

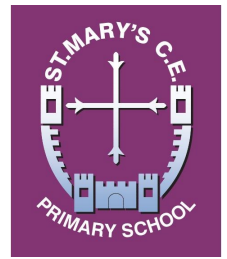
St Mary's Newsletter

Spring Term – Friday 19th September 2025

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Attendance Weekly 96.7%
Attendance Year 97.2%

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,

Assembly Focus on Good Table Manners

Earlier this week, I delivered an engaging and thought-provoking assembly centred on the importance of **good table manners** — a skill that, while often overlooked, plays a crucial role in showing respect and consideration for others. This is an assembly that I have delivered at the start of every academic year, since I joined the school in September 2019. I was impressed with how much the pupils had remembered from my previous assemblies, even the youngest pupils! The assembly began by highlighting how table manners are not just about etiquette, but about kindness, patience, and shared responsibility. From remembering to say “please” and “thank you”, to waiting until everyone is served before starting a meal, the children were reminded how small actions can have a big impact.



I used a number of simple and relatable examples from school lunches to explain why good manners matter — not just at home or in restaurants, but in our dining hall every day. Pupils were encouraged to reflect on how they could make mealtimes more pleasant by:



- Sitting properly and using all items of cutlery correctly
- Chewing with mouths closed
- Speaking politely and not interrupting
- Helping to tidy up and showing appreciation to those who prepare and serve meals

The assembly concluded with a reminder that **good manners help us build a respectful and caring school community**, and that how we behave at the table often reflects how we treat others in general.

Since the start of the term I have been incredibly impressed with our pupils’ excellent table manners— the vast majority of our pupils are now using all of their cutlery correctly—even in KS1. I even told them that we have the best table manners in the whole of Essex! Well done everyone—keep up the great work at home!

We encourage families to continue this conversation at home, using mealtimes as an opportunity to reinforce these values and celebrate positive table manners. We still have a very small number of pupils in KS2 trying to use their fork to eat every item of food at lunchtime (without using a knife to cut up their food). I am sure you will agree that we don’t want any of our pupils to choke by eating big chunks of food. So, let’s continue working together to make every table — at school and at home — a place of kindness, respect, and connection.

ECO Garden update by Mrs McInnes, Forest School and Eco Garden Leader

You will be glad to hear that the eco garden is looking a lot tidier thanks to some enthusiastic weeding! The children are able to get in and out easily and loved their forest school session last week when they dug up all the potatoes and took them home to cook. Did you enjoy them? My daughter said they were the tastiest potatoes ever!

Thanks also to Rosie from Cultivating Change who helped out this week by cutting back our herb area and advised on the best way to pot up the sage which we are intending to donate to the sensory garden. She gave us lots of tips for gardening through the autumn/winter including some fun ideas for the classroom



Harvest appeal

Uttlesford food bank have reached out to us at St Mary's, asking for donations this harvest festival. With the cost of living crisis, they've had a huge amount of strain on their supplies. They do fantastic work in the community and we'd love to help them continue to do so!



Harvest appeal

Last year, Uttlesford Foodbank provided food to 2,735 adults and 2,333 children in our local community. This required almost 65 tonnes of food to provide these people with emergency support. But, unfortunately, more and more people in our community are going without food - and the food bank has seen need increase by 5% in the last six months alone! Our school's help and assistance will be invaluable in providing support to people that need it.

We ask for you to please donate if you are in a position to do so. Please see further in the newsletter for some ideas of items they are in so need of. Please start to bring in any items from Monday 22nd September to the school office.

Year 6 to 7 secondary admission round for September 2026

The new secondary school admission round opened on Friday, 12 September 2025, for parents of current Year 6 children to apply for a secondary school (Year 7) place for September 2026.

The statutory national closing date for applications is 31 October 2025. Applications can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions 99% of parents in Essex applied online last year.

All of the application information is available on the website above and the website also has a copy of the Secondary Education in Essex 2026-27 booklet which contains details of all secondary school admission policies.

Bag2School

Following the last two years' successes with this initiative we will again be raising funds by collecting your old clothes. We will be sending bags home next week with your children together with a letter, please fill these and return no later than 30th September.



Mental Health Day—10th October

To mark World Mental Health Day on Friday 10th October, our school will be taking part in a variety of activities that focus on positive mental health and wellbeing.

Children are invited to **wear something yellow** to help raise awareness. This could be as simple as a pair of yellow socks, a ribbon, a wristband, or even a full yellow outfit—whatever they feel comfortable wearing.

Please note: Parents and carers **should not feel the need to spend any money**. Simple touches of yellow that you already have at home are perfect.

Thank you for supporting us as we promote positive mental health and wellbeing across our school community.



Free parent and carer training for keeping young people safe online

Parenting in the digital age? This Sexual Health Week, get the tools you need to talk to your kids about relationships, sexual health, and online content.

Join Essex Sexual Health Service two free training sessions, including a special talk from The Two Johns. Spaces are limited, so find out more in the link below and sign up today!

