



St. Mary's News

November 17th 2023



Provisional Calendar Dates for the Year



Important Dates



Monday 20th November 2023	Non Uniform Day 2 Donations of bottles/festive spirits
Monday 20th November 2023	KS2 Anti Bullying Assembly for parents/carers 2.45pm. Sign in at the office
Monday 27th November 2023	Non Uniform Day 3 Donations for our Colours of Christmas Hampers See newsletter for further details
Thursday 30th November 2023	Reception and Key Stage 1 Christmas Movie/Craft Night 3.30—5.15pm
Tuesday 5th December 2023	Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity Play 2.30pm Tickets limited to 2 per family/per day
Wednesday 6th December 2023	Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity Play 2.30pm Tickets limited to 2 per family/per day
Thursday 7th December 2023	Key Stage 2 Christmas Movie/Craft Night 3.30 - 5.30pm
Friday 15th December 2023	Reception Nativity Play 2.30pm Tickets limited to 4 per family
Friday 15th December 2023	KS2 Theatre Show A Christmas Carol (funded by school)
Monday 18th December 2023	Whole School Christmas Day of Fun Come to school dressed up Christmassy Take part in Christmas Crafts Feast upon our super Christmas Lunch or bring your own festive lunch box Enjoy our annual festive pantomime - Aladdin (parental contribution needed)
Friday 22nd December 2023	Christmas Service in Church 2.00pm School closes for Christmas No After School Club this evening
Monday 8th January 2024	School re-opens

Meet our Reading Influencers

Year One	Isaac	Chloe
Year Two	Alfie	Grace
Year Three	TJ	Wallis
Year Four	Ralph F	Erin
Year Five	Harry S	Eliza
Year Six	Jonathan	Heidi

We love to read at St. Mary's. Books transport us to different worlds and help us to experience new adventures. In order to share our love of reading and to promote different authors and stories throughout our school community, the following children have been chosen as Reading Influencers to shine a light on all of the wonderful books and authors out there, for their class mates to read and try out for themselves.



Every week, one of our Influencers will recommend a book for others to read, so look out for their recommendations in our weekly newsletter.

This week, Erin from Y4 has recommended *The Danger Gang* by Tom Fletcher. She says, 'The book is really funny. It is about a child who moves house and makes new friends. Together they save the day by defeating a freaky storm which changes them forever.'

Erin says that it is suitable for children aged 7+ and she would score it 10/10.

Thank you Erin for this recommendation. Look out for a new book next week.

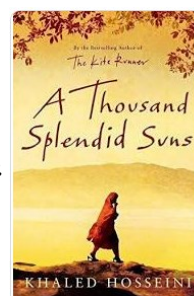


Introducing Mrs Evans as a reader:

Mrs Evans is very passionate about reading and loves nothing more than reading aloud to her class. She admits, it has been too long since she last completed an entire book in her own time, but the last one that captivated her was, 'A Thousand Splendid Suns,' by Khaled Hosseini - it even made her cry! The story begins with one major war in Afghanistan and ends with the beginning of another. It tells how war affected the Afghan citizens and their families - especially the women.

As a child, and growing up, Mrs Evans has always been inspired by books and authors from our Literary history - Dickens, Shakespeare, Austen and the Bronte sisters are some of her favourite authors.

Growing up, her favourite book was, 'The Suitcase Kid,' by Jacqueline Wilson and her favourite quote is, 'Books are uniquely portable magic!'



Happy Retirement

We say goodbye to Hilary—our school cook today, as she is hanging up her apron, pots and pans to retire.

Hilary has been our school cook for seven years, but has worked in other schools within the LA for the last 28 years!

As well as spending more time with her family, Hilary is also looking forward to volunteering her services to help others in the local community.

We want to say a big thank you to Hilary for all of her hard work during her time at St. Mary's and we wish her a long, healthy and happy retirement.



Non-Uniform Days

You will see on the calendar that there are 2 non uniform days remaining for this half term - Monday 20th and 27th November. We use these days to collect items for our Christmas fundraising activities so we are extremely grateful for your kind donations.

