

St Mary's Newsletter

Spring Term – Friday 5th September 2025

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Attendance Weekly 96.8%
Attendance Year 96.8%

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, **welcome back to St Mary's**. I hope you all had a wonderful break – whether you went on holiday, played games together in the lovely Summer weather, read some books, or just enjoyed some rest.

A new school year is like opening a brand-new book. The pages are blank, and we get to fill them with our own stories – with learning, fun, and friendship. Each of our pupils has the chance this year to try new things, make new friends, and show kindness to others. This year, we'll keep learning together, and we'll all be amazed at how much we can do by the end of the year. In our first assembly back together on Wednesday we talked together about our School Values and reminded the children that we are a place where we:

Work hard, Try our best, Show kindness, Respect each other.

If we remember these, our school will be a happy place for everyone.

Over the course of this academic year we'll have exciting lessons, fun activities, as well as trips or special visitors. There's so much to look forward to. So let's begin the year with smiles, courage, and kindness. **Let's make this the best year yet – full of learning, laughter, and friendship. Welcome back, everyone – it's going to be a brilliant year!**

Farewell and Welcome—Staffing Changes!

As we begin a new chapter together, we would like to take a moment to both express our gratitude and extend a warm welcome to some new and leaving members of staff.

First, we say a heartfelt thank you to the members of staff who have moved on after the Summer break. Mrs Flack, Ms Brighten and Mrs Dumitrescu have taken up staffing positions in schools closer to where they live whilst Mrs Norman has left us to pursue teaching training opportunities. To these three members of staff: your hard work, dedication, and contributions have left a lasting mark, and you will be truly missed. We wish you every success in the exciting journeys that lie ahead.

At the same time, we are delighted to welcome our new colleagues who have recently joined the team. **Mrs Tagg** joins us as our new Year 4 class teacher. **Miss Sykes, Mrs Dowling and Miss Woodward** join our Learning Support Team/Midday team. Furthermore, **Mrs Potter (Year 3 class teacher) and Ms Nicholson (Reception class teacher) have increased their teaching commitments and will be teaching their classes full time.** We look forward to the fresh ideas, energy, and perspectives you will all bring, and we're excited to see how you will help us continue to grow and achieve great things together.

To those leaving—thank you for everything. To those arriving—welcome aboard!

The Importance of Wearing the Best Uniform

A school uniform is more than just clothing – it is a symbol of unity, pride, and discipline. When students wear their uniform neatly and correctly, it reflects the values of the school and shows respect for the community they are part of.

Uniforms help create equality among students, reducing distractions caused by fashion trends and allowing everyone to focus on learning. They also encourage a sense of belonging, reminding us that we are all part of the same team, working together toward success.

Wearing the best version of our uniform – clean, well-kept, and properly fitted – builds confidence and shows that we take pride in ourselves and our school. It teaches responsibility and prepares us for future situations where appearance and presentation matter. Our uniform is not just a set of clothes, but a mark of identity and school spirit. By wearing it with pride, we show respect for ourselves, our teachers, and our school community.

Please support the school by ensuring that your child always wears the correct school uniform. I am delighted to say that it

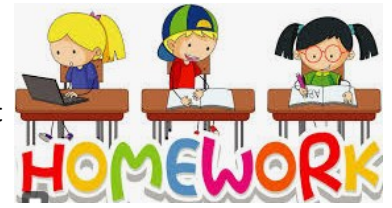


has been one of our smartest starts to the school year that I have experienced since joining St Mary's— let's keep up the great work! A particular well done on the smart footwear and correctly coloured hair 'wear' - it's been lovely to see so many purple clips, scrunches and hairbands!

Thank you so much for your support with this matter.

Upcoming Changes to Homework

We would like to inform you that there will be some upcoming changes to homework at our school. Following feedback from children, parents/carers (in our recent survey) and staff, we are reviewing our current approach to ensure that homework is meaningful, manageable, and supports learning.



Our aim is to strike the right balance: reinforcing essential skills, encouraging a love of learning, and giving families time together without homework becoming overwhelming.

We will inform you of the details of these changes in next week's newsletter—watch this space!

School Attendance:

Regular school attendance and punctuality is vital for building a strong foundation in learning and development. Each day in the classroom provides children with opportunities to strengthen core skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics, while also developing social confidence and resilience. Being punctual in the mornings ensures that children start the day calmly, feel settled, and do not miss out on important introductions to lessons or activities.

When children are absent or late, they can quickly fall behind and may find it harder to catch up, which can affect both their academic progress and enjoyment of school. By supporting good attendance and punctuality, parents help their children form positive lifelong habits, stay engaged with their teachers and classmates, and make the most of every valuable learning opportunity at St Mary's.



A Healthy Breakfast

A healthy breakfast is one of the best ways to set children up for a successful day at school. After a night's sleep, breakfast provides the essential energy and nutrients the body and brain need to focus, learn, and play. Research shows that children who eat breakfast are more alert, concentrate better in lessons, and have improved memory and problem-solving skills. Skipping breakfast, on the other hand, can leave children feeling tired, irritable, and less able to engage with their learning.

