ST MARY'S *CofE* PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Mary's Friday Flyer

Friday 27th November 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

Supporting Safe and Positive Digital Lives

As technology continues to evolve, helping children use the internet safely has never been more important. Whether they are completing homework, gaming with friends, watching videos, or communicating online, children are spending increasing amounts of time in digital spaces.

At St Mary's, we are committed to working in partnership with families to help our children become responsible, respectful and safe digital citizens. This week's Friday Flyer focuses on practical ways we can all support children to enjoy the benefits of technology whilst understanding how to protect themselves from potential online risks.

Why Online Safety Matters

The online world offers fantastic opportunities for learning, creativity and communication. However, alongside these benefits come challenges that children may not always be equipped to manage independently.



Current online safety concerns include:

- Exposure to misinformation and online scams.
- Increased use of artificial intelligence tools and chatbots by children.
- Access to age-inappropriate content through apps, games and social media platforms.
- Risks associated with sharing personal information online.
- Cyberbullying and negative online interactions.

By talking regularly with children about their online experiences and maintaining an active interest in what they do online, parents and carers can play a vital role in keeping them safe.

Our Commitment at St Mary's

Online safety is taught throughout the curriculum and is regularly reinforced through assemblies, classroom discussions and themed awareness events.

Children learn about:

- Safe and respectful online communication.
- Protecting personal information.
- Recognising scams and misleading content.
- Responsible use of social media and technology.

- How and when to seek help if something online makes them feel uncomfortable.

Our safeguarding team, Mrs Laura Oakes, Mr Paul Galvin and Mrs Fiona Rolls-Drew, are always available to offer guidance and support should any online safety concerns arise.

Creating a Safer Digital Environment at Home

While children develop essential online safety skills at school, there are several simple steps families can take at home.

Use Parental Controls

Parental controls can help families manage online activity and reduce exposure to inappropriate content.

Consider:

- Activating broadband filters through your internet provider.
- Setting screen time limits on devices.
- Restricting downloads and purchases.
- Monitoring app installations.
- Using family safety features available on smartphones, tablets and gaming devices.



Useful tools include:

- Apple Screen Time
- Google Family Link
- Microsoft Family Safety
- Xbox Family Settings
- Nintendo Parental Controls

Check Privacy Settings

Take time to review privacy settings on apps and platforms your child uses.

Make sure:

- Accounts are set to private where appropriate.
- Location services are disabled unless needed.
- Friend and follower lists are regularly reviewed.
- Strong, unique passwords are used.

Gaming and Streaming Safety

Many online games and streaming platforms include social features that allow children to communicate with others.

Parents can help by:

- Using age-appropriate settings.
- Enabling content restrictions.
- Checking who children are communicating with.
- Encouraging regular breaks from screens.
- Discussing what children should do if they see or hear something that worries them.

Social Media: Starting Safe Habits Early

Social media platforms can provide opportunities for connection and creativity, but children need support to use them safely and responsibly.

Things to Watch For



- Cyberbullying
- Online scams
- Pressure to share personal information
- Exposure to unsuitable content
- Contact from people they do not know

How Parents Can Help

- Have regular conversations about online experiences.
- Encourage children to tell a trusted adult if something concerns them.
- Follow age recommendations for apps and platforms.
- Model positive and respectful online behaviour.
- Agree clear family expectations for screen use.

Age-Appropriate Guidance

Children Under 11

Focus on supervised use of games, websites and video platforms. Personal social media accounts are generally not appropriate at this age.

Ages 11-13

Introduce greater independence gradually, ensuring strict privacy settings and regular parent oversight remain in place.

Ages 13-15

Continue open conversations about online behaviour, digital reputation and responsible social media use.

Ages 16-18

Support young people to manage their online presence independently while maintaining discussions around safety, wellbeing and critical thinking.

Let's Work Together

The most effective online safety tool is regular conversation. Children who feel comfortable talking openly with trusted adults are far more likely to seek help when they encounter issues online.

Thank you for continuing to work alongside us to ensure that every child at St Mary's can enjoy the opportunities of the digital world safely, confidently and responsibly.

Useful Websites for Parents and Carers

- Internet Matters – www.internetmatters.org
- UK Safer Internet Centre – www.saferinternet.org.uk
- NSPCC Online Safety – www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety
- Childnet – www.childnet.com

Christmas Jumper Day – Thursday 10th December

With the festive season fast approaching, we are looking forward to taking part in Christmas Jumper Day this December to raise money for Save the Children. This annual event brings schools, families and communities together to make a difference to children around the world while having a little festive fun.

Christmas Jumper Day is always a popular event at St Mary's, and we look forward to seeing a wonderful array of festive outfits while raising money for such a worthwhile cause. Further details, including how to donate, will be shared closer to the event.

