



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

School Newsletter

Friday 30th January 2026

Morning Drop-off

All pupils (from Reception to Yr6) arrive from 8.40am via our Rockingham Road entrance.

This gate is locked at 8.45am each morning.

Collection Times

All classes (Reception to Year 6) finish school at 3.15pm.

Afternoon Nursery finishes at 3.30pm.

Please use our 1-way system, after school, to avoid congestion in our narrow Rockingham Close alleyway.

Pupil Bags in School

We ask that pupils only bring in book bags (and draw string P.E bags for their P.E uniform). Each child only has a single peg for these bags (in most cases in the main corridor) and we **do not have the space for rucksacks** or other bags. Thank you.

PE Kits

Each class has two set days for PE each week. Pupils may wear their PE kits and trainers to school on the days they have PE.

Pupils should not wear their trainers to school on any other day – thank you.



Dear Parent/Carer,

On Wednesday afternoon, our Year 5 pupils took part in an online workshop 'Celebrating Black Mathematicians with Big Ideas'. They were introduced to amazing mathematicians, past and present, and explored their field of maths with a special mathematical guest Katherine Johnson. Katherine Johnson worked for NASA and was critical to the success of crewed space flight – her story featured in the film "Hidden Figures". During this special event, they discovered more about the maths which made Katherine Johnson world-famous.

We have planned our curriculum to offer our pupils new and exciting learning experiences in the classroom and through extra-curricular activities. We want our pupils to see themselves in our curriculum and have provided lots of opportunities to make it diverse. You can find out more about our curriculum and the topics your child will be studying here:

<https://www.st-marys.hillingdon.sch.uk/page/?title=Curriculum&pid=10>

National Storytelling Week



Next week is the national Storytelling Week. This fantastic annual event is a joyful celebration of the power of sharing stories. Stories teach us about the world; they allow us to step into someone else's shoes and feel empathy; they help us to relax and escape and they can help develop essential literacy skills. **National Storytelling Week 2026 is a celebration of oral storytelling, reading and writing for pleasure.**

The theme for National Storytelling Week 2026 is: 'Soundtrack your Story'. Everyone has their own

musical story - whether it's in the songs we love and the music we dance to, the soundscapes of everyday life, or the soundtracks we hear in films and games. Music connects us to words: it helps us express who we are and how we see the world. Research highlights that exploring stories through lyrics can be an effective way to re-engage young people with reading for enjoyment and writing for pleasure.

Throughout next week, we will explore the magic of storytelling through sound, lyrics and rhythm and our school will be taking part in free online events and other classroom activities as a part of the National Storytelling Week.

Year 4 Class Assembly – on Tuesday

Year 4's class assembly will take place on **Tuesday (3rd February), at 2.45pm**. We will open up the front entrance to school, shortly before this time, for all visitors to take their seats in our school hall. All family members are most welcome to attend. The Yr4 children will perform their dress rehearsal for pupils on Monday.

You can see a list of all class assembly dates at the end of this Newsletter.

House Team – House Point winners this week:

St Thomas



Small Forks - Lunch Boxes

We are starting to see more and more pupils bringing 'mini' plastic forks into school in their lunch boxes. Some of these forks are very small and we have been advised by our school nurse that they could pose a choking risk especially for our Early Years and Key



Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) pupils. We ask that parents only send in larger sized cutlery into school in lunch boxes. School can provide forks, knives and spoons if needed. Thank you in advance.

Book Week 2026

This year's Book Week will begin on Monday 2nd March. We have planned lots of exciting activities for the children to enjoy as detailed below -

Tuesday 3rd March:

Read With Me (Parents are invited to join their child in class to read to them) at either 9 to 9:20am or at 2:40 to 3pm.

Bedtime Stories 4 to 4:45pm: Reception -Year 6 Children are invited back to school in their pyjamas to enjoy milk and cookies and of course a bedtime story.



Thursday 5th March (World Book Day):

Year 1 have an online workshop linked to The Snail and the Whale book.

Year 2 have a trip to the the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre.

