

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

School Value: Forgiveness

Friday 28th March 2025

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

A note from the Headteacher.

On 2nd April 2025 we will be wearing **BLUE** to keep that conversation going about autism and making sure that those with autism and their families don't feel alone. The colour blue is associated with Autism Speaks' "Light It Up Blue" campaign, which promotes understanding and acceptance of autistic individuals. Children can be in non uniform on this day wearing blue.

This week we have had 2 days assigned to Design and Technology and as always the children have created some amazing work!

Acorns have been investigating healthy nutritional fruits and vegetables to make their own smoothies. Chestnut class have been planning, assembling and sewing their own beautiful cushions and Oak class have been researching, designing and making their own pop up books.

We cannot wait to share their work with you and welcome you to come in at 2:45pm.



A huge well done to Chestnut class this week for their beautiful Easter garden creations. I am sure you will agree they are very special and the children have worked extremely hard.

Well done!



On a sad note, we have unfortunately received a further complaint has been received from a resident regarding parking and conduct:

Can you please send out communication again to remind your parents about NOT parking over our drives in Ormonds Crescent and to be more respectful (verbally) towards the residents when they are politely asked not to.

Whilst we continue daily, to turn a blind eye to the smaller cars which park in this space, it is not big enough for the larger cars as they prevent us from entering/leaving our properties. The constant parking on the corner (by telephone box) where the yellow lines are, has resulted in the kerbstone coming away from the path. This in turn will probably mean that more will now come away! Whilst we do understand that the school has no control over where and how the parents park, we remain disappointed of your parents' attitudes towards local residents.



Please can I ask that you:

- **Avoid blocking driveways** - Even if you're stopping briefly, do not park in front of residents' driveways.
- **Follow parking regulations** - Observe posted signs, yellow lines, and other restrictions.
- **Do not double park** - This can cause congestion and safety hazards for pedestrians and other drivers.
- **Be mindful of noise** - Keep noise levels down, especially early in the morning and late in the afternoon.

*As we approach the end of term, please take a moment to check your **ParentPay** account and clear any outstanding balances. Ensuring accounts are up to date helps keep school services running smoothly.*

Thank you for your cooperation and continued support!

Please also remember to collect medication from the school office if it is no longer required. We currently have an overflowing first aid cupboard!

A big thank you to FOSMS who are hosting our Significant female sale in school today—thank you to all the parents/carers who have paid in advance making this easier to organise. Thank you

A little reminder that we have our Easter Production 3rd April. We are looking forward to welcoming our Grandparents and Senior citizens at 09:30, then our Parents/Carers at 2pm.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend, Mrs Walker

10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage...

THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. Those emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, what usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often devolve into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel (like they fail) or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance: striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people hear "gaming" they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges that are overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity: it's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain; that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

Meet Our Expert

Daniel Jacobson is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247.



NOS National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.ofcom.gov.uk/consult/condocs/gaming/gaming-children-and-young-people-report-2022.pdf>



Classroom News

Acorn Class:

Year 1 and 2 have been looking at statistics in maths and this week we have had fun learning all about tally charts and gathering information. Reception have been learning about 9 & 10 and using 10 frames to support their learning. In Science our plant topic is going well, we are watering and observing our beans daily. We are experimenting with growing an avocado seed and are patiently waiting. In Literacy we have been looking at ways we can improve our writing and remembering those important grammar features. PSHE is teaching us all about money and where it comes from and how we keep it safe and make it grow by saving. It was also lovely to have our significant females in school for our little celebration for Mother's day.

Mrs Fallon—Class Teacher

Chestnut Class:

In English this week, children undertook an independent creative writing task to showcase their creativity and writing skills. In Maths, we have continued with fractions- looking at adding fractions and mixed numbers. In Science, the children have been experimenting with different sound insulators. Our highlight this week has been our DT days. The children have tried extremely hard with making their cushions. Although some children have found this difficult, all children have shown great perseverance and resilience to create their final products.

Mrs Carlier—Class Teacher

Oak Class:

This week in Oak class we have published our textbooks in our English lessons and been learning how to calculate and comparing volume in maths. In geography we have looked at the different types of forest found across the world, comparing and contrasting the flora and fauna. It happens and the effect that it has. In art, we have looked at Sue Andrews' paintings of tropical plants and used these as inspiration for our own. We have had two packed days creating our pop-up books in DT and year 6 have completed the last assessments before the SATs.

Mr Austin—Class Teacher



Acorn class were very excited to be planting some seeds in our allotment this week. A group of children finished prepping one of the large tubs and added compost to it, before planting some carrot seeds. We are looking forward to watching the growing process over the coming weeks. Another group of children helped Miss Smith to clear and weed the area along the back fence of the field. This not only makes the school grounds look a lot tidier, but it is great preparation for planting sunflowers on World Earth Day. After these jobs had been completed, the children enjoyed playing in the mud kitchen, the digging area and the dens. A productive, yet fun session Acorn class, well done!