Day 1— Monday 20th November - we would be grateful for any bottle donations—especially those bottles that contain festive cheer :)

Day 2 — Monday 27th November - Colours of Christmas Hamper donations.

Every year we hold a Christmas Hamper Raffle to help raise valuable funds for our children. Thanks to your donations, the hampers that we are able to create are fantastic - and are well worth winning. This year, we are hoping to create a selection of different hampers that contain items of similar Christmas colours - Hence the title **Colours of Christmas Hampers**.

We are asking for donations of: food and drink (all in date); unopened toiletries; new toys/games/jigsaws; stationery; decorations; chocolates, Christmassy gifts etc. in the correct colour (or containing some of the colour) for your child's class. Your gifts do not need to contain both colours allocated to your child's class—just one of the colours is fine.

Colours for each class are: Reception: Red/Orange
Year One: Gold/Blue Year Two: Blue/White
Year Three: Purple/Pink Year Four: Green/Pink
Year Five: Silver/Purple Year Six: Red/Gold

Thank you in advance for your support.

Books of raffle tickets will be sent home at the beginning of December for you to enter the raffle. You are also welcome to sell extra tickets to your friends, families, neighbours etc.

The raffle will be drawn on Wednesday 20th December.



Thank You

We would like to say a big thank you for your generous donations of selection boxes and Christmas Chocolates last week.

These donations will be used for the PTFA Selection Box Bingo.



Christmas Lunch

Cook will be serving her tasty, Christmas Lunch on Monday 18th December. If your child would like a School Christmas Lunch on this day, then please let the office know by the end of November at the very latest. The lunch costs £2.60 and can be paid for via School Money, once you book your child's meal.

If your child would prefer to bring their own packed lunch, then why not send in a cracker and other festive treats to make it a lunch to remember.



New Lunch Menu

A new school lunch menu will be launched on Monday 20th November.

The menu has been uploaded onto the school website for you to see.

If your child would like a school meal, just let the office know.

School meals can be flexible, so your child can have a packed lunch some days and a school meal on other days. Meals must be paid for in advance and can be paid for using School Money.



Community Christmas - Wednesday 13th December

We would like to invite our more elderly parishioners and other pensioners from the local community to join us for carols and refreshments on Wednesday 13th December from 10.15am - 11.15am in our Infant Hall. Our choir will perform carols and then spend time chatting with our visitors and serving refreshments.

We are really looking forward to the event and we hope that some of our local community can come along and spend time with our children. We think that it is really important that our community comes together, particularly at Christmas time, as it can be a lonely time for some and it will be wonderful opportunity for our children to spend time talking to our more elderly residents.

Please do try to come along and please extend our invitation to those pensioners who may not be aware of our invitation. We are looking forward to meeting you all and can promise you a very warm St. Mary's welcome.



Choir Christmas Sing-a-Long Thursday 14th December

Our school choir are fabulous! It is lovely to see so many children showing such enthusiasm and passion for singing and performing and they are so keen to show off their skills and talents to their families. With this in mind, we have organised a Christmas Sing-a-Long for the choir and their families on Thursday 14th December from 3.45 - 4.45pm to showcase the children's hard work.



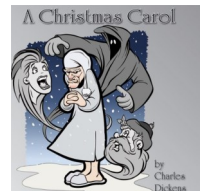
The event is free to attend— we simply ask for donations, on the day, to help with the costs of refreshments.

We hope to see you all there. Bring your voices along with you as there will be some opportunities for audience participation :)



A Christmas Carol - Theatre Production Friday 15th December

Our Y3 - Y6 children will have the opportunity to watch a theatre production of a Christmas Carol on Friday 15th December when a theatre company will visit our school. School has funded the cost of this production as we think it will be a great experience for our children and A Christmas Carol is such an iconic Christmas story. We hope that the children really enjoy the show.



Christmas Pantomime Aladdin - Monday 18th December

It is a St. Mary's tradition to hold a whole school panto during the festive season.