Thank you in advance for your support and generosity. Together, we can help make a positive difference to the lives of children who need it most.

Rise Pupil Charter Santa Fun Run – Friday 4th December

We are excited to be taking part in the Trust-wide Santa Fun Run on Friday 4th December. Last year, schools across the Trust raised a fantastic amount of money for Rainbows Hospice for Children and Young People, and we are hoping to match that incredible achievement again this year.

Please keep an eye on your inbox and our social media channels, as details of our JustGiving page will be shared shortly for anyone wishing to support this wonderful cause.



For the event, we are asking children to wear a Santa hat or other festive Christmas headwear. As the run will take place outdoors, children will also need to come to school dressed warmly and bring a coat and wellies.

To celebrate their efforts, all children taking part will be treated to a hot chocolate and a biscuit afterwards, providing a cosy way to warm up and enjoy the festive spirit together.

Thank you for your support. We can't wait to see a sea of festive hats and smiles as we run together for such a worthwhile cause!

Christmas Tree Festival



The magic of Christmas has arrived at St Mary's Church, where the Christmas Tree Festival is now in full swing! Our school tree is looking absolutely wonderful and is proudly displayed alongside many other beautifully decorated trees from across the community.

A very special thank you to Mrs Oakes and Mrs Pole, who kindly gave up their time to set up and decorate our tree in the church. Their hard work has helped create a truly festive display, showcasing the children's handmade decorations and creativity.

The festival is open until Tuesday 1st December, so if you have the chance, do pop along with family and friends. It's a lovely way to spend some time together, admire the incredible trees, and soak up the festive atmosphere as we countdown to Christmas.

Next week, our tree will make its journey back to school, where it will take pride of place in the school lobby. We know the children will be delighted to see their handmade decorations on display and to share their festive creations with everyone who visits.

We hope many of our families will be able to visit the festival and enjoy this wonderful community celebration of the Christmas season.

Special Visitor to EYFS

This week, EYFS took part in the Rise Charter. We were delighted to welcome Martha and enjoyed showing her around our school grounds. The children drew pictures for her and took lots of photographs before she continued her journey to Redmile Primary School.

The visit supported Communication and Language through conversation and questioning, Personal, Social and Emotional Development through welcoming a visitor, and Understanding the World through exploring our school environment and wider community. We also used shadow puppets to explore light and dark, developing our understanding of the world alongside our creativity and imagination.



Christmas Trips

EYFS & KS1 – Cinema Friday 11th December **KS2 – Panto Tuesday 15th December**



Please ensure that all payments for the above trips are made through Arbor by the 4th December 2026.

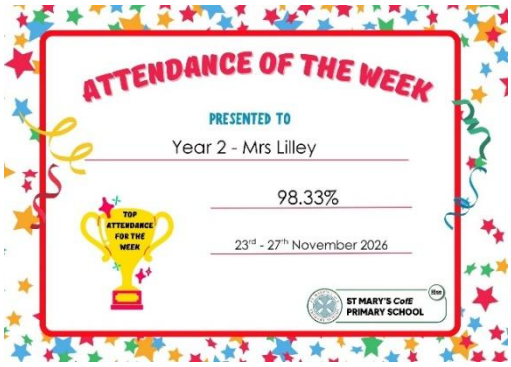
Any payments that are not made will mean that your child cannot attend and will remain in school with another class.



If you have any questions, please speak to Mrs Sanders in the school office.

Attendance of the Week

A huge well done to Year 2, who are our Attendance Champions of the Week with 98.33%



This is an especially fantastic achievement given that there are so many coughs, colds and seasonal bugs doing the rounds. Despite this, Year 2 have shown great commitment to their learning and have achieved the highest attendance in school this week.

Thank you to all our families for continuing to support good attendance wherever possible. Every day in school really does make a difference.

FoSMS Needs Your Help

FoSMS is incredibly proud of everything we do to support our school and provide those extra opportunities that make a real difference to our children. However, we want to be honest with our school community - we need more volunteers and more support with fundraising.



The funds raised by FoSMS help cover costs such as transport for school trips, keeping contributions from families as low as possible, and enabling us to run popular events such as school discos. Without enough volunteers, some of these events may not be able to continue. As we look ahead, we also need to carefully prioritise how our fundraising income is spent, focusing on the resources and opportunities that will have the greatest impact on the children.

You don't need to commit to every meeting or event. Even a small amount of time, occasional help, or support behind the scenes can make a huge difference.

Our Christmas events will still be going ahead and we're excited for the festivities to come. As we move into the New Year, we would love more parents and carers to get involved so that together we can continue providing those special experiences that make school life memorable for our children.