Friday 6th March: Children can come to school dressed as their favourite book character. Our KS2 (Years 3 to 6 pupils) have an online Charlotte's Web themed workshop.

We will send out further details about some of these events closer to March.

Tiny Happy People

The BBC's Tiny Happy People website has been designed to help parents develop their child's language skills. You can explore their simple activities and play ideas here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

Limited (Full Time) Nursery Places - available for September

We have a limited number of 30 hours Nursery places available for September (8.30am until 3.30pm).

Our before and after school club provider also takes Nursery pupils enabling **wraparound care between 7.30am and 5.30pm each day** for pupils attending our school Nursery. This club finishes at 5.15pm every Friday. Parents can pick up an application form from our school office.

Please note: These places are limited and offered on a first come, first served basis.

Fun Fest Holiday Club

FEBRUARY HOLIDAYS

FUN FEST UXBRIDGE!



Upcoming Holidays

February Half-Term

16th February to
20th February
Monday - Friday

8am - 6pm

Follow
-US-



Bookings Open!

Booking Info

We are taking bookings

<https://fun-fest.co.uk/uxbridge>
St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Rockingham Close UB8 2UA Uxbridge
07399 880319
uxbridge@funfestholidayclub.co.uk

Our popular Fun Fest holiday club is once again returning to St. Mary's for the February half term break.

This club will take place, every day of the holiday, between 8am and 6pm.

Fun Fest are currently taking bookings:

<https://fun-fest.co.uk/uxbridge/>

Children's Centres

Children's centres offer a range of services to support parent/carers and 0 to 5-year-olds.

You can view the Hillingdon centres here:

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/10473/Contact-details-for-our-family-hubs-and-childrens-centres>

School Lunches

Your child will only be provided with a free lunch if you place an order on the iPay website. **Please note:** we are not sent any spare meals each day. Parents need to provide a packed lunch for any child without an order.

<https://www.ipayimpact.co.uk/IPI/Account/LogOn>

Place2Be – Parenting Smart

The Parenting Smart website is open to all parents and includes practical tips to support children's wellbeing and behaviour:

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/index>

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

ROBLOX

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Roblox is an online platform where users can play and create games known as 'experiences' made by other users. Roblox has a large UK audience. ITV News has reported that millions of people in Britain use the platform regularly, with children forming a significant proportion of its users. The sheer scale of it makes it extremely difficult to moderate effectively, creating risks for unsupervised children.

A PLATFORM RATHER THAN A GAME

Roblox differs from traditional video games in that it hosts millions of user-created experiences rather than a fixed set of developer-produced content. Each experience is self-rated by its creator rather than independently age-rated in advance, as is the case with PEGI-rated games. With millions of user-created experiences, moderation is largely automated which means that inappropriate content may reach younger players and have a harmful effect.

MATURE CONTENT

With much of Roblox's moderation automated through AI and creators self-certifying suitability, inappropriate content frequently appears on the platform. Some experiences may include content intended for older players. While Roblox has tools to restrict access based on age settings, these systems are not always perfect. Younger players are likely to encounter content you may deem unsuitable.

IN-GAME SPENDING

Roblox is free to play, but many experiences and cosmetics include optional purchases using Robux, the platform's virtual currency, to get advantages in games. This business model is common across online games, but reporting has highlighted cases where children have spent large amounts of money unintentionally or without understanding the real-world cost.

RISK OF ADDICTION

Roblox encourages repeated and extended play. Many experiences are made of short tasks, rewards, and progression systems that can prompt users to keep playing for longer periods of time. Some games also use reminders, daily rewards, or timed events to encourage frequent logins. These designs can make it difficult to stop playing. Spending long periods online may affect sleep, schoolwork, or other activities if boundaries are not in place.

COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER USERS

Roblox includes text and voice features that allow players to chat in shared game spaces. While the platform uses automated filters and moderation tools, media investigations have found that inappropriate and potentially harmful messages can still get through. There are risks that children could be targeted by groomers. In response, Roblox has announced changes to how chat works. The platform plans to use facial age-estimation technology to restrict chat access between adults and children they do not know.