We choose to hold the panto in school in order to keep costs down, as coach transport and theatre ticket prices are so expensive.

School is aware of the financial challenges that many of our families are facing, at this time, and with this in mind, the PTFA have agreed to help fund the cost of the panto with school and with you—the families. This means that we are asking for a donation of £2.50 per child. Payment streams will be put up on School Money on Monday and we ask that all contributions are paid by Wednesday 13th December. Thank you.

We hold the panto as part of our Christmas Day of Fun as it really makes it a day to remember for the children. As part of this day, the children are able to come to school dressed up in a Christmassy way - or they can even come dressed up as a character from our panto Aladdin. The day will also include Christmas Lunch and a selection of Christmas fun activities. We are certain that the children will have a fabulous day.





Guitar Awards

Congratulations to the following children who have been chosen as Mrs Connolly's 'Guitar Stars of the Week'.

Week beginning 7/11
James from Y5



Week beginning 14/11
Anna from Y4

Year 3 Beginner Guitar Classes

A letter went home last week to our Y3 children from Mrs Connolly inviting them to join her new beginner guitar classes that will start on a Monday, after school (after Christmas).

Full details were included in the letter.

Places are filling up quickly, so if your child would like to join, please let school know. School can provide a guitar, but it may make a nice Christmas present from Father Christmas.



Toy Appeal

If you are busy sorting out your cupboards before Christmas, our ABC would welcome donations of any unwanted toys, games, lego, jigsaws etc as long as they are in good repair, and all pieces are present.

If you know of anyone throwing away a Wii please ask them to 'throw' it our way as our console is playing up and the children are disappointed when they can't use it without it glitching.

Any donations can be sent into the school office. Thank you.



Lighting the Billinge Christmas Tree Poster Competition 2023



All of our children have been invited to enter the Lighting the Billinge Christmas Tree Poster Competition. The aim of the competition is to design a poster advertising the lighting of the Billinge Christmas tree.

The poster may be as imaginative as your child would wish, in past, present or futuristic mode. It can be A4 or A3 in size and should include your child's name, age and school name on the back. Posters need to be brought into school no later than Monday 27th November, when they will be collected for judging by the local parish council.

The poster must contain the time, date and venue for the event. (Friday 8th December at 6pm at the Millennium Garden)

A winner will be chosen from each class and they will receive a £15 gift voucher. An overall winner for the school will also be chosen and they will receive a £25 gift voucher.



Anti-Bullying Week/Assembly

Our children have spent the week Making Some Noise about Bullying and exploring some of the issues/myths about bullying.

Our KS2 children (Y3-Y6) would like to invite their families to join them in their Anti-Bullying Sharing Assembly on Monday 20th November at 2.45pm, in the Infant Hall.

If you are able to attend, simply sign in at the school office from 2.40pm.



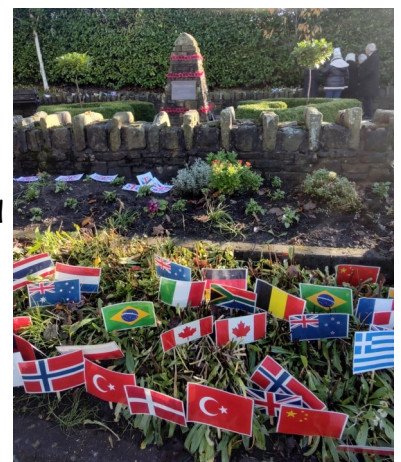
Y5/6 Remembrance Service



Our Y5/6 children joined together with other schools, and the local community, last Friday to remember all of the people whose lives have been affected by war.

As part of the service, our children laid flags of peace and remembrance.

It was a lovely service and the children were excellent representatives of our school.





Design a Scarecrow and Scarecrow Hunt—Winners



A GREAT BIG WELL DONE to everyone who took part in the PTFA's Design a Scarecrow and Scarecrow Hunt competition. As you can see by the photographs, your creations were amazing!