Our next FoSMS meeting will take place on Wednesday 9th December at 3.30pm. We'd love to see some new faces, so please come along if you can.

FoSMS is only as strong as the community behind it - every helping hand counts.



In **Year 1** our story for the week has been my absolute favourite children's book "I Want My Hat Back", and our sound in phonics has been the oo/ue/ew/u-e sounds (eg. moon, blue, chew,rude). In geography the children have enjoyed learning about where we live, and we've been using google earth and street view to peer from the highest mountains in the UK (from the safety of the classroom). In maths we've been looking at 3D and 2D shapes, spending a lot of time trying to remember which is a pentagon and which is a hexagon!

A very busy week for **Year 2** this week. We are nearing our dress rehearsal for our nativity so we are trying to do our play without scripts this week and learning our songs! We are continuing with our London topic and we have also had some fun with riddles after reading a poem that was all riddles about minibeasts and we had to work out what they were. Then we had a go at making our own riddles!

This week in **Year 3** we have begun our supported write for a persuasive advert. The children have loved reading about other adverts so far and are very excited to create their own. In maths, we have been looking at the four and eight times tables. They have listened really carefully and have made great progress as a result. In science, we have been looking at voluntary muscles (like the bicep) and involuntary muscles (like the heart). The children have found this super interesting! Finally, the children have been the most excited about our class book, Krindlekrax. We have left the book on a cliffhanger and they are desperate to find out more! What a fun and busy week!

This week in **Year 4**, we have started exploring food chains! We have been learning all about apex predators and thinking about where we fit into the food chain. In Maths, we have reached the end of our learning on times tables, so now it's all about practising and building our speed and accuracy! Next, we will be moving on to multiplying and dividing much larger numbers. We are also nearing the end of our class book, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*. It has been such a pleasure to share this story together on Friday afternoons. We have all become so invested in Edward's journey that we never want to put the book down!

This week in **Year 5** we have been building on our multiplication skills by learning how to multiply three-digit numbers by two-digit numbers. In DT, we have started an exciting new topic on bridges and have been investigating different types of bridge designs. We may even have some budding civil engineers in the class!

In RE, we have been learning about inspirational people from the past and present who have acted as "equality heroes", showing great courage in standing up for their beliefs and promoting fairness for others. We have also begun reading our new class novel, The Island at the End of Everything, which is a wonderfully moving and sensitively written story that has already captured the children's interest and imagination.

This week in writing, **Year 6** have been busy creating their own independent fiction pieces, all with an historical setting. In maths, we continued exploring ratios and put our new learning to the test with some real-world challenges. In science, the class had great fun recording and sharing their own short reports on animal adaptations. We've also wrapped up our computing unit on website design and are excited to dive into 3D modelling next week. Our contemporary dance moves were very impressive, and we made the most of the fresh air later in the week with some rugby skills practice in PE!

Dates to Remember 2026-2027

Print me and keep me handy!

Below are dates for this academic year. We will continue to add new dates, and these will be added in green.

Tuesday 1st December	Christmas Tree Festival closes at 12noon
Friday 4th December	Rise Santa Fun Run
	FoSMS Cake Raffle
Monday 7th December	KS1 Nativity
Tuesday 8th December	KS1 Nativity
Wednesday 9th December	EYFS Nativity
Thursday 10th December	Christmas Jumper Day (details to follow)
Friday 11th December	EYFS/KS1 Cinema Trip
Tuesday 15th December	KS2 Theatre Trip
Wednesday 16th December	Whole School Christmas Church Service at St Mary's Church
Thursday 17th December	FoSMS Carols, Coffee & Mince Pie Morning
	Santa's Grotto arrives at St Mary's
	Relish Christmas Dinner Day
Friday 18th December	Last Day of Autumn term
	FoSMS Break the Rules Day (details to follow)
21st December 2026 – 1st January 2027	**Christmas Holidays**
Monday 4th January 2027	School Open – Spring Term starts
Friday 8th January	FoSMS Cake Raffle
Thursday 21st January	School Census Day
Monday 25th January	NHS Height & Weight Checks for EYFS and Year 6 Pupils
Thursday 28th January	Rev'd Mary Barr Collective Worship
Tuesday 9th February	Safer Internet Day
Friday 12th February	**School Closed – Inset Day**
Monday 15th – Friday 19th February	**Half Term**
Thursday 4th March	World Book Day
	Rev'd Mary Barr Collective Worship
Wednesday 10th – Monday 15th March	Book Fair at School
Monday 15th March	Parents Evening
Wednesday 17th March	Parents Evening
Friday 19th March	Red Nose Day
Monday 22nd March – Friday 2nd April	**Easter Holidays**
Monday 3rd May	**School Closed – Bank Holiday**