Advice for Parents & Educators

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Roblox's parental controls provide an important starting point. Linking a child's account to an adult account allows parents to apply spending controls, limit communication features, and review recent activity. Regular supervision, use of parental controls, and conversations with children about what they see online can help reduce the risk of exposure to inappropriate content.

PLAY TOGETHER WHERE POSSIBLE

Playing Roblox with a child can help adults understand the types of experiences available, how monetization works, and how children interact online. This shared engagement can also make it easier for children to raise concerns if something feels wrong. Parents and educators should monitor all games played on Roblox due to its self-rating nature.

CONSIDER LIMITING OR DISABLING CHAT

Although Roblox is introducing tighter age-based chat restrictions, some parents and educators may prefer to disable chat entirely for younger children. Children can still play games while communicating with friends they know through other supervised platforms.

ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Many Roblox experiences are creative and age appropriate, and for many children the platform is an important way to socialise with friends. Rather than banning it outright, parents and educators should talk openly with children about online safety, spending, and how to respond to inappropriate behaviour.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is a technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechRadar, The Telegraph, The Evening Standard, The Guardian and The New Statesman.



See full reference list on our website

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Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 21.01.2028

WhatsApp and Social Media

Pupils learn about online safety every term and we have been reminding our KS2 children of these age restrictions on social media. To use WhatsApp in the UK, you need to be at least 13 years old.

Due to these age restrictions, **we strongly recommend** that parents do not allow any child (attending our school) to use WhatsApp or any other social media platforms rated 13+ due to the risks involved. You may find this NSPCC website useful – it looks at how to set up parental controls on your child's phone:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-safety-blog/2023-01-12-is-whatsapp-safe-for-my-child/>

What are the age restrictions on social media?

Age Restriction	Platforms
13	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Kik, Ask.fm, Houseparty, Periscope, Tumblr, Reddit, Pinterest
13+	WhatsApp, YouTube, WeChat, Whisper, Yubo
16	LinkedIn
18	Tinder, Bumble

(13+ means with parental consent)

Useful SEN Websites and Information

Hillingdon SENDIASS website: Hillingdon SENDIASS is a free, confidential and impartial support service for parents and carers, children and young people up to 25 years where the child or young person has or may have special educational needs. Their website includes useful information and links to a range of support groups available:

<https://www.hillingdonsendiass.co.uk/>

Hillingdon Autistic Care and Support (HACs)

A charity providing support for children with a diagnosis of autism and their families:

<https://www.hacs.org.uk/>

Hillingdon Local Offer

The Hillingdon local offer provides information for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their parents/carers. It allows families to see what they can expect from a range of local agencies and how to access them.

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/4654/SEND-local-offer>

Hillingdon Talks, Moves, Plays

Hillingdon Talks, Moves, Plays: Children's Integrated Therapy Service (CITS) is a team of Speech and Language Therapists, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, technicians and administrators, who deliver a community service for children and young people aged 0 to 19.

CITS operates an open referral system, which means anyone can refer a child or young person to any of the therapy services. We recommend parents, carers and professionals contact the advice line on 01895 488 200 to speak with a therapist for advice and to decide whether a referral is needed. You can find further information and parent advice on their website: <https://www.cnwl.nhs.uk/children-integrated-therapy-service>

Stronger Families Hub

The Stronger Families Hub operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide families in Hillingdon with information, advice and support.

<https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/stronger-families-hub>

Hillingdon Parent Carer Forum (PCF)

A team of volunteer parents/carers whose aim is to improve services and processes for Hillingdon SEND children. They exist to harvest the voice of parents/carers in Hillingdon, to help shape the services accessed by SEND children, by way of engagement with parents and co-production with the Local Authority.

