



St. Mary's News

December 1st 2023



Important Dates



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 8th December 2023	Billinge Christmas Tree Festival Y5/6 Choir are invited to sing, with the other Billinge Schools at the opening of the festival 10.00am
Wednesday 13th December 2023	Community Christmas 10.15am—11.15am See newsletter for further details
Thursday 14th December 2023	Christmas Sing-a-Long Final Choir session of the school year
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) Take part in Christmas Bingo
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 Breakfast and After School Club open as normal

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.



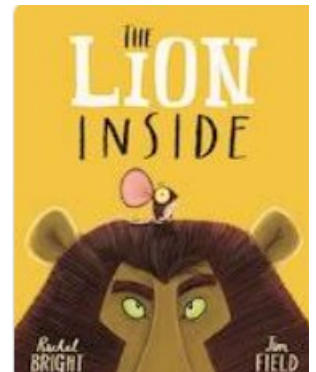
Every week, one of our Influencers will recommend a book for others to read, so look out for their recommendations in our weekly newsletter.

This week, Chloe, from Y1 has recommended *The Lion Inside* by Rachel Bright. She says, 'It is about a Lion and a Mouse. The Lion was the King of the Jungle who was afraid of the little mouse and he ran away.'

Chloe says that the book is suitable for Year 1 children and she would score it 10/10.

Chloe also likes her book—*The Name Book* which is about a little girl called Chloe who lost her name. She went on an adventure to find it and the animals helped her.

Thank you Chloe for your recommendations. Look out for a new book next week.



A BIG WELL DONE TO OUR INDOOR ATHLETICS TEAM

We want to say a big WELL DONE to our Y5/6 children who represented the school at the St Helens Indoor Athletics Championships today.

The children were part of a group of over 250 children taking part in running, throwing and jumping events. The team performed fantastically and were thrilled to be placed 2nd—which is a great achievement. The children behaved so well and were fantastic sporting ambassadors for the school. Well done to Annabelle, Molly, Kate, Ruby, Niamh, Heidi, Scarlett, Georgia, Penny, Indiana, Sophia, Martha, James B, Jonathan, Luca, Ishaan, Lucas, Michael, Fred, Ethan, Jude, Bobby, James Br and Malachy.

School would also like to thank Mrs Cotterill for giving up her Friday nights and lunchtimes to train the children.





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.



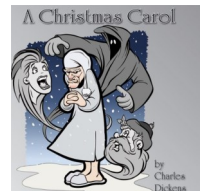
The event is free to attend— we simply ask for donations, on the day, to help with the costs of refreshments.

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 are set up on School Money 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 21/11

Indiana from Y5

Week beginning 28/11

Heidi from Y4



Year 3 Beginner Guitar Classes

A letter went home recently 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.



Key Stage 1 Nativity Plays

Our Y1 and Y2 children have been very busy over the last few weeks rehearsing for their Nativity Play - The Bossy King! The children are all very excited—but very nervous.

All of our Y1/Y2 will have the opportunity to perform on stage—our Y2 children will retell the story through acting and narration and our Y1 children will be instrumentalists.

Every child has been allocated 2 seats, per performance, to allow all of the children's parents to attend. We do appreciate that many of our grandparents will be disappointed not to be able to attend, but seats have to be restricted due to health and safety reasons and the hall capacity has been reduced by the stage.

In previous years we have paid to have the production recorded, but we were so disappointed with the quality of the recording that we are reluctant to professionally record the production again. Other companies that we have looked into are very expensive and we are conscious that Christmas is an expensive time of year already. With this in mind, a member of staff will record the production on an IPAD, and we are happy to put our copy of the performance onto a pen drive for you, if you send a named one in. Please bear in mind though, that this will not be a professional recording - it will simply be a live record of the show. We look forward to seeing you all on Tues/Wed next week. Just sign in at the office. Please don't come too early as we need time to set up the hall after lunch. Doors will only open at 2.20pm.



There is no KS2 Christmas Play this year. We are planning to have a summer production instead.

Reception Nativity Play



Our Reception children have been busy preparing for their Christmas Play - The Nativity - which they will perform for their families on Friday 15th December at 2.30pm.

