

Newsletter

Friday 14th February 2025



St. Mary's Catholic
Primary School

Dear Families and Friends

Busy fortnight!

Of all the seasons, I think Spring is my favourite. Despite the awful weather that we can have, I love being reminded of the potential in nature around us. Daffodils and snowdrops, dotted along the roadside and hedgerows, add a splash of colour. The days are getting longer, and we have had some amazing sunsets these past few weeks. I love Spring and witnessing nature waking up after its winter slumber. It also reminds me of all the exciting things we can look forward to in school as the weather gets warmer.



As part of Children's Mental Health Week, the children explored this year's theme of 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself', with the aim to equip and empower children to embrace self-awareness and explore what it means to them. We spent time with the children helping them to discover how getting to know who they are can help them build resilience, grow and develop. Internet Safety Day, which also took place during the same week, enabled the children to explore the theme 'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online'.

Our Growing In Faith Team (GIFT) organised a Fair Trade Café. This group of children work hard to make a positive impact, not just locally, but globally. Through their dedication and creativity, they put together this event raising £81 for People First Dorset, whilst also promoting the importance of Fair Trade.



Everyone matters and is loved by God.

Recycling

Message from Mrs Myatt:

Following suggestions from our Eco Club members, we are working to increase recycling opportunities within our school. After meeting with Celia Jardin-Smith from Marnhull Hub, we have decided to start recycling some of the items they collect.



To introduce this initiative gradually, we will focus on a few different recyclable items each month. This month, we are collecting **bread bags and felt tip pens**.

Children may bring these items into school and place them in the **grey recycling caddy**, or alternatively, they can be deposited in the **green bin in the car park**. Once we have gathered a collection, our Eco Club will sort the items ready for recycling.

**MOMENTS
MATTER,
ATTENDANCE
COUNTS.**

Attendance and punctuality

Government departments track school attendance figures. We have a whole school attendance target which is 96.5%. Our attendance is currently at **94.9%** which is **now even further below** our national target than when I last wrote to you. **Can I please remind you that term-time holidays are not permitted.** Thank you again for working together with us in ensuring your child does not miss out on valuable education. Please check the NHS website for guidance. <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

St Anthony – 89.97%

St Mark – 95.18%

St Francis – 96.93%

St Alban – 95.22%

Lateness is on the increase. Please remember that the bell rings at **8:45** and that is when the gates will be closed. **There are STILL families consistently arriving after the bell.** Since the start of the school year, there have been 79 recorded late before the register closes and 23 late after the register closes. It is unsettling for the children and disruptive to everyone. If this is you, and you know that you are often late, please make a greater effort to ensure you leave your house earlier or sign up for breakfast club. Anyone arriving after **8:45** will be marked **late** in the register. Thank you for your understanding in this matter. **Please email or phone the office to alert school for any absence or lateness.** Can I also ask that you are prompt picking up your children at the end of the day. **We are often still waiting for children to be picked up at 3:25/3:30pm.**

Celebration Assembly



We look forward to seeing you at Celebration Assembly on Fridays. Remember to be there at 2.45pm, so we can start at 2.50pm. Please do park in the playground if you are staying for the assembly. Thank you.

Sleep tight workshops

Suitable for families with children 12 months or older who are struggling with sleep.

“Did you know that up to 50% of children struggle with sleep at some point, which rises to 80% where there is a diagnosis of SEND (special educational needs and disabilities)?



Poor sleep can lead to cranky mornings, trouble focusing on school, and even long-term health challenges - not to mention tired, stressed-out parents.” Vicki Beevers Founder and CEO of The Sleep Charity.

Sleep Tight workshops are held online over five weeks and each session is around 2 hours long. During the workshops we will look at the science of sleep, what can go wrong and strategies to support. Attendees will get some sleep diaries to track their child's sleep to see if we can identify what the issues may be for their child.

Online sessions are currently starting from Friday 2nd May 12:30pm. for parents to book onto an existing session or to ask for more information they can directly email beststartinlife@dorset.gov.uk

School Uniform

Please can you ensure your child has appropriate school uniform, **which is labelled clearly**, including a warm coat.



