



St. Mary's News

January 19th 2024



Important Dates

Tuesday 23rd January 2024	Y4/5/6 Sewing Club The club will run every Tuesday for 8 weeks from Tuesday 23rd January until Tuesday 19th March
Thursday 25th January 2024	Key Stage 2 Choir restarts.
Thursday 8th February 2024	PTFA Fundraiser Break The Uniform Rule Day See PTFA page for further details
Friday 9th February 2024	Break up for half-term. Breakfast and After School Club open as normal
Monday 19th February 2024	School re-opens
Thursday 22nd February 2024	PTFA—Spring Disco Further information to follow
Thursday 7th March 2024	World Book Day Further details to follow
Thursday 14th March 2024	Non Uniform Day in exchange for Easter Eggs to support our PTFA's Easter Egg Hunt and Easter Bingo
Wednesday 20th March 2024	Parents' Evening 1 3.40pm - 6.30pm Appointment slips will be sent out after February half-term. Parents can book appointments for either date. For children in Reception only - there will be a Stay and Play session for parents/carers to attend from 2.15pm - 3.15pm on this day. During this session, there will also be an opportunity for you to look through your child's record/work file. Parents/carers of children in Y1—Y6 will have the opportunity to look through their children's books next week.
Tuesday 26th March 2024	PTFA Easter Egg Hunt and Easter Bingo See PTFA page for further details
Wednesday 27th March 2024	Parents' Evening 2 3.40pm—6.30pm Appointment slips will be sent out after February half-term. Parents can book appointments for either date. For children in Y1-Y6, school will be open this afternoon from 2.15pm - 3.15pm for parents/carers to spend time looking through their children's books and sharing their work with them. Reception class will not be open to parents/carers this week following the Stay and Play session last week.
Thursday 28th March 2024	Break up for Easter Breakfast and After School Club open as normal
Monday 15th April 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, Jonathan from Y6 has recommended Framed - the Perfect Crime - It's a Work of Art by Frank Cottrell-Boyce. Jonathan says that the book is about a boy called Dylan whose life starts to fall apart after his dad disappears. Dylan needs to raise money and the only way he can get it is by pulling off the greatest art heist in history.

Jonathan says that the book is suitable for children from Y5 upwards and he would score the book 10/10.



Thank you Jonathan for your recommendation. Look out for a new book next week.



Christmas Gift Donations (next week)

Thinking about what you can do with any duplicate, or unwanted Christmas gifts or toiletries, then think no further!

The PTFA are asking if you would like to donate them to school, so that they can be stored and used at other fund-raising events throughout the year.

If you would like to donate your gifts, school will be holding a donation week from **Monday 22nd January - Friday 26th January**. Simply send in your donations with your children and we will arrange storage.

Thank you.

Non - Uniform Day Advanced Notice

School will be holding a non uniform day on **Thursday 14th March** in exchange for donations of Easter Eggs to support our Easter Egg Hunt and Bingo.

Children can come to school in whatever they choose on this day.

All donations will be really appreciated.



Unwanted Toys, Jigsaws, Board Games

Following a visit from Father Christmas, if you have any unwanted toys, jigsaws or board games that you would like to recycle, please pass them our way to use, in our classrooms, during wet breaks and lunchtimes.

Please only send in toys that are in good condition or jigsaws and games that contain all of the necessary pieces. Please do not send in any soft, or cuddly toys. Thank you.



Guitar Awards

Congratulations to the following children who have been chosen as

Mrs Connolly's 'Guitar Stars of the Week'.

Week beginning 8th January:
Year 3: Noah

Y4/5/6: George (Y4)



History in Action - Year 4 Became Romans for the Day!



Our Year 4 children had a fantastic day of learning yesterday when A Roman soldier visited Year 4 on Thursday to tell them all about life in ancient Rome and to bring their History topic to life!

The children learnt about how the Roman Empire grew to become the most powerful in the world, completed a Roman knowledge quiz, had the opportunity to identify and handle a range of Roman artefacts and had lots of fun playing a Roman board game called Delta.



In the afternoon, they learnt about life as a Roman soldier and looked at the weapons and armour they would have used before taking part in Roman military drills and marching.