Breakfast is also important for overall wellbeing. A balanced meal in the morning helps regulate mood, supports growth and development, and encourages healthy eating habits that can last a lifetime. Simple options such as wholegrain cereals, fruit, yogurt, or toast can make a big difference. By making time for breakfast each day, parents give their children the best possible start, ensuring they arrive at school ready to learn, thrive, and enjoy the day ahead.



PE Timetables:

Apologies but we have had to make some more changes to the PE timetable—please see below the latest timetable we will be following starting next week.

Reception - PE Friday (starting 19th Sept)/Forest School Thursday (starting 18th Sept)

Year 1 - PE Tuesday/Forest School Thursday (starting 11th Sept)

Year 2 - Monday and Friday

Year 3 - Monday and Friday

Year 4 - Monday and Thursday

Year 5 - Wednesday and Friday

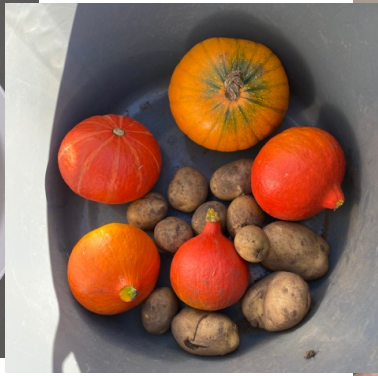
Year 6 - Tuesday and Wednesday

Have a great weekend.



Mr C. D. Jarman

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



ECO GARDEN

As you may have seen, the Eco garden has turned into a jungle over the summer holidays, despite not being watered! Mrs McInnes is on the case and will get the children and new eco committee members to help tidy it all up ready for the autumn term.

We were thrilled to discover lots of marrows, onion squash, lettuce, chard and wonderful sunflowers growing that the children had planted last academic year. The potatoes were also still there thankfully - we were worried the bindweed had engulfed them but they were happily growing deep underground! Y1 will have the pleasure of digging them up on Thursday at forest school and then they will bring them home for you to enjoy.



We shared out the produce amongst our community, including Max from Chater's whose daughter Eliza helped plant and water the gorgeous courgette plants which grew into monster marrows! He expertly fashioned them into a delicious dish with olives and feta, ready to serve in his restaurant, yum! It was smiles all round as grateful neighbours delighted in the veggie gifts from St Mary's. Today Mrs Wulfse and Mrs Tickle were happy to take on the challenge of cooking an onion squash for the first time - let us know how you get on ladies!

If anyone would like to help with the running of the eco garden at any time - either weeding, watering or even helping with a club then please let us know.



CHILDRENS TENNIS LESSONS

ST MARYS PRIMARY SCHOOL

MONDAYS 3.15PM-4PM
AUTUMN/WINTER TERM

AGES 5-11 YEARS OLD

14 SPOTS
LIMITED SPACE



AGILITY/BALANCE/CO-ORDINATION

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED IF YOU HAVE YOUR
OWN RACKET BRING IT!

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Diary Dates

Key Dates for the Spring/Summer Term

Monday 1st September	-	INSET DAY
Tuesday 2nd September	-	INSET DAY
Wednesday 3rd September	-	First Day back for Pupils (Year 1—Year 6 Only)
	-	Reception Stay and Play sessions with Parents/Carers
	-	- Group A (9.30—10.30)
	-	- Group B (11.00—12.00)
Thursday 4th September	-	Reception Staggered starts begin
Thursday 11th September	-	First Forest School session for Year 1
Monday 15th September	-	First full day for Reception (8.30am—3.15pm)
Thursday 18th September	-	First Forest School Session for Reception
Friday 19th September	-	Year 5 Swimming starts (10 weeks)
Thursday 25th September	-	Yrs 3&4 Football Festival (8.50am —12.30pm)
Tuesday 30th September	-	Little Wandle Workshop—9.00am or 6.00pm
Wednesday 1st October	-	Year 3 Saffron Walden Museum visit (9.00-12.00pm)
Monday 6th October	-	Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church (9.30am)
27th—31st October	-	HALF TERM BREAK
Monday 10th November	-	Remembrance Service at St Mary's Church (11.00am)
Tuesday 11th November	-	Parent/Carers Consultations (3.30pm—6.30pm)
Thursday 13th November	-	Parent/Carers Consultations (3.30pm—6.30pm)
Wednesday 4th December	-	FOSM Panto
Friday 5th December	-	FOSM KS2 Disco
Monday 8th December	-	EYFS/KS1 Nativity at St Mary's Church (6.00pm)
Wednesday 10th December	-	EYFS/KS1 Scoot Fit
Friday 12th December	-	FOSM Christmas Fair (3.00pm—4.30pm)
Monday 15th December	-	Year 5 Parent/Carers Residential Information Meeting (5.00pm)
Wednesday 17th December	-	Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas Lunch
Friday 19th December	-	Carol Service at St Mary's Church (9.30am)
	-	End of Term—1.30pm Finish



Please note all new or changed dates are in blue