Free virtual awareness sessions – open to Essex residents and professionals working with young people

Talking Safety: Empowering Young People *Wednesday 17 September 2025 - 6:30pm to 7:30pm* - For parents, carers, and anyone working with young people in Essex - Delivered by Essex Sexual Health Service in partnership with Risk in the Community - **Register here:** <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/9830a117-af81-4d35-8bf1-aa7b4b52f883@37c354b2-85b0-47f5-b222-07b48d774ee3>

Know the Online Risks (with The Two Johns) *Thursday 18 September 2025 - 8:00pm to 9:30pm* - For all parents, carers and professionals supporting young people across Essex - **Register here:** https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KtTs6WgJQOyiQc6228mixg#/registration

House triumphs!

These are the results for this week: in 1st place with 69 points was Fire House; in 2nd place with 63 points was Water House, in 3rd place with 60 points was Air House and in 4th place with 56 points was Earth House. Well done everybody!



**1st place
(69 points)**



**2nd place
(63 points)**



**3rd place
(60 points)**



**4th place
(56 points)**

Stars of the week

Blake—for always getting involved in class discussions

Nkosi—for his perseverance and challenging himself in Maths this week

Florence—for always showing safe, respect and effort

Blossom—for her hard work in her maths

Percy—for being a fantastic class mate and helping others

Poppy—for her beautiful handwriting in English this week

Mabel—for working hard and being a kind and supportive peer

Lexi—for excellent effort in Maths and English with great focus

Ana—for settling so well and for joining in in class

Edie—for effort, focus and respect towards others and myself

Charlie—for always taking part in class discussions and putting in lots of effort to his work

Ranveer—for an excellent attitude to all learning and giving great contributions to class discussions



Have a lovely weekend.

Mr C. D. Jarman

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

Coffee Morning—Monday 13th October

Parents and Carers are warmly invited to join us for a **Coffee Morning on Monday 13 October, 8:30-9:30 am** in the school hall.

This is a relaxed opportunity to meet key members of our school community, including:

- Mr Chris Jarman, Headteacher
- Mrs Robinson, Inclusion Lead
- Mrs Crocker, Welfare and Support Officer
- Jess Dowling and members of the Friends of St Mary's
- KT Haynes, Team Leader from Stort Valley School Trust
- A MIND practitioner

Come along to enjoy a cup of coffee or tea, ask questions, and find out more about the support and activities available for our children and families.

We look forward to seeing you there!



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/wmhd

Harvest appeal



Help support your food bank this Harvest

In the month leading up to Harvest, the food bank will provide over 160 food parcels for local individuals and families facing hardship.

Donate food



Donate an item or two from our shopping list, ensuring we can provide food for people facing hardship in your community.

Donate money



Help to cover the costs of storing and distributing food, as well as developing sustainable projects.

Shopping list

Tinned Meat & Fish

Cooking & Pasta Sauces

Tinned Beans & Soup

Tinned Veg & Fruit

Coffee & Tea

UHT Milk

Cereal & Oats

Long Life Juice & Squash

Microwave Puddings

Noodles & Rice

Instant Mash & Stuffing

0300 102 7980 (option 1)
uttlesford.foodbank.org.uk

Registered Charity in England & Wales (1176230)





Coffee Morning

MONDAY 13TH OCTOBER

8.30am—9.30am

SCHOOL HALL

Everyone Welcome!

Come along and have a chat with Mr Jarmain (the Headteacher), Mrs Robinson (Inclusion Lead), Jo Crocker (Welfare and Support Officer), KT Haynes (Stort Valley Schools Trust), Jess Dowling and members of the Friends of St Mary's team and a MIND practitioner



BAG 2 SCHOOL



Our next Bag2School collection
has been arranged for

Tuesday 30th September 2025

*Any questions please ask |
the School Office*

What to include in your BAG2SCHOOL plastic bag:



Clothes



Paired shoes



Handbags



Hats



Bags



Scarves and ties



Bras



Jewellery



Socks



Belts

What not to include in your BAG2SCHOOL plastic bag:



Duvets and blankets



Pillows and cushions



Carpets, rugs and mats



Soiled, painted, ripped or wet clothing



School uniforms with and without logo



Corporate clothing and workwear



Textile off cuts, yarns or threaded material



Furniture and large items



Batteries



DAY AT THE MOVIES

2nd October 2025
Census Day

MAINS

MARGHERITA PIZZA (V)
BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA
PEPPERONI PIZZA

SIDES

POTATO WEDGES
COLESLAW
SWEETCORN

DESSERT

POPCORN CRISPY CAKE
FRUIT YOGHURT
FRESH FRUIT



dolce



Diary Dates

Key Dates for the Spring/Summer Term

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 Girls Football Festival (8.50am —12.30pm)
	-	Yrs 5&6 Girls Football Festival (12.30pm—3.15pm)
Tuesday 30th September	-	Little Wandle Workshop—9.00am or 6.00pm
Wednesday 1st October	-	Year 3 Saffron Walden Museum visit (9.00-12.00pm)
Friday 3rd October	-	EYFS/KS1 Teddy Bear Run (1.30pm)
Monday 6th October	-	Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church (9.30am)
Friday 10th October	-	World Mental Health Day—wear something yellow
Monday 13th October	-	Parent/Carer Coffee Morning (8.30—9.30) School Hall
14th—15th October	-	Black History Month Workshops Reception —Year 6
Thursday 16th October	-	Yrs 3&4 Multi Skills Event
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)
Monday 1st December	-	Friends of St Mary's AGM (3.30pm—4.15pm)
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
Thursday 11th December	-	FOSM Panto
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