It was a fun-filled day and the children learnt lots about the Romans. Have a look at the Year 4 galleries page to see more pictures from the day



Celebration Page



Emile—Key Stage 2 Homework Star of the Week



Year 3	Emily
Year 4	Maddison-Lucy
Year 5	Tyler
Year 6	Emile

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	Max K - trying hard in phonics
Year 1	Jack - super literacy work
Year 2	Isabella-Rose - marvellous maths
Year 3	Noah - super Science knowledge on rocks
Year 4	Ralph S - terrific times tables work
Year 5	Indiana - excellent DT work
Year 6	Mia - excellent reading aloud of the class novel

Rec	James G for always helping to keep the classroom tidy
Year 1	Sophia for opening the door for Mrs. Talbot-Davies
Year 2	Sofia for always remembering to use her manners
Year 3	Freddie for always trying his best in everything he does
Year 4	Thea for always having lovely manners
Year 5	Scarlett for always being polite and always being willing to do 'jobs'
Year 6	Caitlin for always putting others before herself

ABC Star of the Week

A big SHOUT OUT to Heidi S (Y4) for always being helpful in club. Well done Heidi.



Star Pupil Award



	Matthew House Winner	Mark House Winner	Luke House Winner	John House Winner	Overall Star Pupil
Rec	Darcy	Lyla	Billy	Alexander	Alexander
Year 1	Ava	Henry W	Hunter	Ryder	Ava
Year 2	Lexie	Skylar	Taylor	Marnie	Taylor
Year 3	Thea	Amelia	Ethan	Daisy	Thea
Year 4	Erin	Alasdair	Joycelin	Eddison G	Alasdair
Year 5	Maddison	Jessica	Oliver	George	Maddison
Year 6	Ruby	Malachy	Angus	Ethan	Ruby



Christmas Fundraisers Update

Thanks to your generosity, we are delighted to report that our Christmas fundraising events have been hugely successful raising a fabulous total of £2622.89!

Thanks to this, the PTFA have been able to help fund the cost of the Christmas Pantomime, which really helps make the school's Christmas Day of Fun one to remember. The PTFA have also been able to purchase a new, portable sound system for school.

From a starting balance of just over £200 in September, and following the above donations to school, the PTFA now has a balance of £2034. This is an amazing start!

We would like to thank all of the volunteers who helped to make the fundraising events so successful.

The PTFA have organised 3 more events for the Spring Term. Please see the details below.



Break the Uniform Rules Day!

On Thursday 8th February, school will be holding a Break the Uniform Rules Day!

Children and staff are being challenged to come to school on this day, wearing their uniform/work clothes in a different way.

Children, and staff will be charged 50p for every rule they break—up to a maximum of 4 rules (£2) with all money raised being added to the PTFA funds.

There are some ideas on the poster and other possible ideas could be:

- * Wearing your hoodie back to front
- * Wearing a football/rugby top instead of your school polo top
- * Wearing one trainer and one shoe

Let's see how creative you can be BUT REMEMBER - YOU CAN ONLY CHANGE 4 THINGS AND THAT EACH CHANGE WILL COST YOU 50p !!!!!

Fines should be sent into school in an envelope on the day. Thank you.



Spring Fever Disco

Following the very popular Autumn Disco, the PTFA are hosting a Spring Fever Disco on Thursday 22nd February.

There will be 2 separate discos:

Reception, Y1 and Y2 from 4.15pm - 5.30pm

Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6 from 6.00pm - 7.30pm

Both discos will be held in the Infant Hall and will be hosted by our fantastic DJ.

Children can wear whatever they chose to attend the disco and we look forward to seeing their 'outfits'.

Tickets cost £5 per child and will include light refreshments for the children. Children attending the later disco (Y3-Y6) can bring an extra £2 with them, if they choose, to buy further refreshments and snacks.

Tickets go on sale at 9.00am on Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd February. Children in ABC can send in ticket requests and money in a named envelope on the dates above.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A CHILD ONLY EVENT.



Easter Bingo and Egg Hunt

Why not join us for an egg-cellent Easter Egg Hunt and some Bingo fun on Tuesday 26th March.

In order to minimise disappointment, as we know that these events are very popular, we will be holding 2 separate sessions:

Session 1 3.45pm - 4.45pm

Session 2 5.00pm - 6.00pm

Both sessions will contain an Easter Egg Hunt around the school grounds for the children, followed by Easter Egg Bingo.

Tickets will cost £3 to include entry to the Easter Hunt and a book of Bingo tickets.

