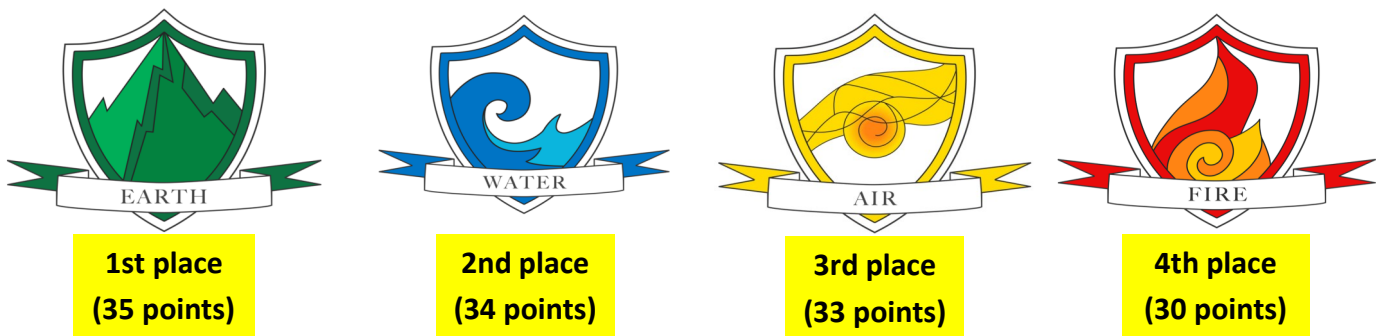
Quick reminder: don't forget to **tick Gift Aid** to ensure even more of your fundraising money goes to the school and that you **link your child to their class page** so that their fundraising goes towards their class total—and will show up on the fundraising leader board. **Don't worry if you have already signed up your child and they aren't linked to their class page—we will keep a running total on our office excel spreadsheet to ensure each class total is accurate and no-one has been missed off. Keep up the great work everyone! If you would like to find your child's class fundraising page these are saved on the school website. Please click this link to go straight to the 7 class fundraising pages. Good luck!**

**Remember: the closing date for the Grow10 fundraiser is 29th November—so 6 weeks to go!**

Next week we will give the you a run down of our leader board, so you can see who has raised the most so far and how each class is doing and some other fundraising examples!

### House triumphs!

It was especially tight this week with our House points, with only 4 points separating 1st place and 4th place! In 1st place this week with 35 points was Earth House (green); in 2nd place with 34 points was Water House (blue); in 3rd place with 33 points was Air House (yellow) and in 4th place with 30 points was Fire House (red). Well done everybody! In two weeks we will reveal the overall team points, just before the half term break!



### Stars of the week:

Well done to the following pupils who were our Shining Stars this week:

**Leah**—always working diligently in all her lessons

**Lily**— always trying hard and doing the right thing

**Chloe**—for always working hard and being a pleasure to teach

**Marcel**—for always contributing to class discussions

**Addalyn**—for her best effort across all subjects

**Matthew**—for working really hard on his reading

**Ruby**—for always being respectful to the adults in the class

**Joshua**—for always showing safe, respect and effort

**Teddy**—for his dedication and improved confidence in ready

**Daniella**—for her focus and huge progress in maths

**Barney**—great focus and confidence in reading aloud in reading comprehension

**Rose**—for challenging herself with her writing and extending her sentences

### Year 6 - Local Football tournament

Some year 6 pupils attended a local football tournament at Herberts Farm on Wednesday this week. They put in a sterling effort showing sheer determination and displaying excellent team work. Congratulations especially to Toby Connell who was St Mary's Man of the Match!

Thank you to Mr Kemp who kindly came along to help referee and manage the side and thanks to Mr Coldwell for his extra support! Finally thank you to Miss Driscoll for organising our team.