As you can imagine, the children are very excited and are very busy learning their lines and rehearsing the songs. They are loving being on 'the big stage'.

Every child has been allocated 4 seats for the performance. No tickets are needed—simply sign in at the office. If you do not need the 4 allocated seats, can you please let school know ASAP so that we can allocate the spare seats out to those families who have asked for an

extra seat, if possible.

We will open the doors at 2.20pm. Please don't arrive too early, as we need time to set up the hall after lunchtime and it can get chilly queueing up outside. There will be enough seats for everyone. We will record the show using an IPAD and are more than happy to copy it onto a memory stick for you (if you send a named one in) to share with any family members who are unable to attend. We look forward to seeing you all on the 15th.



KS2 Christmas Movie/Craft Night



Our Key Stage 2 Christmas Movie Night will be held next Thursday 7th December, from 3.30—5.30pm. The cost of the movie/craft night is £5 per child and can be paid for via School Money. Refreshments, and crafts, are included in this price. Payments must be made by 12.00 noon on Tuesday 5th December to enable time for resources to be prepared.

All of the children have been voting for the movie that they would like to watch. Here are their choices. By paying for your child to attend Movie/Craft Night, you are consenting to them watching the movies listed below.

Year 3	How the Grinch Stole Christmas Craft activities and a snack
Year 4	Home Alone Craft activities and a snack
Year 5	How the Grinch Stole Christmas Craft activities and a snack
Year 6	Home Alone 2: Lost in New York Craft activities and a snack

If your child is not attending the Movie Night then let the office know and they will remove the payment stream.



Pick up Arrangements for Movie Night

In order to help with traffic congestion, please collect your child from the **places listed below and at the times stated.** As the staff car park will be very busy, it would be safer to park at the club and walk around the church path. If using the front car park, please drive very slowly. All children **MUST** be collected by an adult. No child will be permitted to walk home alone.

Year 3	Collect from Infant Hall side door	5.20 - 5.25pm
Year 4	Collect from fire door at the front of school next to ABC door	5.20 - 5.25pm
Year 5	Collect from main entrance door	5.30pm
Year 6	Collect from Junior Hall - ABC door	5.30pm



ABC will be open as normal on KS2 Movie/Craft Night.



Billinge Christmas Tree Festival

St Aidan's Church are holding a Christmas Tree Festival, once again this year. The festival will run over the 8th, 9th and 10th December.

Our Y5/6 choir members have been invited to sing with the other Billinge schools at the opening of the festival on Friday 8th December at 10.00am. Mrs Taylor will send home further details next week.

School has agreed to sponsor and decorate a Christmas Tree to reflect our school and the tree will be on display in St Aidan's Church throughout the festival weekend for our families to see.

There are usually lots of events happening as part of the festival—we will share further details with you, once they have been formalised.



Christmas Hamper Raffle



Two books of 5 raffle tickets have been sent home this evening with your children. (2 books per family)

The tickets cost £1 each or £5 for the whole book. If you would like to enter the raffle, simply fill in the ticket stubs and return them to school, with the correct money, in a named envelope. Any unwanted tickets can be returned to school.

If you would like extra books, just ask at the office.



The hampers are full of some lovely treats - with every hamper containing far more than the cost of a book of tickets.

The raffle will be drawn on Wednesday 20TH DECEMBER and winners will be invited into school to collect their hampers so that they are able to enjoy the contents over the festive season.

Christmas Day of Fun Monday 18th December

Monday, the 18th of December is our Christmas Day of Fun. We spend the WHOLE day getting into the festive spirit. (Our Christmas Day of Fun was introduced to replace our traditional Christmas Party afternoons, as many of our children didn't really enjoy the loud music and 'frenzied' dancing!)

The children are able to come to school dressed up in a 'Christmassy Way'. They can wear festive pyjamas, Christmas jumpers/t-shirts or dresses OR they can even come dressed as a character from our Christmas Pantomime, Aladdin, which also takes place on this day.

The children will take part in a range of festive activities throughout the morning and will also have the opportunity to play a game or two of Christmas Bingo.

