Newsletter – Friday 23rd October 2026
St Mary's Primary School

Our Vision: We believe, we achieve, we suceed in God's family.

With God, all things are possible. Matthew 19:26

School Value - Compassion

Welcome

Dear Parents, Carers, and Members of our School Community,

As we reach the end of our Autumn half term, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our children, staff and families for their continued hard work, support and enthusiasm. It has been a busy and rewarding few weeks, with lots of wonderful learning, achievements and memorable moments to celebrate. I hope you all enjoy a restful half-term break, take time to relax and recharge, and return ready for another exciting half term ahead. Thank you for being such an important part of our school community.

Reminders for the new half term-

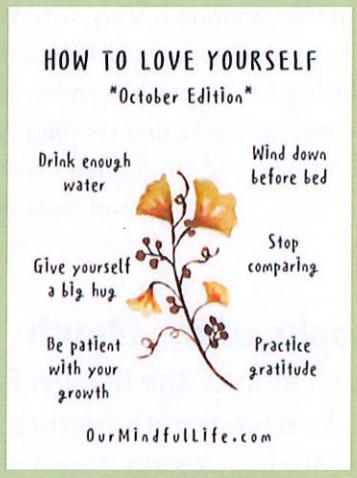
Please do remember to send your child back to school with warm layers, wellies and waterproof outerwear for their forest school sessions as we head into the colder months of the year.

The deadline for panto payments is coming up in Novemebr so we would be very grateful if you could consider clearing this over the next few weeks. Please do speak to us if this is going to be a problem.

The school menu is now published on ParentPay and bookings can be made up to Christmas.

Thank you so much for your support,

Mindful Moments





Dojo Messages

- SWF Library Amination Workshop
- SWF Library Video Game Competition
- J9 Support Services
- Mrs Baldry Sand Play Training
- Trust Battle of the Bands
- Harvest Festival
- ParentPay Balances
- Admission Consultation
- Admission Arrangements 28/29
- School Reports
- Mrs Walker's Golden Stickers



A Note from Mrs Walker

This week has been another busy and successful week.

This week, Olive and Henry represented our school brilliantly as they visited one of our Trust schools to take part in a Pupil Voice event focused on British Values. They embraced the opportunity to share their views, listen to others and contribute to important discussions. Both children did a fantastic job, demonstrating confidence and pride in representing our school. They truly embodied our school values of Community and Courage, and we are incredibly proud of them both. Well done, Olive and Henry!

A huge thank you to all our families for your generous Harvest Festival contributions and for joining us in school today to celebrate our Harvest Festival assembly. It was wonderful to see so many of you there to support the children and share in this special occasion. The children worked incredibly hard preparing their performances, and it was a real joy to see them shine on stage. For some children, this was their very first time performing in front of an audience, and they showed such bravery and confidence, truly demonstrating our school value of Courage. We are so proud of every child and grateful for the continued support and generosity of our wonderful school community.

Netball club with Miss Francis will resume after half term, with a focus on honing skills, building confidence and improving overall fitness as we head into the colder months. Sessions will provide a great opportunity for players to develop their game, stay active and enjoy playing netball throughout the winter season.

FOREST SCHOOL sessions the week after half term. Acorn Class, Friday AM session, Chestnut Class, Thursday AM session, Oak Class, Thursday PM session.

School photos are taking place on Monday 9th November, the registration code was shared on Class Dojo. Please do register as all photos come direct to parents.

Wishing you all a wonderful half term break, we look forward to seeing you on Tuesday 3rd November after our planned inset day on Monday 2nd November.

THANKFULNESS ~ COMMUNITY ~ COMPASSION ~ TRUTHFULNESS ~ COURAGE ~ FORGIVENESS

Reading for Pleasure

We would love to encourage all of our families to make time for reading for pleasure at home. Reading together, sharing a story, listening to an audiobook, talking about a favourite book or simply allowing your child to choose something they enjoy can make such a difference. When children see reading as something fun, relaxing and enjoyable, rather than something they only do for school, they are more likely to develop a lifelong love of books and reading. Even just 10 minutes a day can open up new worlds, spark imagination, build vocabulary and strengthen children's reading skills. So, snuggle up, share a story, talk about what you're reading and most importantly, make reading a happy part of family life! ❤️📖

