

St Mary's C of E Primary School E-Newsletter

School Value: Forgiveness

Friday 4th April 2025

Our Vision: We believe, we achieve, we succeed in God's Family.

A note from the Headteacher.

As we come to the end of our busy Spring Term, I would like to reflect back on our successes this term.

- We welcomed Chris Connaught, an inspiring Author into school and the children were fascinated to listen to some of his stories and went on to write and illustrated their own versions.*
- We welcomed PC Dan in to school for a Police Visit. He visited all classes to speak to the children about the role of the Police and the children had the opportunity to try on some of the uniform.*
- We embraced our Essex PINS Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools. Successful training sessions were held with Parents which included; Neurodevelopmental Diversity, Learning & Executive Functioning, Emotional Regulation.*
- As part of the PINS project, the Autism Bus from Essex visited us providing staff with a powerful and immersive experience of what it feels like to be a child with autism.*
- We celebrated the Chinese new year with a workshop, pupils enjoyed a variety of engaging activities, including storytelling, traditional crafts, and games that highlight the significance of Chinese New Year. The children also had lots of delicious Chinese food to taste test and review.*
- We have welcomed our new Parish Reverend in to school to deliver regular Collective Worship assemblies. During these assemblies the children have learnt about Lent, the purpose of Prayer and Kindness.*
- We have had the pleasure of showing around many prospective parents during the term for Mid-year applications and EYFS starters, we have welcomed 4 new pupils during the Spring Term.*
- Our school has taken part in the Tesco's "my happy mind project" This programme will teach children the science behind their mental health, and give them the skills to create positive wellbeing that will benefit them for the rest of their lives. The community has been able to vote with tokens in store for our project. We are currently waiting for an update from Tesco's.*
- Keith Pullen our School Improvement Partner visited STM to meet with staff and pupils throughout the day and provided us with some wonderful feedback.*
- We had new electric gates installed creating a safer environment for our staff and pupils.*
- The whole school had a fantastic time at the Chapel celebrating shrove Tuesday. All the children enjoyed making and eating their delicious pancakes. The children were asked to illustrate what they would give up for Lent and then participated in some Easter card crafts.*
- It was wonderful to see the children dressed "as a word" for World Book day which raised money towards some resources in the class reading corners and school library.*
- We participated in the Trust Science Competition. Our pupils completed a number of experiments using different materials and then recorded their findings. They also wrote and performed a presentation around their findings along with some beautiful artwork to the other ten schools present.*
- We celebrated Red nose day alongside Holi day which is a joyous and religious Hindu holiday and also known as the 'festival of colour'.*
- This week we wore blue for Autism awareness to help keep that conversation going about autism and making sure that those with autism and their families don't feel alone.*
- We enjoyed our Design and Technology days and the children created some amazing work! We welcomed our families in to view their children's work at the end of the second day.*

Thank you for all your support this term, lets make the Summer Term even more amazing. At the end of this newsletter you will find our diary dates for the Summer Term.

I hope you all have a wonderful Easter break and I look forward to welcoming you back to school on Tuesday 22nd April.

Mrs Walker

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about iPADS

Apple debuted the first iPad in 2010, kickstarting the tablet market, and it remains the best-selling tablet to this day. Although Apple doesn't offer a child-specific version, iPads are hugely popular with youngsters due to their ease of use and endless choice of apps. There's a selection of models, with different-sized screens and distinct features – including the standard iPad; the iPad Air; the iPad Pro; and the iPad mini. Thankfully, they all offer parental controls so you can regulate how your child uses the device ... and how long they spend on it.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

PHYSICAL DAMAGE

While some tablets (such as the Amazon Fire Kids editions) come with rugged shock-proof cases, iPads aren't built for rough and tumble. They're also more expensive than most other tablets, and any damage your child's iPad suffers could be costly to repair. Buying a child-friendly case and screen protector for the device could be a wise move, especially if it's being used by younger ones.