At lunchtime, children on school meals will have their Christmas Dinner and those on packed lunches can bring in their own festive lunch.



Selection Box Bingo

What a great success our Selection Box Bingo was! It was wonderful to see so many children, and grown ups, having a such a good time.

Our 2 bingo callers were fantastic so a big shout out to Anna's and Emily's grandad and to Darcey's dad.

Our thanks also go to the many PTFA members who gave up their time to help set up the event and to volunteer on the evening.

We will let you know how much we raised from all of our Christmas events once we have final totals. The money raised so far will go towards the cost of the Christmas Panto and we are also looking to purchase a new sound system and microphones to use at school events/plays/concerts etc.

Thank you all for being so generous.



Name the Elf Winner

Well done to Charles, from Y3, who successfully picked out the correct name for our Christmas Elf Gus!

We will present Gus to Charles in Monday's assembly.

Guess the Sweets in the Jar Winner

Well done to Ava, from Y2, who was the closest guess, with 1250, to the actual number of jelly beans in the jar.

Ava wins the jar of sweets as her prize. We hope that they last you a very, very, very long time - and remember to brush your teeth!





Celebration Page



Emile—Key Stage 2 Homework Star of the Week



Year 3	Willow
Year 4	Noah
Year 5	Maddison
Year 6	Molly

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	Harry C - super problem solving in maths
Year 1	Jack - excellent effort in reading
Year 2	Skylar - impressive Literacy work
Year 3	Noah - marvellous addition and subtraction work
Year 4	Maddison Lucy - excellent report about the digestive system
Year 5	Ruby - excellent equivalent fraction work
Year 6	Jessica - super effort in maths

Rec	Oscar C for having such lovely manners
Year 1	Isabella for always giving 100% in the Nativity rehearsals
Year 2	Charlie R for trying so hard in play rehearsals
Year 3	Charlie for being a supportive friend
Year 4	Erin for always smiling and having a positive attitude
Year 5	Elliot for being so polite holding doors open for others
Year 6	Andrew for always being ready and willing to learn

ABC Star of the Week



A big SHOUT OUT to Noah from Y2 for settling in so well. Noah is new to St Mary's so it has been lovely to welcome him to club.



Star Pupil Award



	Matthew House Winner	Mark House Winner	Luke House Winner	John House Winner	Overall Star Pupil
Rec	Jacob	Robyn	Emily T	Will	Robyn
Year 1	Carter	Millie	Nancy	Chloe	Chloe
Year 2	Edith	Bobby	Noah	Rose	Noah
Year 3	Abir	James	Robyn	Isla	Robyn
Year 4	Aiden	Thea	Arthur	Delilah	Arthur
Year 5	Howie	Jessica	Amelia	James Br	James
Year 6	Ishaan	Alice	Niamh	Taylor	Taylor



School Holiday Pattern 2024 - 2025

Autumn Term 2024 : School opens on Tuesday 3rd September 2024

Closes for half-term on the evening of Friday 18th October 2024

School opens on Wednesday 30th October 2024

Closes for Christmas on the evening of Friday 20th December 2024

Spring Term 2025: School opens on Tuesday 7th January 2025

Closes for half-term on the evening of Friday 14th February 2025

School opens on Monday 24th February 2025

Closes for Easter on the evening of Friday 4th April 2025

Summer Term 2025: School opens on Tuesday 22nd April 2025

Closes for half-term on the evening of Wednesday 21st May 2025

School opens on Monday 2nd June 2025

Closes on the evening of Wednesday 23rd July 2025

happy
holidays!





PROUDLY PRESENT A
MUSICAL EXTRAVAGANZA

FEATURING - BILLINGE MUSIC GROUP,
VALLEY BRASS TRAINING BAND
& OTHERS

SUNDAY 17TH DECEMBER

ST AIDAN'S CHURCH, BILLINGE. WN5 7LA

1PM - 3PM

ADMISSION £2 - PAY ON ENTRY

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

ANY DONATIONS TO
ST AIDAN'S FOOD PANTRY
WOULD BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