Books of the Month

Each month, the Review Panel highlights recommended new children's books. Our top five picks each month feature newly published children's books that we think you'll love just as much as we do. From picture books and poetry to novels and non-fiction, we love shouting from the rooftops about the best new children's books when we find them. Each month, our panel of experienced teachers, librarians and children's book experts carefully selects five outstanding titles for your pupils to read, with a mixture of fiction and fact, and longer and shorter reads to excite young readers. Some of the books are linked to curriculum topics, and others are brilliant reading for pleasure choices or storytime read-alouds.



October 2026

https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/books-of-the-month/best-books-this-month-october-2026/









Acorn Class

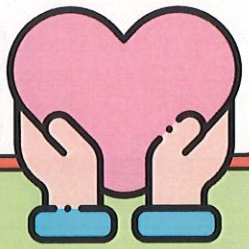
This Week In Class

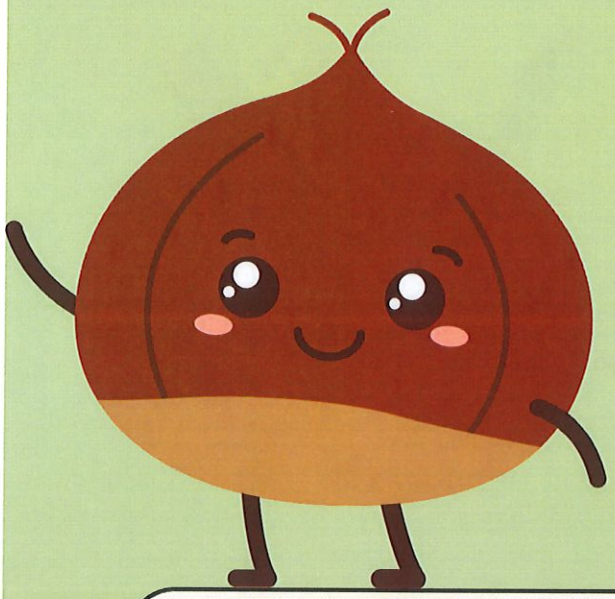
This week, Acorn Class have been working hard to prepare for the harvest festival! Everyone has a role, whether this is showing their work, singing or speaking in front of an audience. We have worked hard to fully understand harvest, why Christians are saying thank you to God during this time, and how some countries do not have as much food to enjoy as we do. As well as this, we have thought about how some people in this country do not have enough, and we have clarified the role of the donations and the food bank. Thank you to our school community for making sure that we have had so many donations for harvest.

In art this week, we made sure our creative journals were all covered and looking good for the whole class (they look great!) Then we used handwriting pens to draw shells or snails with spirals on. The challenge was to use the pen to draw the fine details, but also to try 'continuous drawing' where the pen doesn't leave the paper, and sometimes you have to go back over what you've drawn!
We were very disappointed not to visit St Mary's Church on Wednesday, but we learned more about it and we are definitely set to return on a drier, less windy day. We know that it would not have been good to be walking so near to the road and the cars with such deep puddles, plus slippery grass and a strong wind! We can't wait to go soon!

Caught You Caring

This week Freddie Budgen was Caught Caring. Freddie was caught caring when another child wanted to sit next to his friend, and he kindled offered to give up his chair and find another one. This was very kind of him!











Chestnut Class

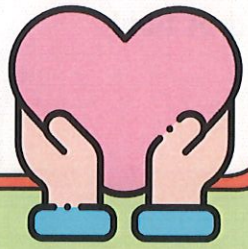
This Week In Class

We have had a really busy half term and everyone has really settled well into year three and four. We've worked really hard and made good progress. This week in English we have been looking at advertising and how to persuade people to do what we would like them to do. In Vipers reading we have finished our topic of Stone Age and will be moving on to a new topic after half term. In maths we have been doing assessments.

We have been doing lots of rehearsals for Harvest Festival this week and I'm really proud of everyone's efforts. In history we have finished off our Stone Age topic with researching monuments on the laptops. In PSHE the children focused on fabulous friends and the children picked a name of a child who they were going to be especially friendly with. We have finished our Spanish and learning about instruments this term and will be doing music after half term.