SCREEN ADDICTION

Like most digital devices, tablets have the potential to become quite addictive. You might find your child spending too long staring at their iPad, which could lead to irritability, mood swings and a loss of interest in more important tasks. If this happens, be sure to visit the built-in screen time settings and ensure you limit how long they're able to spend on the device each day.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

18
CONTENT

Even if it would never occur to your child to go searching online for age-inappropriate sites, apps or information, there's always a possibility that something unexpected – perhaps a video that auto-plays or content incorrectly suggested by an algorithm – could appear on their tablet and upset them. You can help prevent this by adjusting the content settings (see our 'top tips' section below).

SIRI SUGGESTIONS

The parental controls built into iOS (the fundamental operating system of Apple devices) enable you to block access to most age-inappropriate content – but your child could potentially still bypass these restrictions (either accidentally or deliberately) by using Siri, Apple's voice-activated digital assistant. To avoid this, toggle the 'Ask Siri' functions to 'off' in the iPad's settings menu.

Advice for Parents & Carers

ENABLE FAMILY SHARING

Before letting little ones loose on an iPad, it's a good idea to set up Family Sharing, as this lets you utilise the parental controls to manage exactly how your child is able to use the device. You can do this fairly easily by going into the iPad's settings; once there, you'll be able to add an existing Apple account (if your child already has one) or set one up from scratch.

APPLY SOME LIMITS

The 'Downtime' function allows you to tell the iPad to lock itself at certain periods (at mealtimes or before bed, for instance), while 'App Limits' removes access to certain apps once they've been used for a specified length of time each day. The iPad can display a reminder when these limits have nearly been reached, letting your child mentally prepare for the end of their gaming or viewing time.

STOP ACCIDENTAL SPENDING

To empower your child with an increased sense of freedom on their device (without giving yourself something else to worry about in the process) you could enable the iPad's 'Ask to Buy' feature. Whenever your child tries to download or buy an app, game or product, the iPad sends you a request to approve (or deny) it. This option only becomes available if you've set up Family Sharing.

SET CONTENT AND PRIVACY RESTRICTIONS

The parental controls can stop the iPad from displaying explicit or age-inappropriate content (in apps like iTunes and Safari, for instance) when your child is signed into their account. You'll also be able to restrict the capacity to download and install apps, and you can specify permissions which prevent children from changing the iPad's privacy settings once you've selected them.

TRACK IT DOWN

Just like the iPhone, Apple's iPads have 'Find My' software to help you locate your child's iPad – or indeed, any linked Apple devices that have gone AWOL, including phones, watches and AirPods. If you enable 'Find My' in the settings menu, it will display the last known location of an iPad that's been mislaid, as well as giving you the option to lock a missing iPad that you suspect has been stolen.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 16 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech website The Register, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



NOS
National
Online
Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

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[@national_online_safety](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn8v1t1v1v1v1v1v1v1v1v1)

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Acorn class had a lovely session this week. We talked about our allotment and about the different things that we were planting. A group of the children helped to plant sweetcorn and then watered them and we are hoping that it will produce some lovely corn on the cob. A few of the children drew pictures onto wooden disks and hung them on the trees as decorations. We also had the magnifying glasses and binoculars out with us and the children had great fun bug hunting; they found lots of worms, a centipede and a bright green caterpillar. Towards the end of the session we made sure all the flowers had been watered and we then played a game on the field. Well done Acorn class.

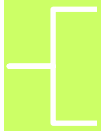
Chestnut class had a lovely session this week too. We split the class into two groups and one group went over to the allotment to plant potatoes and broccoli while the other half had free play and did other activities. Then we switched the groups over and the second half of the class planted their potatoes and broccoli. Some of the children played at being archaeologists and went on a "dig" in our mud area. The mud kitchen was in full use as well and the children wrote menus on slabs of wood and made wooden signs for open and closed. A couple of other children made up a "worm shop"; they had collected up worms and placed them in little pots with soil and leaves and pretended to sell them. Fantastic imaginative play Chestnut class, well done!