Winter Wear

Boys	Girls
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium grey long trousers or shorts• Red school sweatshirt with school logo• White button through shirt• Tie – red with blue stripes• Grey socks• Sensible black or dark brown shoes. No trainers or boots	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medium grey skirt, pinafore dress trousers• Red school sweatshirt or cardigan with school logo• White button through shirt• Tie – red with blue stripes• Sensible black or dark brown shoes. No trainers or boots

PE Kit

Please can I remind you that on PE days, for health and safety, children should not be wearing any earrings. If this cannot be avoided, please ensure your child wears (surgical)tape over their earrings. Can we also request that children in **KS2** wear long socks and bring shin pads for their PE days. **There are still several of the older pupils wearing PE Kit on non-PE days.**



Keeping Safe online

Following on from our Internet Safety Day, it has come to our attention that children are still accessing inappropriate content online – whether it is gaming, YouTube or videos. E.g Squidgames which is rated 15 due to its violent nature and sexual content. Please be aware of keeping your children safe online – check your parental settings etc.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

"Inappropriate" means different things to different people. What's acceptable for one age group, for example, may be unsuitable for a slightly younger audience. Online, young people can chance upon inappropriate content in various ways – from pop-up ads to TikTok videos. The increasingly young age at which children become active in the digital world heightens the risk of them innocently running into something that they find upsetting or frightening. Trusted adults need to be able to help children be aware of what to do if they're exposed to age-inappropriate content.

WHERE IS IT FOUND?

SOCIAL MEDIA

Age-inappropriate content is easily accessible through many social media platforms. TikTok, for instance, is hugely popular with young people, but is arguably best known for clips featuring sexualised dancing or profanity. Some social media users also express hate speech or promote eating disorders and self-harm, which could cause lasting damage to a child's emotional and mental health.

GAMING

Gaming is an enjoyable source of entertainment, but many popular titles can expose children to inappropriate material such as violence, horror, gambling or sexually explicit content. Playing games unsuitable for their age risks normalising to children what they are seeing. Some games also include in-game chat, where other (usually older) online players often use language that you probably wouldn't want your child to hear or repeat.

STREAMING

The range of video streaming services available online means that users can find almost anything they want to watch on demand. Children are therefore at risk of viewing TV shows and movies which contain nudity, drug and alcohol abuse, explicit language and extreme violence. Unfortunately, these streaming platforms can't always determine that it's not an adult who's watching.

ADVERTS

Online adverts frequently include age-inappropriate content: usually gambling and nudity or partial nudity, although adverts for alcohol or e-cigarettes are also common. Some search engines also feature adverts that are responsive to your search history: so if you've recently looked up a new horror movie, shopped for lingerie or ordered alcohol online, then the ads appearing on screen could reflect this the next time your child borrows your device.

18 Advice for Parents & Carers

TALK IT THROUGH

Embarrassment or fear of getting into trouble can make it difficult for children to talk openly about age-inappropriate content they've watched. Remind your child they can always come to you if they're troubled by something they've seen online, without worrying about consequences. Before offering advice, discuss what they saw, how they felt and how they came to find the content in question.

CONNECT, DON'T CORRECT

If your child's been particularly distressed by exposure to content that wasn't suitable for their age, it's important to offer guidance to prevent them from repeating the same mistake – but it's equally vital to help them deal with the emotions that the situation has raised. You could tell them about any similar experiences you might have had at their age, and how you dealt with it.

BLOCK, REPORT, CONTROL

After discussing the problem, you and your child can take action together. This could include blocking any inappropriate sites and reporting any content which violates a platform's rules. To further safeguard your child online, set up parental controls on internet-enabled devices that they use. This will significantly reduce the chances of your child being exposed to age-inappropriate content in future.

GET SPECIALIST HELP

Age-inappropriate content can potentially have a negative impact on a child's mental health, which is sometimes displayed through changes in their behaviour. If the problem becomes more severe, you might consider reaching out to a mental health professional or an expert in this field who can provide you and your child with the proper support.

STAY CALM

Even though it is obviously difficult to stay rational in a situation where your child has been put at risk, it's essential to think before you react. Your child may well have hesitated to open up to you about watching inappropriate content for fear of the consequences, so being calm and supportive will reinforce the notion that it would be easy to talk to you about similar issues in the future.

Meet Our Expert

Crissy Jorgensen is a Registered Counsellor with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, and she runs a private practice offering counselling to children, teenagers and families. Her main focus is creating awareness and educating the community on the mental health pressures of today's world, as well as resources and techniques to understand and cope better.