Caught You Caring

This week Eve was caught caring. At Forest School Eve let all of her classmates have their 'smores first and made sure to thank the adults at the end of the sesison.











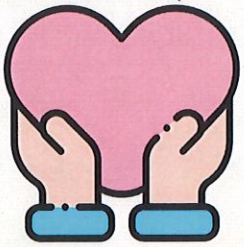
Oak Class

This Week In Class

It has been another busy and exciting week in Oak Class, with the children working hard across the curriculum and taking part in some special events. We have enjoyed developing our skills, exploring new ideas and celebrating our learning together. Our Harvest Festival performance was a particular highlight, and the children should be very proud of their efforts! In our reading lessons this week, we have been focusing on summarising texts. The children have been developing their ability to identify the most important information, distinguish key details from less significant information and express the main ideas in their own words. These are valuable skills that will help them to develop their reading comprehension and become more confident, independent readers. In writing, we have been celebrating the season by composing our own harvest poems. The children have explored ways to use rhyme, rhythm and descriptive language to bring their poems to life. They have thought carefully about vocabulary choices and how to make their writing engaging for an audience. It has been lovely to see their creativity shine through, and we have enjoyed preparing our work around this special time of year. Our mathematical learning has focused on fractions. The children have been exploring equivalent fractions and developing their understanding of the relationship between mixed numbers and improper fractions. We have practised converting between the two forms and considered how fractions can represent the same value in different ways. These concepts require careful thought and plenty of practice, and the children have been working hard to strengthen their understanding and apply their knowledge to a range of problems. In science, we have been investigating electricity. The children designed their own fair tests, deciding what they wanted to investigate and considering how they could make their experiments fair. They then carried out their investigations, observing what happened and thinking carefully about their results. It has been particularly pleasing to see the children taking ownership of their learning by generating their own questions and planning how to investigate them. Developing these scientific enquiry skills is an important part of becoming curious and independent scientists. Our history learning has taken us to the life of Harriet Tubman. We have explored her remarkable story and considered her role in helping enslaved people escape to freedom through the Underground Railroad. Her courage, determination and commitment to helping others have provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the importance of standing up for what is right, even when doing so is difficult. Her story has encouraged thoughtful discussions about freedom, equality and resilience. The children also took part in a resilience workshop, exploring the importance of persevering when things feel challenging. We discussed how mistakes can help us learn, why it is important to keep trying and how a positive attitude can help us overcome obstacles. These are important lessons that we can apply in our learning and everyday lives. A huge highlight of the week was our Harvest Festival performance! The children worked hard to prepare and perform for the school community, sharing the spirit of harvest through their contributions. We are incredibly proud of the confidence, teamwork and enthusiasm they demonstrated. Thank you to everyone who supported the children in making the celebration such a success.

Caught You Caring

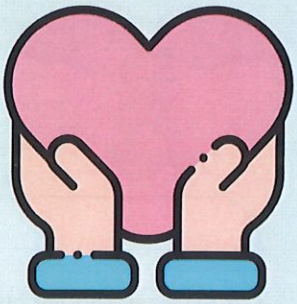
This week Benji was caught caring. Benji volunteered to clear away the play equipment sensibly after break, he was a good role model to the younger children. Well done Benji!





Caught you Caring

Teachers and staff are invited to submit the names of pupils they "catch caring" along with a brief description of the act of kindness they observed. These moments will then be shared and celebrated, helping to reinforce our school values and inspire others to follow their example.



Joe Naulder
Joe was caught caring being kind and nurturing to a number of children this week.
Well done Joe!

Oliver Bennett
Oliver was caught caring helping to set up the sensory circuit for children to use and thinking of the safety of the children using it.
Well done Oliver!

Luna Hearn
Luna was caught caring tidying up the classroom without being asked. Well done Luna!

John-Boy Smith
John-Boy was caught caring when he kindly offered to clean the tables after lunch
Thank you and well done John-Boy!

A huge thank you to all the children who have received a Caught You Caring certificate this half term! We are so proud of you for always finding ways to be kind, show you care and treat others with compassion. Whether through a thoughtful word, a helping hand or a simple act of kindness, you are making a real difference to those around you. Keep shining and showing us all how to live out our school value of compassion: We see, we care, we help!