Scarecrow Hunters all voted for the best scarecrow as part of their hunt, and the winning scarecrow was 'Field' by Ellis from Y3.

Lots of families found 21 scarecrows in the Scarecrow Hunt, so there were no outright winners. As a result, all entries with 21 scarecrows were then placed together and a winner was selected at random. A big shout out to Daisy from Y3 and her brother Billy from Reception who were the lucky winners.



'Field' by Ellis — The Winning Scarecrow







Selection Box Bingo

The PTFA will be running their popular Selection Box Bingo on Tuesday 28th November.

Due to the popularity of the event, two separate sessions will be run. The first session will run from 3.45pm - 5.00pm and the later session will run from 5.15pm - 6.30pm. Offering 2 sessions will hopefully enable as many people as possible to attend.

Both sessions will be ticketed - with a maximum of 100 tickets being sold for each session. Children must be accompanied by an adult, who will also require a ticket. Tickets went on sale yesterday and they are selling quickly. **ALL TICKETS FOR THE LATER SESSION HAVE NOW BEEN SOLD.** Tickets cost £3 each and will include a book of bingo tickets.

A range of Christmas stalls will be open during the event and refreshments will also be on offer.



PTFA Christmas Fund Raiser

Before half-term, as part of our fundraising initiatives, all of our children created their own Christmas pictures which have been uploaded onto mychildsart.co.uk for you to view. Their designs can be printed as Christmas cards, or can appear on a range of other items like mugs, key rings etc.

You will have received information last week on how to order Christmas items/gifts, containing your own child's design. If you order before **16th November** and use the code **StMarys7** during checkout, you will receive a 10% discount off your order.

School will receive 20% of all money raised.



Over the Years - Money raised by the PTFA has helped school to:

- ◆ Update IT equipment
- ◆ Fund the cost of the annual pantomime
- ◆ Buy a class set of reading books for every class
- ◆ Buy Leavers Hoodies for our Y6 children
- ◆ Part fund the cost of music lessons
- ◆ Purchase musical instruments
- ◆ Buy a portable speaker and sound system
- ◆ Buy a new football kit for the school

All of our children benefit from any money raised.

Your support is really appreciated.



Celebration Page



Emile—Key Stage 2 Homework Star of the Week



Year 3	Willow
Year 4	Eddison G
Year 5	James B
Year 6	Ruby

Bucket Fillers

Bucket fillers are children who fill other people's buckets (lives) with kind words and deeds. They are shining examples to others around them.

This week's
Bucket Fillers are



Good Work Stars



A huge well done to the following children who have all been recognised for their super work week.

Rec	Elena - super phonics
Year 1	Lola - great work in phonics
Year 2	Luke - trying hard with his spellings
Year 3	Charles W - amazing poetry work
Year 4	Romeo - super Science work
Year 5	Tilly - super character description of Scrooge
Year 6	Molly - for trying hard to challenge herself in writing activities

Rec	Mychailo for having such lovely manners
Year 1	Nancy for always having a big smile on her face and sharing it with others
Year 2	Marnie for being a great help around class
Year 3	Domhnall for working hard to keep the classroom tidy
Year 4	Delilah for being happy and helpful in class
Year 5	Alfie B for helping adults and other children without being asked
Year 6	Fred for holding doors open for people

ABC Star of the Week



A big SHOUT OUT to James from Reception, who is a super member of club and always has impeccable manners. Well done James.



Star Pupil Award



	Matthew House Winner	Mark House Winner	Luke House Winner	John House Winner	Overall Star Pupil
Rec	Oscar B	Lyla	Brooke	Alexander	Lyla
Year 1	Isabella	Henry W	Isaac	Amelia	Isaac
Year 2	Theo	James	Ava	Sofia	Ava
Year 3	Jax	Emily	Freddy	T-J	T-J
Year 4	Harry	Alasdair	George	Grace	Grace
Year 5	Logan	Martha	Elliot	Robert	Martha
Year 6	Michael	Tristan	Angus	James D	Tristan