National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.education.gov.za/documents/2009/Programme%20on%20the%20importance%20of%20preventing%20children%20from%20accessing%20age-inappropriate%20content%20on%20the%20internet>
<https://www.nos.org.za/2022/04/20/parents-carers-need-know-age-inappropriate-content/>

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 01.12.2021

Do remember that we have **Breakfast Club** which starts at 8am every day and costs £2.75 per session.

Busy Bees After School Club has 3 sessions:



3:15 - 4:15pm - £4.00

3:15 - 5:15pm - £8.50

3:15 - 6:00pm - £12.00

Pre-school hourly rate is £5.00.

Government funding (nursery vouchers) for eligible 3- and 4-year-olds can be claimed for a maximum of 15 or 30 hours (where eligible) per week over 38 weeks of the year. Additional hours will

be charged at £5.00 per hour.

Please use School Money to book your child in for any sessions but note that you can't book through School Money on the day.

After school clubs

Teacher led After School Clubs run from 3:15 until 4:15pm.

Day	Clubs
Monday	Book Club - Miss Smith
Tuesday	Eco Club - Mrs Myatt Football KS2 - Mr Young
Wednesday	Prime Sports KS2
Thursday	Choir - Mrs Baldwin

Please be prompt picking up your children at the end of their club. Thank you.

PTFA

We are busy gearing up for our tuck shop after half term with plans to hold **three** before Easter. The Tuck Shop will be held in the hut rather than the school foyer to hopefully help with queuing and cars as well as avoiding any wet weather. We'll be selling croc charms as well, so if you love your crocs come along!



We have been paid by easyfundraising this quarter, which is brilliant. We have to have over £15 of cash back to enable a payout, so thank you to everyone who has signed up and is using it.

Don't forget if you need any pre-loved uniform, we have request forms in the school foyer for you to fill in - just post it in our returns box.

Our next meeting is **Tuesday 4th March 7.30 - 9.30pm** in the School Hut. As always, everyone is welcome to come along.

If you have any ideas or suggestions, please do let us know either on the school run or at stmarysmarnhullptfa@gmail.com

Many thanks
The PTFA

Introducing our

FRIDAY TUCK SHOP

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY

28TH FEB
14TH MAR
28TH MAR

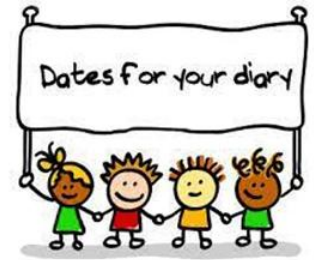


AFTER SCHOOL
FROM 3.10PM
IN THE HUT,

A SELECTION OF SWEETS, SNACKS AND
DRINKS FOR POCKET MONEY PRICES

Dates for your diary:

- **Monday 24th February – INSET Day**
- **Tuesday 25th February - children return to school**
- **Tuesday 4th March – PTFA Meeting 7.30-9.30 school hut**
- **Wednesday 5th March – Ash Wednesday – Lent begins**
- **Wednesday 5th March – Yogi Forest School**
- **Thursday 6th March – World Book Day**
- **Friday 14th March – Mass and Lent Day of Faith tbc**
- **Tuesday 1st April – Parents evening 3:30 – 5:30pm**
- **Thursday 3rd April – Parents evening 4:30 – 6:30pm**
- **Friday 4th April – last day of Spring Term**
- **Easter Holidays**
- **Tuesday 22nd April - children return to school**
- **Friday 23rd May – break up for Half Term**
- **Monday 2nd June – INSET Day**
- **Tuesday 22nd July – break up for Summer Holidays**



God Bless

Sharon Betts
Headteacher

Term Dates 2024-25		Half Term holidays	Inset Days
Autumn Term 03.09.24 – 20.12.24	Children start school Wednesday 4th September 2024 Children break up for Christmas holidays on Friday 20th December 2024	Children finish for half term on Friday 25th October 2024 and return to school on Tuesday 5th November 2024	03.09.24 04.11.24
Spring Term 06.01.25 – 04.04.25	Children start back at school Monday 6th January 2025 Children break up for Easter holidays on Friday 4th April 2025	Children finish for half term on Friday 14th February 2025 and return to school on Tuesday 25th February 2025	24.02.25
Summer Term 22.04.25 – 23.07.25	Children start back at school Tuesday 22nd April 2025 Children break up for Summer holidays on Tuesday 22nd July 2025	Children finish for half term on Friday 23rd May 2025 and return to school on Tuesday 3rd June 2025	02.06.25 23.07.25