EPIC

Empowering Parents and Carers.
Inspiring Children.



Benefits

- Confidential one-to-one coaching and wellbeing support for parents and carers
- Support with stress, anxiety and feeling overwhelmed
- Building confidence and resilience
- Family relationships and communication
- Supporting your child's emotional wellbeing
- Parenting, school and life challenges

Sessions available at school or via Zoom

Confidential • Supportive • Flexible appointment times

Special subsidised rate **£30** per hour (normally £60)

Delivered by Sheila Moses

• Telephone: **07956123335**

Website: mellow-minds.com

Attendance

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

On Time: First Time, Every Time



Which CIRCLE are you in?

TARGETS

Whole School Attendance Target is: 95%

National Attendance Target is: 93.5%

Whole School Attendance this week is: 92.08%

Pupils with 100% attendance this week: 54

THIS WEEK

Reception	94%
Year 1	88%
Year 2	97%
Year 3	89%
Year 4	78%
Year 5	98%
Year 6	100%

LATENESS

Collective Worship will be held at 9.05am each morning and attended by all staff, including the office staff. It is important that your child arrives on time for school. If they arrive after 9.05am then you will need to wait with your child until Collective Worship has finished at 9.20am as there will not be any staff to let them in. Collective Worship is a legal entitlement in a Church of England school and a time of reflection and respect.

STUDYBUGS

If your child is absent from school please:

- Contact the school via Studybugs on the first day of absence before 9.00am . (This is our preferred method of communication for sickness absence)
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 9.00am;
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible.

If you haven't already, please download the free studybugs app, or register on the studybugs website and use it to tell us whenever your child is ill and unable to attend school.
The tool helps us to know sooner if your child is unaccounted for. It is quick and easy to register and automatically reminds you to keep us posted. Please use the following link to register:
https://studybugs.com/about/parentsIf you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office

FOREST SCHOOL

THIS WEEK

This week at Forest School, Chestnut class and Oak class enjoyed spending time around our campfires, where they had the opportunity to toast marshmallows and make their own delicious s'mores. The children loved watching their marshmallows toast over the fire before sandwiching them between biscuits to create this tasty treat. The campfires provided a lovely opportunity for the children to come together, enjoy the experience and develop their understanding of fire safety while spending time outdoors.

We also got creative with some lovely autumn-inspired crafts using conkers, string and pipe cleaners. The children used their imaginations to turn these natural treasures into a variety of different creations, exploring different ways to join materials together and make their own unique designs. It was wonderful to see their creativity and enthusiasm as they experimented with the materials and shared their ideas with one another.

During free play, the children made fantastic use of our loose parts, including tyres, pallets, logs and crates. These open-ended resources encouraged the children to work together, solve problems and use their imaginations to create all sorts of structures and imaginative play scenarios. Some children enjoyed spending time in the mud kitchen, mixing, creating and preparing all sorts of wonderful mud-based concoctions!

The children also had the opportunity to get creative with paints, decorating a variety of logs, pallets and pieces of wood around our Forest School area. It was lovely to see them adding colour and personality to our natural surroundings, taking pride in their artwork and helping to make our outdoor space even more vibrant and inviting. The children also continued their creative work from last week by beginning to paint the clay creatures they had made. They carefully added colour to their creations, bringing their clay faces to life. It was lovely to see the children developing their original ideas and taking pride in their finished artwork. These colourful creations will help to brighten up our Forest School area as we move further into the autumn and winter months.

As always, it was wonderful to see the children embracing the freedom of outdoor learning, developing their creativity, teamwork and problem-solving skills while enjoying time in nature. Whether they were gathered around the campfire, making crafts, building dens or exploring their own ideas during free play, the children made the most of their Forest School sessions!

Unfortunately, due to the heavy rain and strong winds, Acorn class were unable to enjoy their Forest School session outdoors this week. Instead, we brought the fun inside and enjoyed a variety of creative Forest School crafts in the classroom and hall. The children used colourful pipe cleaners to make fun creations, created expressive clay faces, and made fun and imaginative creatures using conkers and pipe cleaners. They also had some Forest School-themed colouring sheets and a word search to enjoy. Although the weather prevented us from exploring outdoors, the children embraced the change of plans and had a lovely time getting creative, using their imaginations and enjoying some woodland-inspired activities indoors.

