

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Newsletter No 3

November 2023

'Serving with Love; Striving for Excellence'

Dear Parents/Carers,


This term continues to be very positive and exciting, enriched with competitions, fundraising, educational visits, sports, music and art enrichment, within the wider community.

It is lovely to see the children preparing for their Nativities and Christmas, as we begin the season of Advent, and we look forward to welcoming you all to these towards the end of term.

As you are aware I will be moving on in January, after having been appointed Headteacher of another primary school and I will be working as part of a Federation of several local primary schools.

I have had 23 wonderful years at St Mary's Catholic Primary School since January 2001, with many special memories of pupils, staff, parents and governors. It has truly been a privilege to serve the school community. I thank our dedicated and hard working staff who work tirelessly for the needs of all our children. I am so very proud of each and every child and I thank you all for your ongoing partnership and support.

The governing body and the Diocese are currently securing the interim leadership for the school from January and this information will be shared with you in the coming weeks.

 Continue to check our newsletters and website: www.stmarysrcp.medway.sch.uk for upcoming events where additional up to date information can be found.

You can follow us on our official school 'X' Twitter account [@stmarysrcp_1894](https://twitter.com/stmarysrcp_1894).

Thank you for your continued support.

With best wishes to you and your families.

Mrs MJ Grabski
Headteacher

Christ the King

***Pilate summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"
Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:33, 36***

The Kingdom Jesus is talking about is the Kingdom of Heaven. No matter who we are or what we have done, Jesus offers us forgiveness, love, welcome and an invitation to a personal relationship with him. All we have to do is ask Jesus to be the King of our hearts.

Lord Jesus, your Kingdom is a Kingdom of truth and life. ***Lord have mercy***
Your Kingdom is a Kingdom of holiness and grace. ***Christ have mercy***
Your Kingdom is a Kingdom of justice, love and peace. ***Lord have mercy***

***Dear Jesus,
I invite you to be the King of my heart.
Help me to follow your ways and live well in your Kingdom.
Amen***



ATTENDANCE

It is a legal requirement for all children to receive full-time education. DfE policy states that:

“Parents should ensure their children attend school regularly, arrive at school on time, properly dressed and in a condition to learn”.

Irregular attendance will undermine the education of your child. A low attendance rate will seriously slow down your child’s educational progress; affect their learning and their friendships.

The governors at St Mary’s expect every child’s attendance to be 96% or above.

Unauthorised Absence

Any pupils arriving after 9.30am will be recorded as unauthorised absence which may result in the issuing of a penalty notice (unless the office has been previously notified). The Penalty Notice requires each parent to pay a fine of £120 within 28 days, which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in a Court Case.

Absences **will not** be authorised if:

- Another member of the family is ill
- The family have overslept or had a late night
- There are problems with uniform/clothing
- You take more days holiday than approved
- You have forgotten school dates
- There is an annual family event such as a birthday
- Your child attends a medical/dental appointment for more than ½ a day without written proof this is necessary
- You take your child shopping
- You are taking a family holiday

If your child’s attendance during the school year is... your child would have lost approximately... or they would have missed approximately...

95%	9 days	50 lessons
90%	19 days	100 lessons
85%	29 days	150 lessons
80%	38 days	200 lessons
75%	48 days	250 lessons
70%	57 days	290 lessons
65%	67 days	340 lessons

If in a school year your child is late everyday ... your child would have lost approximately ... or they would have missed approximately ...

5 minutes	3.5 days from school	20 lessons
10 minutes	7 days from school	41 lessons
15 minutes	10 days from school	55 lessons
20 minutes	4.5 days from school	82 lessons
25 minutes	22 days from school	123 lessons

USEFUL LINKS FOR E-SAFETY:

www.kidsmart.org.uk – Kidsmart is an award-winning Internet safety website for parents and those working with children. It has been developed by the children’s Internet charity, Childnet International, and has excellent information on many of the technologies used by children with guidance on how to stay safe online.

www.thinkuknow.co.uk – Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre’s website houses a range of information on how to stay safe online. It includes a unique facility that enables parents and young people to make reports of actual or attempted abuse online.

www.childnet-int.org – The Childnet International website gives internet safety advice and links for young people, parents, teachers and other organisations.

www.saferinternet.org.uk – On the UK Safer Internet Centre website, you can find e-safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe on the internet.

www.connectsafely.org – This site is built by parents for parents. It offers clearly written guidebooks explaining apps, services and platforms popular with children and teenagers.

www.betterinternetforkids.eu – A site promoting safe digital habits for children throughout Europe. It has blog posts trending internet topics and even has a hotline where families can receive support and report anything suspicious online.

CITIZENS ADVICE

Citizens Advice Medway, are a registered charity that offers free, independent, confidential, and impartial advice 24/7 for whatever you are struggling with. Whether that is housing, welfare benefits, employment, debt, family law, or something else.

People can visit or call for a brief interview called an Initial Check. Essentially a "triage" system, you may be given the information you need straight away or arrange for you to have a full advice interview or speak to a Project Worker on the same day or at a later date.

Alternatively you may be asked to call the national Citizens Advice Adviceline. You can browse self help information website at www.citizensadvice.org.uk. This has particularly helpful sections on a range of enquiry areas.

You can call on 01634 383 760 between 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Thursday.

You can visit between 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Thursday at the office:

Third Floor, Kingsley House, 37-39 Balmoral Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 4PF

E-SAFETY

The internet, social networking sites and the various devices used to access them, such as laptops, tablets and mobile phones, are playing an ever increasing and influential role in the lives of our children who use the internet for education, entertainment and communication.

