



St. Mary's News

January 26th 2024



Important Dates

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
Thursday 27th June 2024	Year 6 Stay and Pray session with parents/carers 9.00am
Tuesday 2nd July 2024	Year 5 Stay and Pray session with parents/carers 9.00am
Wednesday 3rd July 2024	Year 4 Stay and Pray session with parents/carers 9.00am
Thursday 4th July 2024	Year 3 Stay and Pray session with parents/carers 9.00am

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, Harry and Eliza from Y5 have recommended The Iron Man by Ted Hughes. They both say that it is a very interesting book and that it contains lots of detail and can be quite mysterious. The book also has a lot of cliff hangers. They would give the book 8.5 /10 and said that it is suitable for children age 6+ to read or listen to.

Thank you Eliza and Harry for your recommendation. Look out for a new book next week.



Parent Governors - Welcome

We are pleased to welcome Martyn Ode to the school's governing body as a parent governor. Martyn, who has a daughter in Reception, is experienced in financial management and strategic decision-making, and is passionate about supporting children's education and our school community.

We are confident that Martyn will make a positive contribution to our governing body.

Parent Governors - Vacancy



We do still have another parent governor vacancy and school would urge anyone who is interested in representing a parental viewpoint of the school to come forward and express your interest. Our Chair of Governors and Mrs Hymers are

more than happy to meet with anyone who has an interest in the role in order to answer any questions that you may have.



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.

Extra- Curricular Sports Clubs for Next Half-Term

Letters will go out on Monday for you to book places on next half term's sporting clubs. (You can also email to reserve a place)

Wednesday KS2 3.30pm - 4.30pm **Basketball**

Friday KS2 8.00am - 9.00am

Rec/KS1 3.30pm - 4.30pm



Hula Huts

Children work in teams to build a Hula Hut out of hoops and then work together to defend their hut from an attack from the opposition. It's a great team activity that the children really love.

Guitar Awards

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



Week beginning 22nd January:
Year 3: Amelia

Y4/5/6: Thea (Y4)





Celebration Page



Emile—Key Stage 2 Homework Star of the Week



Year 3	Domhnall
Year 4	Jude
Year 5	Jessica
Year 6	Michael

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



Rec	Theo for always helping others
Year 1	Hettie for always being so smiley and happy in class
Year 2	Grace for cleaning leaves/twigs up around Church and Edith for saying kind words to Mrs TD every day
Year 3	Rosie for being such a great friend to everyone
Year 4	Evie for always giving a 100% in every lesson
Year 5	Lucas for being a great friend and always making good choices
Year 6	Grace for setting a fantastic example to other children



Good Work Stars



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

Rec	Max B - excellent participation in phonics
Year 1	Nancy - fantastic facts about Samuel Pepys
Year 2	Bobby - excellent effort in writing lessons
Year 3	Amelia - amazing diary writing
Year 4	Edison K - marvellous maths
Year 5	Martha - lovely artwork
Year 6	Taylor - earning his pen licence

ABC Star of the Week



A big SHOUT OUT to Aayushi from Rec who has been chosen as she always has a lovely smile on her face in club and is so well behaved.



Star Pupil Award



	Matthew House Winner	Mark House Winner	Luke House Winner	John House Winner	Overall Star Pupil
Rec	Jacob	James G	Brooke	Connie	Connie
Year 1	Isabella	Millie	Isaac	Chloe	Millie
Year 2	Theo	Bobby	Noah	Jax	Jax
Year 3	Jax	Thomas FP	Thomas Br	Isla	Thomas Br
Year 4	Lyla	Maddison-Lucy	Romeo	Ralph	Lyla
Year 5	Scarlett	Eliza	Harry	Sophia	Harry
Year 6	Michael	Tristan	Thomas	Kate	Kate

Full of Beans
CHILDREN'S FITNESS & SPORTS COACHING

FEBRUARY FOOTBALL ACADEMY



Fun filled, action packed football camp for ages 5 – 11 with enough options to keep your child happy and entertained. Run by FA **qualified coaches**. Includes: A feel for a day of training like a professional player, **Football** Small Sided Games, **Football Dodge**, Skills from around the World, Keepy up competitions & Challenge Zones.

Bookings can be made via our website
www.fullofbeansfitness.co.uk

Email: camps@fullofbeansfitness.co.uk
Telephone: 0151 374 0454
Facebook: FOBWIRRAL Twitter: FullOfBeansFit

COST
£25 Standard day 9-4pm
£32 Extended day 8.30am-5.30pm

LOCATION
Birchley St Marys Primary School, Birchley Road, Wigan

DATE
Mon 12th Feb - Fri 16th Feb

EARLYBIRD Discount 10% until Monday 5th Feb
Sibling discount throughout 10% off second child
Both discounts automatically applied at checkout

Ofsted
Registered

Our coaches all hold professional qualifications and an enhanced DBS. Expert and qualified instruction in a safe, non-competitive environment. We go out of our way to ensure a personal and special day.

Half Term Football Academy 12th–16th February

- * 10% discount if booked before the 1st February
- * A further 10% discount for siblings
- * Children can attend a mix of either camp e.g. 2 days football and 3 at multi sports
- * Only book days needed
- * Childcare vouchers accepted

Half Term Multi Sports Camp 12th–16th February

- * 10% discount if booked before the 1st February
- * A further 10% discount for siblings
- * Children can attend a mix of either camp e.g. 2 days football and 3 at multi sports
- * Only book days needed
- * Childcare vouchers accepted

Full of Beans
CHILDREN'S FITNESS & SPORTS COACHING

FEBRUARY MULTI SPORTS CAMP



Fun filled, action packed multi sports camp for ages 5 – 11 with enough options to keep your child happy and entertained. Run by FA qualified coaches. Includes Football, Dodgeball, Gym, Dance, Basketball, Cheerleading, Fun games, Craft, NERF Zone, Glow Sports, Party games, Athletics and Obstacle courses.

Bookings can be made via our website
www.fullofbeansfitness.co.uk

Email: camps@fullofbeansfitness.co.uk
Telephone: 0151 374 0454
Facebook: FOBWIRRAL Twitter: FullOfBeansFit

COST
£25 Standard day 9am-4pm
£32 Extended day 8.30am-5.30pm

LOCATION
Birchley St Mary's Primary School
Birchley Road, Billinge, Wigan

DATE
Monday Feb 12th - Fri Feb 16th

EARLYBIRD Discount 10% until Monday 9th October
Sibling Discount throughout 10% off second child
Both Discounts automatically applied at checkout

Ofsted
Registered

Please note that the camps will only run if numbers are viable.



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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