Finally, I hope you all have a lovely half term break and I look forward to welcoming the children back for more forest fun when we return to school.

Miss Wilson - Forest School Lead

Collective Worship

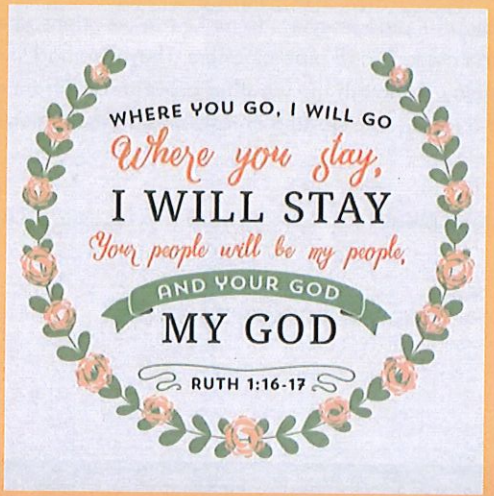
This week...

This week, Mr Gatenby led our Collective Worship, focusing on our school value of compassion. He reminded the children that compassion means "We see, we care, we help." Together, they explored how we can show compassion in our everyday lives by noticing when others need support, caring about how they feel and taking action to help.

Mr Gatenby shared a short story about a child who was always wishing for more, encouraging the children to reflect on the importance of gratitude and appreciating what we already have. This linked beautifully with the Bible story of The Ten Lepers (Luke 17:11–19), which reminds us of the importance of noticing our blessings and giving thanks. The message was clear: when we stop to notice and give thanks, we discover how rich we already are.

The children also worked together to create an acrostic poem using the word COMPASSION. They came up with some wonderful and insightful ideas about what compassion looks like in action, demonstrating a thoughtful understanding of how small acts of kindness can make a big difference to others.

To conclude, Mr Gatenby shared the beautiful words from Ruth 1:16–17: "Where you go I will go." These words reminded us of the importance of loyalty, standing alongside others and showing that we care through our actions. It was a lovely opportunity for the children to reflect on how they can live out our school value of compassion each day, remembering that we can all make a difference when we see, care and help.



FOURTH SUNDAYS

All are welcome!

- Songs
- Bible Story
- Refreshments



Every 4th Sunday of each month

10:00 AM - 10.45 AM



Holy Trinity Church
Trinity Square
South Woodham Ferrers

www.holytrinityswf.org.uk

Facebook: Holy Trinity South Woodham Ferrers



A Service of Memorial & Thanksgiving

Remembering those we have loved and miss



Sunday, 1st November at 3pm

St. Mary's Church
Woodham Ferrers, Main Road, CM3 8RF



UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Activity	Who
26-30.10.26	Half Term	Whole Shool
02.11.26	Trust Inset Day	Whole Shool
09.11.26	School Photos	Whole School
11.11.26	Flu Spray 1pm -3pm	All pupils with consent
12.11.26	Trust Maths challenge	Selected pupils
12.11.26	Muslim Society Visit	Whole School
13.11.26	Children in need - Wear spots and odd socks Cultural celebration day	Whole School
13.11.26	African Drumming Workshop	Whole School
13.11.26	FOSMS Disco	Whole School
16-20.10.26	Anti Bullying Week and Road Safety Week	Whole School

NEW TERMLY MENU

This is our new Autumn Term menu which begins on 3rd September and runs through to taking us right up to Christmas. This is now published on ParentPay for bookings. We work a week in advance for bookings. The deadline for bookings is 12pm Friday for the following week.