The following internet advice aims to provide parents and children with information and resources to help develop safer habits when learning and playing online. Much of the advice about online safety is common sense but the school encourages parents to take time to speak with their children about what they are doing, who they are talking with and where they are going on the internet.

USEFUL POINTS TO REMEMBER

Computers should be used in a central place.

Encourage the use of technology in a central family area. This will make it easier to keep an eye on your child's activities. The best protection still remains that of adult supervision.

Speak with your child about where they go online.

Ask your child about what kinds of sites online and what mobile apps they like to use and why. Revisit the conversation from time to time. You could discuss:

- Their favourite online sites
- What they enjoy most?
- What are the fun aspects of being online?
- What do they think could go wrong?
- How would they react if things got out of control?

Be cautious of online strangers

Speak with your child about never arranging to actually meet a person they met online. Never share personal information with anyone online because they may not be whom they claim to be.

Be respectful

If you wouldn't be prepared to say it to someone in person, don't text it, instant message it, or post it as a comment online.

Remind your child that what goes online, can stay online

Referred to as your digital footprint or alternatively as 'digital dirt', explain that a silly or offensive picture or post put online today could stay online forever. It could prove embarrassing and detrimental when they are older. A picture taken and then placed online can very quickly become out of their control.

Consequences

Encourage your child to consider the possible consequences of their online actions. Suggest they stop for a moment to consider the possible consequences of their text or online post before they proceed. If the consequences of their online actions impact on school, the Behaviour Policy will be enforced.

Use privacy settings and sharing controls

Social networking sites have sharing and privacy controls to manage who sees their personal posts, photos, videos, etc. Using sharing and privacy settings correctly is very important.

Choose a sensible password

Remind your child never to give out their passwords. Instruct your child to create a memorable password preferably containing capital letters and numbers. It is also advisable to change this password occasionally and not to use the same password for all websites.

View online content critically

Just because you see something online, it is not a guarantee that it is true. Encourage your child to be critical as not everything is what it appears to be.

Further Advice and Information

If you have a particular concern or would like to speak about any issue of e-Safety in more detail, please contact a Designated Safeguarding Lead at our school.



CHRISTMAS NATIVITY DATES

NURSERY & YEAR R NATIVITY

This will be on **Friday 8th December at 2pm.**

YEAR 1 & YEAR 2 NATIVITY

There will be 2 performances but we ask that **no one attends more than once**, so that everyone has a chance to attend.

Tuesday 12th December at 2pm OR

Wednesday 13th December at 2pm

CHRISTMAS NATIVITY YEAR 5 & YEAR 6

Parents with children in Year 5 and Year 6 are welcome to join our celebration in Church on **Friday 15th December at 2pm.**

PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY, NO PHOTOGRAPHS OR VIDEOS CAN BE TAKEN DURING PERFORMANCES AT SCHOOL.

Thank you for your co-operation.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

St Mary's Christmas Lunch is scheduled for **Tuesday 19th December.**



CLASS CHRISTMAS PARTIES

Class Christmas Parties are scheduled for the afternoon of **Tuesday 19th December.**

Please send in a small selection of party food such as crisps, sausage rolls, cakes for the children to enjoy. Children can wear their party clothes all day for this occasion.

CHILDREN DUE TO START SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2024

If your child is born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020, they are due to start school in Reception Year in September 2024 and you need to apply now. Applications need to be made online via the Medway Council website.

SUGAR AND HEALTH

As a Healthy School, we ensure the children are taught that some foods present a possible health risk if they are eaten too often. Through the Personal, Social and Health Education curriculum and our work with the National Healthy Schools Standard, we teach children the importance of making healthy choices.

As we are all aware, consuming too much sugar can have serious effects on health and these issues may only appear later in life. Children can grow accustomed to a diet high in free sugars, and this habit will then be harder for them to break.

As a school, we are therefore raising awareness where possible, and encourage children to make sensible choices. We request that snacks consist of fruit or raw vegetables such as carrots for breaktime and the following items should not be included in packed lunches: chocolate and sweets. We ask that the only drinks provided are water, pure fruit juice or drinking yogurt and milk is offered to all children at the end of their lunch. Due to the risk of severe allergy, nuts (including peanut butter) must not be brought into school. Foods that are less healthy may be offered from time to time as treats or as part of whole school celebrations such as Christmas parties.

We request that children do not bring any sweets or cakes in to school to share with their class, firstly to consider the varied dietary and allergy needs of all pupils but also to support us in promoting healthy choices.

Thank you in for your co-operation.

FAREWELL

This term, we bid farewell to Mrs Giberson. We thank her for her hard work and contribution to St Mary's and wish her all the best.

WHY READ 20 MINUTES AT HOME?

Student A Reads	Student B Reads	Student C Reads
❖ 20 minutes per day.	❖ 5 minutes per day.	❖ 1 minute per day
❖ 3,600 minutes per school year.	❖ 900 minutes per school year.	❖ 180 minutes per school year.
❖ 1,800,000 words per year.	❖ 282,000 words per year.	❖ 8,000 words per year.
❖ Scores in the 90 th percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 50 th percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 10 th percentile on standardized tests.

Collect **FREE** funds for us any time you shop with Sign up now

Collect FREE donations for our school with all your online shopping!

A BIG THANK YOU to our School supporters and our **NEW** supporters, who have helped to raise school funds through www.easyfundraising.org.uk and I am pleased to inform you that so far we have raised **£837.78!** Please continue to support the pupils at St Mary's Catholic Primary School, by raising much needed funds to support our curriculum and events for the children, throughout the year.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stmaryscatholicprimaryschool1/>

School closes at 2pm on

Wednesday 20th December 2023 and re-opens on Thursday 4th January 2024