Chestnut class also cleared and weeded some of the back fence area. We dead headed our flowers and made sure they were watered, especially as the weather is starting to improve. The children continued with their nature spots and had fun climbing the two large trees in our forest school area. We talked about the allotment and unfortunately we had run out of compost so were unable to plant anything. Chestnut class will however be planting potatoes in their session next week. A few of the children did some painting in the art area and others used their imaginations and played games. One of the children was tidying up pieces of wood and found a plaque that said there was a time capsule buried near the large willow stump; so a few children made some little wooden crosses and placed them next to the plaque to make it more noticeable. Another great session Chestnut class, well done!

After all their hard work on the allotment last week, Oak class were eager to get started planting some fruit or vegetables. The children topped up two of the planting containers with compost and we planted a blueberry bush in one of the them. I had brought in some raspberry canes which were bundled together so we separated them very carefully, ensuring that there were good roots left on each cane. We then planted the canes around the edge of the other container and placed a metal tepee obelisk in the centre of the pot for the plant to grow around. We also started clearing and weeding along the back fence of the school field and started digging over a small strip in preparation for planting sunflower seeds on World Earth Day after the Easter holiday. Another very productive session this week, well done Oak class!

Freddie Forest Bear enjoyed his weekend with John-Boy and is now excited to be going home with Louisa from Acorn class this weekend. Louisa was very patient and listened so carefully when I was explaining how we needed to prep and plant the carrot seeds. Despite others getting bored and going off to do something else, she stayed with me and helped plant the seeds, cover them gently and then water them. It was lovely to see someone so young, keen to learn about growing our own food. Well done Louisa, enjoy your weekend with Freddie.



Miss Wilson—Forest School Lead



MENU

w/c 31.03.25

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

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

Thank you

Deadline 9:00am Monday 24th March for dinners w/c 31st March

Deadline 9:00am Monday 31st March for dinners w/c 21st April

<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Cheesy Ham & Broccoli	Beef Bolognese	Chicken Roast	Sausage Pasta Bake	Pepperoni Pizza
Cheesy Broccoli Pasta	Quorn Bolognese	Quorn Fillet Roast	Quorn Sausage Bake	Cheese Pizza
Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans	Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans	Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans	Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans	Jacket Potato Cheese / Beans / Tuna
Baguette Ham / Cheese		Baguette Ham / Cheese		Baguette Ham / Cheese / Tuna

Dojo messages this week:

- ◇ School meals
- ◇ Mothers day sale
- ◇ Lost Property
- ◇ Year 6 Bikeability

St Mary's Clubs

KS1 & KS2 Multiskills Club
Monday: 12.30pm—1:00pm
Mr S.Thomas—EKC

KS1 & KS2 Science Club
Tuesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm
Mrs Carlier

KS1 & KS2 Art Club
Wednesday 3.15pm – 4.15pm
Mrs Fallon

Year 6 Tutoring
Thursday: 3.15pm—4:15pm
Mr Austin & Mrs Walker



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

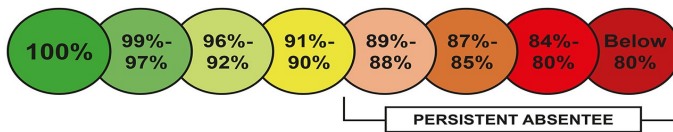
Please note that dates are subject to change.— Check Dojo events page for further info

Date	Activity	Enrichment	Who
28th Mar	FOSMS Significant Females sale—Details to follow		
2nd April	Wear Blue for Autism Awareness		
3rd Apr	Easter Service Citizens 9:30—10.30am Parents 2-3pm		
4th Apr	FOSMS to draw raffle FOSMS Easter Egg hunt		
7th—21st Apr	Easter Holiday		
22nd April	Children return to school		



ATTENDANCE MATTERS

On Time: First Time, Every Time



Which CIRCLE are you in?



Reception	100%
Year 1	97.78%
Year 2	100%
Year 3	95%
Year 4	91.11%
Year 5	84%
Year 6	85.63%



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

National Attendance Target is: **93.5%**

Whole School Attendance this week is: **91.69%**

Pupils with 100% attendance this week: **53**

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

FOSMS Newsletter – 28th March 2025

We're fast approaching end of term, the Easter holidays are just around the corner!

Today, your children had the wonderful opportunity to pick out their special gifts from our Special Female Sale. They were all an absolute pleasure, and it was heart warming to see them independently choose something meaningful for the special people in their lives.

Easter Raffle – Get Your Tickets!

Next week, we have our Easter Raffle, with plenty of fantastic prizes to be won! Tickets are available in advance or can be purchased in person at the Easter performances. (Please add *your* name to the comments section for the tickets)

£1 - 1 ticket

£5 - 5 tickets

£10 - 10 tickets

Final Week of the Coin Bottle Challenge!

We're down to the last week of the Coin Bottle Challenge, and the competition is incredibly close! Each class has been collecting spare change, but could this weekend be the perfect time to boost their total? Maybe a few extra chores—like weeding the garden or doing the dishes—could help top up those bottles!

The class with the most money at the end of the challenge will win an additional **£100** from FOSMS to spend on something of their choice. But no one goes away empty-handed—every class keeps the money they've raised and gets to decide how to spend it. It's a win-win all around!

Thank you for your continued support—we couldn't do it without you!

With very grateful thanks, FOSMS