	Meat-free Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Tomato and basil pasta V with garlic bread and side salad or Cheese / tuna baguette	Pitta bread pizza with cheese V or ham with potato wedges and side salad or Cheese / ham baguette	Roast chicken or Quorn fillet V with roast potatoes, veg and gravy or Cheese / ham baguette	Cheesy ham and broccoli pasta or Cheesy broccoli pasta V Cheese / ham baguette or Jacket potato with cheese / beans / tuna	Sausage Chips and Beans, or Quorn Sausages Chips and Beans V Cheese / ham / tuna baguett
	Fruit & yoghurt	Fruit & yoghurt	Fruit & yoghurt	Fruit & yoghurt	Baked treat
Week 2	Cheese and tomato pasta V with garlic bread and side salad or Cheese / tuna baguette	Fish Fingers, Chips, Peas & Sweetcorn or Veggie Fingers V or ham with potato wedges and side salad or Cheese / ham baguette	Sausage roast or Quorn sausage roast V or Cheese / ham baguette	Meatball or no meat ball V pasta bake with salad or Cheese / ham baguette or Jacket potato with cheese / beans / tuna	Chicken nuggets or Quorn nuggets V with potato wedges and beans or Cheese / ham / tuna baguette
	Fruit & yoghurt	Fruit & yoghurt	Fruit & yoghurt	Fruit & yoghurt	Baked treat

Clubs

Autumn Term After School Clubs Sept - Dec 2026

We are delighted to confirm that we will be providing the Clubs below from September 2026.

Clubs will run up to W/C Monday 7th December.

No Clubs will run on the last week of term with the exception of Multi Skills with Mr Thomas

KS1 & KS2 Multi Skills Club – Monday 3.15pm – 4.00pm
This after school club is available for all year groups and will be run by Mr Thomas. Please book direct with Mr Thomas as per the flyer.

KS1 & KS2 Film Club – Tuesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm
This after school club is available for all year groups and will be run by Mrs Carlier. Currently full, with a waiting list.

KS1 & KS2 Lego Club –Wednesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm
This after school club is available for all year groups and will be run by Mrs Richardson. Currently full, with a waiting list.

Year 6 Tutoring Club – Thursday 3.15pm – 4.15pm
This after school club is available for Year 6 and will be run by Mr Austin. (This will be managed in groups throughout the year).

KS1 & KS2 Coding Club – Thursday 3.15pm – 4.15pm
This after school club is available for all year groups and will be run by Mr Gatenby. We have spaces available on this club.

Friends of St Mary's School - FOSMS

Welcome to the Autumn Term!

Autumn inspires reflection, change, and beauty, reminding us to embrace transformation and the richness of life.

Welcome Friends!

<u>Our AGM is Coming Up!</u>

Our Annual General Meeting will be taking place this Autumn, with the date to be confirmed very soon.

The AGM is a great opportunity to look back on what FOSMS has achieved over the past year, share plans and ideas for the year ahead, and elect our committee for 2026/27.

Last year was a hugely positive one for FOSMS, with **over £18,000 of investment** secured for St Mary's through fundraising, grants and wider support for the school community. We're excited to keep building on that momentum in the year ahead.

This year, the following committee roles will be available:
Chair • Vice Chair • Treasurer • Vice Treasurer • Secretary

You do not need previous PTA experience to get involved – just an interest in supporting the school and being part of a friendly team.

If you might be interested in one of the roles, would like to know more about what is involved, or would simply like an informal chat, please do get in touch. We would be very happy to hear from you.
📧 <u>contact@fosms.co.uk</u>

Coins in a Jar

Coins in a Jar is back! Will Acorn Class be the victors for a third year running??

Any spare change you have please do give it to your child to bring in and pop in their class bottle. As always the winning class have their funds matched up to £100!

Can you help?

As always, we can only run our fun events and raise money for our school with help from volunteers. If you feel you could spare a few hours or share some new ideas over the course of the school year to lend a hand, we would love to hear from you!

contact@fosms.co.uk

BERLESDUNA
ACADEMY TRUST

BERLESDUNA VACANCIES

MARCH 2026

https://www.berlesduna.co.uk/information/vacancies/

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. We expect all staff and volunteers to share our commitment. All successful applicants will be subject to an enhanced DBS check, medical clearance and satisfactory references. We are an equal opportunities employer.

Crays Hill Primary School
HLTA. Applications close 6th November 2026. Interviews week commencing 9th November 2026.

St Nicholas C of E Primary School
Midday Assistant. Applications close 2nd November 2026. Interviews 9th November 2026.