## Smartphone Free Childhood

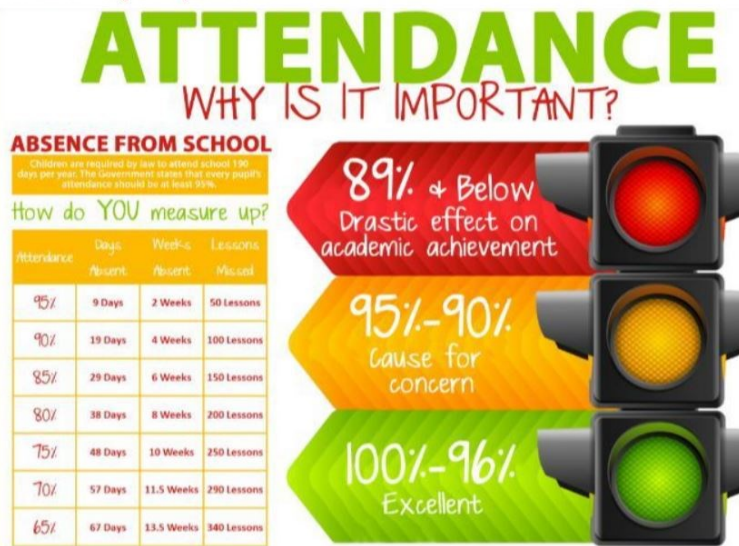
You may have heard of an emerging movement in the UK called 'Smartphone Free Childhood' (Their mission is here: [Mission — Smartphone Free Childhood](#)). Smartphone Free Childhood are raising concerns regarding smartphone use amongst our children. They have produced a summary of possible harms that I have attached to this email in order to provide you with as much context for our concerns as I can.

We appreciate that for some of you with older children this may be difficult to enforce. However, we still strongly recommend that parents take the following actions to safeguarding their children:

- Keep smartphones out of bedrooms.
- Agree smartphone free time to support social and family interaction.
- Monitor the apps that your child is downloading and using.
- Ensure that they are not accessing large, student generated groups.
- Where possible, exercise curiosity about your child's smartphone use.
- Encourage your child to speak about any concerns they have.



Attendance – Why is it important?



## Attendance Reminder

Parents are legally responsible for making sure their child receives a suitable full-time education. Good school attendance starts with close and productive relationships between schools, parents, and pupils, so it's important schools and families work together. If you have concerns about your child's attendance you should contact the schools attendance team so we can work together to support you and your child. For further information on attendance please see the attendance policy on the schools website: <https://www.stmaryssw.org.uk/policies/>

Essex County Council have useful information for parents and carers regarding attendance: [www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/school-attendance-and-absence](http://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/school-attendance-and-absence)

## Individual/sibling school photos

Just a reminder that children will be having individual/sibling photos on **Monday 14th October**. Please could all pupils come to school wearing their school uniform, including a school sweatshirt/cardigan.

Children in Year 1 and Year 3 will not be doing PE on Monday. Please could children in Year 2 bring a PE kit to change into.

Have a enjoyable weekend, see you on Monday.

Warm regards

*Mr C. D. Jarman*

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

Grow10 Toy shop sale Monday 14th October at 3.15pm

Please come and support Libby, Emily, Maise and Aoife from Year 4 on Monday who will be selling bracelets, bookmarks, stationary, dolls and Halloween decorations.



**Friday October 18th**

**3.15pm**

**St Mary's primary school**

Come and support Lily who is selling  
Homemade bird feed to raise money for new  
Computing equipment for St Mary's primary school

**SMALL 50P**

**LARGE £1**



## Xmas4schools—CHRISTMAS CARDS

For those of you who may not recognize this concept, it involves the children making a design of their choosing on a special template, which parents/carers can then choose to turn into and purchase greetings cards, gift labels and other products. Many families choose to design Christmas cards or gift labels, but it does not necessarily need to be a Christmas design. It could be something much more general; some have made nice thank you cards, which can be used for all occasions.

**You can collect a card/gift design template from the School Office.**

For every product families choose to order, the School will receive £1.

**The deadline to return the artwork is 9.00am on Friday 25th October.** Please take all design directly to the school Office. Please note that the card design needs to fill the whole page and if you are sticking anything on, make sure it is stuck securely. See the attached photo for more tips.

Many thanks and happy designing!

**Xmas4schools™**

**ARTWORK INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS/ORGANISERS**  
Please read these instructions carefully to ensure you get the best results:

**DO** ✓

- Bright, colourful Christmas designs that fill the A4 paper produce the best results.
- Use paint, felt tip, crayon, inks and coloured pencils.
- Use collage.
- Use **glitter glue**.
- Make sure any text is bold, legible and kept **AWAY** from the edges of the A4 paper.

**DON'T** ✗

- Please **DO NOT** use sprinkle glitter (glitter glue is fine) - it has a tendency to fall off and end up on other children's artwork and our scanners!
- If you are doing collage, please **MAKE SURE ALL ITEMS ARE FIRMLY STUCK DOWN TO STOP THEM FALLING OFF**
- **Avoid metallic finishes** over large areas.
- **Pale coloured pencils** on a white background do not reproduce well.

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**PLEASE FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE BELOW FOR THE BEST RESULTS**

**DO** ✓



• You can colour right up to the edges, but any important drawings or wording needs to be kept at least 1cm away from the sides of the paper.