Another great week for Oak class. The children finished weeding, clearing and digging along the back fence so that area is now completely ready for our sunflower seeds to be planted. We also finished prepping the remaining plants tubs in the allotment and we scattered wild flower seeds in the three large tractor tyres. The children played nicely in the mud kitchen and had fun climbing the two large trees; they also enjoyed whittling some willow sticks. Two of the boys used bailing twine to make a bench seat hanging between two trees which was very impressive! A great session again Oak class, well done!

Freddie Forest Bear enjoyed his weekend with Louisa and is now settling down for a brief hibernation over the Easter break.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Easter.

Miss Wilson—Forest School Lead



Collective Worship



THANKFULNESS COMPASSION COMMUNITY TRUTHFULNESS COURAGE FORGIVENESS

Rev Jacqui took our assembly on Wednesday and told with the children a story from the bible Luke, Chapter 13 verse 6-7.

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. **2** Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? **3** I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. **4** Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? **5** I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish."

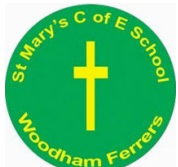
6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. **7** So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?'

8 "Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. **9** If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

Reverend Jacqui explained to the children the in this story the Trees represented us, the people, the gardener represented Jesus, and the fruit represents the good we bring to the world.

She explained that in telling this story, Jesus was really talking about us and about God. God had "planted" us here on this earth and he expects us to produce good fruit in our life. What kind of fruit does he expect? When He looks at the way we live our life, he wants to see things like love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and gentleness.

Reverend Jacqui told the children that God was always with us, loves us and is ready to forgive us.



MENU

w/c 21.04.25

A reminder that we require meals to be booked one week in advance on ParentPay.

The cut off for this is 9am every Monday for the following week.

If you have missed the deadline you must ensure your child has a packed lunch with them.

<i>Easter Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
	Chicken Nuggets	Sausage Roast	Mild chicken curry	Fish Fingers
	Quorn Nuggets	Quorn Sausage Roast	Quorn fillet curry	Veggie Fingers
	Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans	Ham / Cheese Baguette	Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans	Ham / Cheese / Tuna Baguette
		Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans		Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans / Tuna

Dojo messages this week:

- ◇ Summer Term Menu
- ◇ Year 6 Leavers trip—Chelmsford Cathedral
- ◇ Year 6 SATS Breakfast
- ◇ World Autism Day
- ◇ Gardening Lunchtime club
- ◇ Essex Fire Museum

Summer Term Clubs

KS1 & KS2 Multiskills Club

Monday: 12.30pm—1:00pm

Mr S.Thomas—EKC

KS1 & KS2 Film Club

Tuesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm

Mrs Beard

KS1 & KS2 Science Club

Tuesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm

Mrs Carlier

KS1 & KS2 Gardening Lunchtime Club

Wednesday 12:30pm—1:00pm

Miss Wilson

KS1 & KS2 Lego Club

Wednesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm

Mrs Matthews

KS1 & KS2 Art Club

Wednesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm

Mrs Fallon

Year 6 Tutoring

Thursday: 3.15pm—4:15pm

Mr Austin



AFTER SCHOOL MULTISKILLS CLUB

MONDAY - ALL YEARS - UNTIL 4.00PM



For half termly costs and start/finish times, please visit:

Book online: www.essexkidscamp.co.uk/activities

Email: info@essexkidscamp.co.uk



@Essex Kids Camp

dates to Remember

Please note that dates are subject to change.— Check Dojo events page for further info