Tickets go on sale at 9.00am on Thursday 14th and Friday 15th March. If your child is in breakfast club, send in your ticket request and money in a named envelope on the dates above.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT TO THIS EVENT.

Everyone is welcome to attend PTFA meetings. The more volunteers we have - the more events we can hold - the more funds we can raise - the more our children benefit. If you are unable to attend meetings, but can help out at events - please let school know.

The next meeting will be held on **Wednesday 24th April at 6pm in the Infant Hall**. The focus of this meeting is the reintroduction of a Summer Fayre. In order to run a Summer Fayre, lots of volunteers will be needed so if you are able to attend this meeting it would be really appreciated. The provisional date of the Summer Fayre is Friday 12th July. Further information will follow.

SMARTPHONE SAFETY TIPS

for young people

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You may have been lucky enough to have unwrapped a smartphone at Christmas, or you might be eagerly anticipating getting a new one at some point during this year. Whether it'll be your first ever phone or an upgrade on your old model, it's always useful to have a refresher about how to set it up and adjust the settings to keep yourself – and your valuable personal info – safe and secure. We've collected some expert tips to help you enjoy your smartphone in the healthiest way possible.

NEVER SHARE YOUR PASSCODE

Alongside face or fingerprint recognition, your passcode is crucial to unlocking your phone and accessing your apps and personal information. You shouldn't give it out, even to close friends – after all, you wouldn't hand them a key to your house and let them go in for a nosey around! If a friend wants to use your phone, ask them why and make sure you can see what they're doing with it.

RESPECT PARENTAL CONTROLS

If you're allowed to have a smartphone, it's because your parents or carers feel that you're mature and responsible enough to use it safely. They might set controls and boundaries on your device – not to spoil your fun but to help you avoid hazards like too much screen time or costly in-app purchases. Following these rules means you can enjoy using your phone while respecting their wishes.

TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT

Whether it's to listen to music, play games, create content or chat with friends, using a smartphone should be fun. If you're ever feeling anxious, worried or scared about going on your phone, then something isn't right. It's important not to ignore these feelings; instead, talk to a trusted adult about what's happening and how it's making you feel.

STAY ALERT

Two words: look up. It might sound obvious, but it's so easy to get immersed in what we're looking at or listening to on our phones that we can become unaware of our surroundings – or who might be around us. People often walk with their head down, focusing on their phone, and forget to check for obstacles in their path, cars or other pedestrians coming towards them, which is clearly dangerous.

DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS

Phones offer a vast amount of content and the chance to chat with friends whenever we feel like it, which can make it difficult to take time away from the screen. If that's something you struggle with, you could try setting time limits on certain apps. Putting our phones down for a while gives us more time to interact with others or do something physical that helps keep us fit and healthy.

IGNORE UNKNOWN NUMBERS

There are some scammers who might call or text asking you to share personal data or to click on a link and provide your details. Some may claim to be from a genuine company, but trustworthy businesses don't spontaneously call or message to ask for your information. It's safest to ignore calls or texts from unknown numbers, and never give your personal details out over the phone.

ONLY USE AGE-APPROPRIATE APPS

Before downloading a new app or game, check what age rating it has. Don't feel pressured into getting a particular game or app just because your friends are using it. If it's intended for older people, there's a definite risk that it could include content (which is violent or frightening, for instance) or language which isn't suitable and may leave you feeling upset or disturbed.

REMOVE TEMPTATION

A good night's sleep is so important for concentration, mood and overall health. Unwinding properly before going to bed – which means not staring at a screen late at night – can often improve sleep quality. Put your phone on charge overnight, but not in your room. This means you'll have a lot less temptation to check any notifications, reply to messages or get caught up scrolling on social media.

THINK ABOUT OTHERS

Watching videos, listening to music or calling someone can all help to pass the time while we're on the bus, waiting in a queue or walking down the street. It's important to remain mindful of other people, though; they might not want to hear your tunes or your conversation. Likewise, if you're calling from a public place then don't forget that anyone could overhear something personal about you.

SWITCH OFF GEOLOCATION

In your phone's settings, you'll be able to disable geolocation for individual apps and photos; this means that people online (including strangers) can't see information about where you are when you share or post a pic. On the subject of images, it's also important to ask permission before taking or sharing a photo of someone – and don't share embarrassing images of your friends with others.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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