If you wish to receive information emails, please sign up to their database. They have different levels of volunteering options: <https://hillingdonpcf.com/>

Speech Link – Parent Portal

Speech and language support for parents and carers:

<https://speechandlanguage.info/parents>

Kooth

Kooth.com, NHS-commissioned and BACP accredited, offers free, safe and anonymous online mental health support and counselling for 11-25 year olds across north central London:

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Safeguarding

If you are worried about a child's safety please do not hesitate to contact the school straight away. You can always speak to Miss Shevlin, the Designated Safeguarding lead, if you have any concerns about a child. You can also call Hillingdon Stronger Families Hub on [01895 556006](tel:01895556006). If a child is in immediate danger, call the Police immediately on 999.

It is all of our responsibility to safeguard children.

Instrumental Lessons

Instrumental lessons

Book a Free one-to-one Music Lesson

For children aged 4+ wishing to learn piano, guitar, ukulele and violin at our school.

Register by text to: 07782503260 and include:

Child's Name, Age, Music Instrument

Or

register at: www.stage talent.co.uk/register



Attendance

We are sure that like us, you as parents and carers, realise the importance of attendance and punctuality. At St. Mary's, we continue to work hard to try to raise attendance levels and to reduce instances of lateness. There is much evidence to show that good attendance plays a vital role in helping your child to achieve their potential. We also know that poor attendance can lead to other problems for children. **How can you help your child attend school regularly?:**

- Talk to your child about school. Make sure your child understands why school is important.
- Get everything ready for school the night before.
- Arrange appointments before or after school or during the school holidays.
- Take holidays during school holidays and not during term time.
- Set your alarm and your child's alarm clock- see who can beat the clock!
- Only grant days at home for genuine illness (you will know)!
- If your child is slightly under the weather, still send them into school- children often start feeling better as the day goes on and they get busy, and if the school is worried, we will call you.

Class Assembly Dates

We have planned for each class to lead an assembly either this, or next term. All class assemblies will take place in our school Hall on the dates listed below. All family members are most welcome to attend – please save the dates in your diaries:

Date	Class	Time
Tues 3 rd February	Year 4	2.45pm
Tues 10 th March	Year 3	2.45pm
Tues 24 th March	Year 5 (Easter Assembly)	2.30pm
Tues 28 th April	Year 2	2.45pm
Tues 19 th May	Year 1	2.45pm
Tues 14 th July	Year 6 (Leavers' Production)	2pm
Thur 16 th July	Year 6 Graduation Assembly	2.30pm

Diary Dates:

Please check our school website for a complete list of diary dates.

Date	Event
13/02/26	School finishes for half term (usual time)
23/02/26	School opens at 8:40am
23/02/26- 27/02/26	Swimming - Year 4
03/03/26	Year 6 Test Week
03/03/26	Read with me-Parents invited -9-9:20am: 2:40-3pm
03/03/26	Bedtime stories 4-4:45pm -Reception to Year 6
05/03/26	World Book Day- Year 2 Trip- Roald Dahl Museum
06/03/26	Children to dress as favourite book character
09/03/26- 13/03/26	Test Week
10/03/26	Year 6 - Parents Evening
10/03/26	Year 3 Class Assembly
12/03/26	Year 6- Parents Evening
23/03/26	Test week-Year 6
27/03/26	End of term -School finishes at 12:15 for Easter break
13/04/26	School opens at 8:40am
21/04/26	Parents Evening online
23/04/26	Parents Evening online
04/05/26	May Bank Holiday
11/05/26- 15/05/26	SATS week
18/05/26	Class photographs
25/05/26-29/05/26	Half Term
01/06/26	School opens at 8:40am.
08/06/26- 12/06/26	Swimming-Year 5
15/06/26-17/06/26	Year 6 Residential trip
18/06/26	Sports Day -EYS
18/06/26	Year 2- Windsor Castle Trip
30/06/26	Sports Day-KS1
02/07/26	Sports Day-KS2
03/07/26	Year 3 Chiltern Open Air Trip
10/07/26	Year 5 School Trip
14/07/26	Year 6 – Leavers Production 2:00pm
16/07/26	Year 6- Graduation
17/07/26	Last day of term. School finishes at 12:15.