**DON'T** ✗



• Please also **DO NOT** draw a border unless you want it to appear on the final product.



## Kids & smartphones – what’s the big deal?

When children first started getting smartphones a decade ago, there was no research about their impact. Now there is, and it’s overwhelming.



### HARMFUL CONTENT

Smartphones act as a gateway to pornography, violent and extreme content. Often kids don’t seek them out but are exposed to them via algorithms and messaging apps. Once seen, these things can never be unseen. 90% of girls and 50% of boys say they’re sent explicit content they didn’t want to see.



### ADDICTION

Tech companies intentionally make apps addictive, because the more time we spend, the more data they harvest, the more money they make. By leveraging dopamine circuits, they trigger brain responses akin to slot machine gambling. 1 in 4 young adults show signs of behavioural addiction to smartphones.



### ACADEMIC DISTRACTION

The average teen receives 237 smartphone notifications a day – one every few minutes – making focusing on schoolwork hard. Studies show that excessive smartphone use has negative impacts on academic performance. Children at schools with effective smartphone bans get GCSE’s 1-2 grades higher.



### GROOMING

Sites like TikTok, Snapchat and Roblox are used by sexual predators to target children with their first smartphones, blackmailing them into sharing sexual content. Sextortion is now the fastest growing crime against teens. Since 2022, there has been a 66% rise in ‘self generated’ sexual abuse imagery of children under 10.



### CYBERBULLYING

Disagreements between pupils used to stop at the school gate, now they follow kids wherever they go, 24/7. Young people who experience cyberbullying are twice as likely to attempt suicide and self-harm. One in six teens report being cyberbullied in the past month, according to the World Health Organisation.



### MENTAL ILLNESS

Rates of depression, anxiety and suicide in young people have spiked globally since 2010, when children first began getting smartphones. The first generation to grow up with smartphones are now adults – data shows that the younger they got their first smartphone, the worse their mental health today.



### OPPORTUNITY COST

Underpinning all these harms is one that is potentially the most significant of all. For the first time in human history, children are spending more time on devices than they are playing – an activity crucial to our healthy development. Smartphones are experience blockers, distracting children from engaging in the real world. The average UK 12-year-old now spends 29 hours a week – equivalent to a part-time job – on their smartphone. This leaves little time for the real world activities and relationships that enable us to learn the essential life skills we need to transition into adulthood. The average daily time that teens spend with friends has plummeted by 65% since 2010.

Join the grassroots parents movement to protect childhood from Big Tech

[www.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/join](http://www.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/join)

For all links to stats references see [www.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/the-problem](http://www.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/the-problem)



# Diary Dates



## Key Dates for the Autumn Term 2024:

### October

Monday 7th October

Tuesday 8th October

Friday 11th October

Monday 14th October

Monday 14th October

Friday 18th October

w/c Monday 21st October

Friday 25th October

Monday 28th October to

Friday 1st November

Monday 4th November

Tuesday 5th November (8.30am)

Thursday 7th November

Friday 8th November

Tuesday 12th November

Thursday 14th November

Monday 18th November and

Tuesday 26th November

Wednesday 4th December

Friday 6th December

Tuesday 10th December

Thursday 12th December

Monday 16th December

Thursday 19th December

Friday 20th December

- **Black History Month**
- Parent and Carer Coffee Morning 8.45am-9.15am
- Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church at 9.30am
- Bags2School pick up date
- **Grow10 Chocolate Apple Sale—3.15pm**
- **Individual/Sibling Photos**
- **Grow10 Year 4 Stationery sale—3.150pm**
- **Grow10 Bird Feeder Sale—3.15pm**
- One Plan Meetings take place (for two weeks)
- **Light Day—non uniform day (wear colourful clothes)**
- **Whole School Diwali workshop**
- **Year 5 Book Sale**
- **Half term**
- **INSET training day for staff members**
- **Pupils back to school (from 8.30am)**
- **Parent/Carer book look 8.30—9.00 and 3.15—4.00**
- **Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church 11.00am**
- **Parent/Carer Consultations (School Hall) 3.15pm-6.00pm**
- **Parent/Carer Consultations (School Hall) 3.15pm-6.00pm**
- **Reception 2025 Open Morning 9.30—11.30**
- **Reception 2025 Open Morning 9.30—11.30**
- **PTA Pantomime**
- **Christmas Jumper Day**
- **EYFS & KS1 Nativity at St Mary's Church 6.00pm - 7.00pm**
- **Flu Immunisation**
- **Christmas lunch**
- **Carol service at St Mary's Church 9.30am—10.30am**
- **Last day of term—1.30pm**

*Please note all new or changed dates are in Blue.*

