



# St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

## School Newsletter

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> 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.**

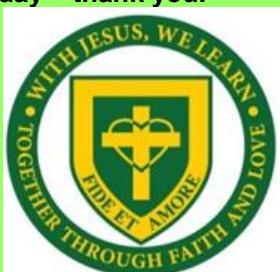
### **Pupil Bags in School**

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,

We hope you found this week's Parents' Evenings useful and that you enjoyed looking through your child's books and celebrating their achievements so far this academic year. Our next Parents' Evenings will be online and are planned for 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April (following our end of Spring Term Test Week).



Thank you to the parents who came along to our Coffee Morning on Tuesday morning. We hope you found the talk from the Uxbridge Family Hub helpful. Following on from this talk, parents can visit the hub this Tuesday (from 1 to 3pm) to chat with Hillingdon's SENDIASS team to ask questions and share experiences around Special Educational Needs (SEN). The hub is based in Uxbridge Civic Centre to the left of the main entrance steps (near the new library).

**You can find out more and register for this free event here:**

<https://discover.hillingdon.gov.uk/sendiass-drop-ins?eventid=7376-4354-4943-8012>

### **Year 6 Trip – Williams F1 HQ**



We are delighted to announce that our Year 6 pupils have been invited to visit the William's F1 Racing Team HQ on Wednesday. Their visit will include F1 themed workshops and a tour of the team's headquarters and their museum of F1 racing cars. The children are very much looking forward to the planned Esports sessions where they will get the chance to use their racing simulators (also used by the William's team and their drivers).

### **Speak Out, Stay Safe - NSPCC Assemblies**



On Monday, our Years 2, 5 and 6 pupils attended age appropriate assemblies led by representatives from the NSPCC. Speak Out, Stay Safe is a safeguarding programme that aims to equip a generation of children with the knowledge they need to stay safe. The aim of these assemblies was to help pupils understand their rights and where they can get help if they need it.

### **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.**



### **Grapes and Blueberries**

Our school nurse has asked us to remind parents: if sending grapes (or large blueberries) into school in lunch boxes to please cut these in half lengthways (and then ideally into quarters) as they can pose a choking hazard.

According to the NHS: '**grapes are the third most common cause of death in food-related accidents. The size and shape of them can completely plug a child's airway.**'

You can read more online here:

<https://cypf.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/health-and-development/child-safety/choking/>

## Fruit at Break Times

All pupils, from Reception to Year 2, are provided with a free piece of fruit (or vegetables e.g. carrot sticks) to eat during their morning break time. This is government-funded through the Department of Health as part of the '5 a day' initiative.

**Pupils in KS2 (Years 3 to 6) are not included in this free scheme but they may like to bring in an extra piece of fruit to eat during their break time from home.**



## Gymnastics Club - 8am Start Time

Our gymnastics club starts at 8am on Mondays and Wednesdays. We ask that pupils wait at the front entrance, just before 8am, each morning to be let into school.

**Please note: We do not have any staff in our office, on Wednesday mornings before 9am, and any pupils arriving late for the gymnastics club may find it difficult getting into school.**



## Plush Key Chains on Book Bags

All pupils have a book bag to carry their reading book, homework, letters etc. We don't mind if pupils wish to personalise their book bag by adding **one small key chain** but we have seen an increase in children bringing in multiple large plush (stuffed animal/character) key chains. Most year groups keep their book bags in their class trays but unfortunately some of our children can no longer do this due to the amount and size of the key rings attached to their bags. Thank you for your help.

## Parents' Digital Safety Guide

### **A Message from the Children's Commissioner:**

I am writing to inform you that I have recently published a new guide -

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/resource/what-i-wish-my-parents-or-carers-knew-a-guide-for-parents-and-carers-on-managing-childrens-digital-lives/>

Supporting children's safety is a shared responsibility between families, schools and wider society. For parents and carers, this responsibility has become increasingly complex as children's lives are now deeply intertwined with the digital world. Many parents face difficult decisions about how to balance protecting children from online harm with enabling access to spaces that are now central to learning, socialising and play.

When I speak to children about what they would do differently when it comes to being online, with the benefit of hindsight, I ask them: would they give a smartphone to their own teenager? Almost unanimously, they tell me no. They want to be protected from it as long as possible. Children are clear that they value firm, informed and protective boundaries when adults have concerns about the content they are accessing online.

As parents, carers, and educators, our job must begin and end with our children's care and safety. It's what they expect and what they want from you.

As one young person told me: "Don't be afraid to be firm... If you are worried [that] your child is seeing harmful content and you don't know what they're watching and it's affecting the behaviour, just take it that you know best – they don't."

Yours sincerely,

Dame Rachel de Souza (Children's Commissioner)

## Screen Time – Early Years Pupils.

A study published this month found that 2-year-olds with 5 hours of daily screen time could say significantly fewer words than those with the lowest screen time. Parents of under-fives in England are to be offered official advice on how long their children should spend watching TV or looking at computer screens.

You might like to read this new BBC report:

[https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c041e9xn3leo?i=1065772&sfmc\\_sub=1063737&l=52\\_HTML&u=32282496&mid=510001415&jb=18001&utm\\_source=SFMC&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=newsbriefing&utm\\_content=](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c041e9xn3leo?i=1065772&sfmc_sub=1063737&l=52_HTML&u=32282496&mid=510001415&jb=18001&utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsbriefing&utm_content=)

## **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**

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>

## **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/>

## **Useful SEN Websites and Information**

**Hillingdon SENIASS website:** Hillingdon SENIASS 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/>

## **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.stagetalent.co.uk/register](http://www.stagetalent.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 <sup>rd</sup> February	Year 4	2.45pm
Tues 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 3	2.45pm
Tues 24 <sup>th</sup> March	Year 5 (Easter Assembly)	<b>2.30pm</b>
Tues 28 <sup>th</sup> April	Year 2	2.45pm
Tues 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 1	2.45pm
Tues 14 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 6 (Leavers' Production)	<b>2pm</b>
Thur 16 <sup>th</sup> July	Year 6 Graduation Assembly	<b>2.30pm</b>

## Diary Dates:

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

Date	Event
13/01/26	Uxbridge Family Hub Talk & Coffee Morning, Refreshments from 8.50am Talk at 9am
21/01/26	Year 6 Trip
06/02/26	Read with me.-parents invited to join their children to read in their classes.
13/02/26	School finishes for half term
23/02/26	School opens at 8:40am
23/02/26- 27/02/26	Swimming - Year 4
03/03/26	Year 6 Test Week
05/03/26	World Book Day- Year 2 Trip- Roald Dahl Museum
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.