Date	Activity	Who
7th—21st Apr	Easter Holiday	
22nd April	Children return to school	
22nd April	Earth Day 2025	All classes
28th April	EYFS—NCMP Year 6—NCMP	Acorn Class Year 6
30th April	Essex Police Visit	All classes
1st May	Trust Orienteering Competition	Selected Pupils
2nd May	Non Pupil Day	
12th May	KS2 SATS	Year 6
12th May— 16th May	Mental Health Awareness Week	
22nd May	Year 2 Writing session in Chestnut Class	
22nd May	EYFS & Yr 1 Working in Partnership	
23rd May	Non Pupil Day	

dates to Remember

Please note that dates are subject to change.— Check Dojo events page for further info

Date	Activity	Who
3rd June	Paul Hannaford at WDF - Y6 only - accompanied by a parent - then back to school.	Letter from SW Partnership to follow. Proposed start time 9:30am-11:30am
3rd June	Power to Inspire	
10th June	Year 6 Leavers service Chelmsford Cathedral	
12th June	Trust Football / Netball Tournament @ The Willows School	
18th June	Trust Swimming gala	
20th June	Year 6 Cyber safety & Knife crime with Essex County Fire and Rescue Service.	
24th June	Essex Food & Farming day	Chestnut Class
25th June	Trust Pupil Voice @ St Mary's School— Forest School	
26th & 27th June	Year 6 Bikeability—TBC	
4th July	Books, biscuits and Blankets	
7th July	Sports day Parents on field at 11.50 - picnic/bbq lunch (PTA). Sports Day start at 1.30pm - BBQ/Games after school	

dates to Remember

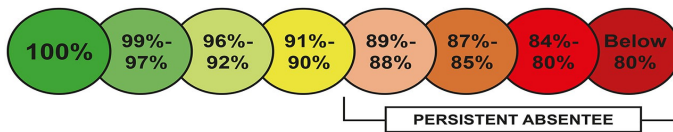
Please note that dates are subject to change.— Check Dojo events page for further info

Date	Activity	Who
11th July	School reports home	
11th July	Year 2 writing session in Chestnut—English	
11th July	EYFS & Yr 1 Working in Partnership	
14th July	Class Swaps EYFS Transition morning with Parents	
14th July	Sports day reserve date	
16th July	Class swaps EYFS Transition morning without Parents	
17th July	Art Gallery	2pm Parents will have an opportunity to view pupils work and discuss reports if they wish.
21st July	Year 6 Leavers Trip—TBC	
22nd July	Year 6 leavers assembly	



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

On Time: First Time, Every Time



Which CIRCLE are you in?



Reception	93.7%
Year 1	92.3%
Year 2	92.2%
Year 3	96.1%
Year 4	93.6%
Year 5	92.3%
Year 6	90.4%



Whole School Attendance Target is: **95%**

National Attendance Target is: **93.5%**

Whole School Attendance this week is: **91.6%**

Pupils with 100% attendance this week: **54**

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/parents> If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office

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.

Friends of St Mary's School (FOSMS)



A note from FOSMS

Wow, we are finishing this term on a high!

Thank you all so much for supporting our Mother's Day / Special Person sale this month, and also our Easter raffle.

We are always so grateful that your support never waivers and I'm so proud of the wonderful supportive school community we have. I will update you soon with the totals we managed to raise for our school and our children.

We have had our Easter Hunt today which the children loved, a little different to previous years and I have to confess I've made the children work for their treats this year but lots of fun was had.

Congratulations to our raffle winners, we hope you enjoy your prizes.

The coins in a bottle challenge has come to an end and we have taken the bottles to have a count up - we will announce the winning class after Easter. The winners will have the total they raised matched by FOSMS up to a maximum of £100 for them to purchase class resources. The other two classes will receive back what they managed to raise to put towards fun resources for the last term of the year!

Please save the date - Thursday 8th May for our VE Day celebrations 2pm-4pm on the school field.

Lastly, we wish you a peaceful Easter break and we can't wait to see you back in a few weeks - we have so much planned for the Summer term and I'm going to need some volunteers to help us pull it all off. Just teasing you up nicely for my begging requests to come.

With very grateful thanks, FOSMS