



Newsletter - Friday 20th March 2026

St Mary's Primary School

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

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

School Value - Forgiveness

Welcome

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

I hope you are all well. I would like to take a moment to warmly welcome you to this week's newsletter. It has been another busy and positive week, and I am delighted to share some of the highlights with you.

Our children have been working incredibly hard across all areas of the curriculum. It has been wonderful to see their enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment to learning. We are especially proud of how they continue to support one another and demonstrate our school values each day.

Looking ahead, please remember to check upcoming dates and any important notices. If you have any questions or need support, do not hesitate to get in touch.

Thank you, as always, for being such an important part of our school community.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend - Mrs. Walker

Mindful Moments



Spring: a lovely reminder of how beautiful change can truly be



Dojo Messages

- Essex Fire Museum Open Days
- School Office Update
- Red Nose Day Reminder
- Emotionally Healthy Minds Workshops
- Rupert's Rainbow
- Year 6 Bikeability
- Acorn class - Call of the wild trip
- Lunch bookings after Easter
- Red Nose Day
- Next Terms Clubs



A note from Mrs Walker

Thank you so much for supporting our Science Week open afternoon on Friday. It was truly lovely to see so many of you there, sharing in the children's learning and enthusiasm. Events like these play an important role in nurturing a love of learning and encouraging children to think creatively and critically about the world around them. We hope you enjoyed seeing the fruits of the children's hard work and the pride they take in their achievements. The children greatly benefit from opportunities to showcase their learning, and your presence makes these experiences even more meaningful. Your continued support helps to build their confidence and reinforces the strong home-school partnership that is so vital to their success.

We are now very much looking forward to our upcoming Easter performance. Rehearsals are well underway, and the children have been working hard to learn their lines, songs, and actions. It has been wonderful to see their excitement grow as they prepare, and we are sure the performances will be a fantastic celebration of their efforts and talents.

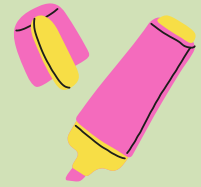
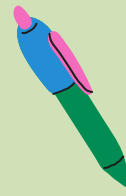
We are very much looking forward to our Easter Service at St Mary's Church, which will take place on Friday 27th March at 2:00pm. This special occasion is always a meaningful time for reflection and celebration, and we warmly invite everyone to join us. **Please remember if you park at The Bell you will need to pay and display or you will receive a fine.**

We are also pleased to welcome a visit from Mr Gatenby on Monday. His visit is highly anticipated, and our staff and children are looking forward to the opportunity to get to know him better.

A letter for booking next terms clubs is now available on Class Dojo, please do complete this asap to reserve a place for your child - there are limited spaces for each and places to get booked quickly. Deadline is **Wednesday 25th March.**

Please note there will be no after school clubs w/c 23rd March 2026 with the exception of Mr Thomas' Multi Skills Club

THANKFULNESS ~ COMMUNITY ~ COMPASSION ~ TRUTHFULNESS ~ COURAGE ~ FORGIVENESS



Acorn Class

This Week In Class

Acorns have been looking at the book Zog by Julia Donaldson this week. We have been learning about prefixes and expanding our sentences using the word 'because'. In maths we have enjoyed learning about measurement, this week we have looked at centimetres and metres. In Science we have sorted mini beasts into their micro habitats, and in computing we have learnt about data and pictograms. In RE we have learnt about the Easter story. With this and Easter rehearsals it has been a busy week, so was nice to have some fun activities on Red nose day.

Achiever

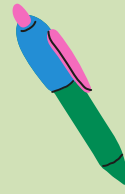
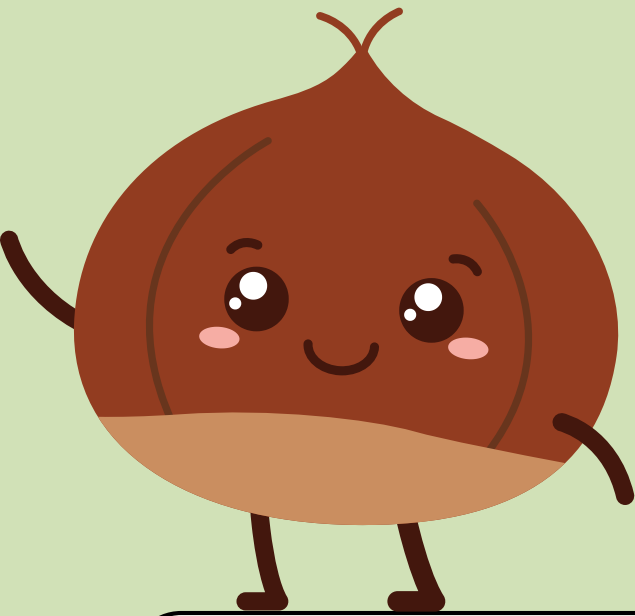
Jesse is showing real progress in his mark making. He is listening more to the instruction and now making recognisable letters and numbers. Well done Jesse, practice does make progress.



Value Achiever

Lily-Belle has shown courage in her recent assessments. She listened carefully to the instructions and tried her best to complete the work. Lily-Belle worked through the questions and showed a real positive attitude. It is lovely to see her confidence growing.





Chestnut Class

This Week In Class

In maths this week we have continued with fractions and learned some very tricky skills. In English we have continued with our instruction writing from science week and created leaflets. In history we looked at a variety of images of Julius Caesar and thought about what they told us about what he was like as a person. There was some very clever thinking! In PSHE we learned about budgeting and what it means. In RE we looked at either Mother Theresa or Martin Luther King and the impact that being a Christian had on their lives. We completed some music in Charanga, but we have also been learning our songs for the Easter Performance.

Achiever

River for showing incredible strength and resilience. You have come into school, tried your best, and carried on with such positivity and determination. We are all so proud of you.



Value Achiever

Alfie B is this week's value achiever. Alfie has shown great courage spending time in Chestnut Class. It can be tricky to try new things but Alfie has managed this really well. Well done Alfie!





Oak Class

This Week In Class

This week in Oak class, we have focused on retrieving information in our reading lessons and have identified the features of playscripts in our writing lessons. In maths, we have finished our unit on fractions, decimals and percentages and are now looking at forming algebraic expressions. In history, we have looked at the chronology of astronomy and in computing we have written formulas on excel. In PSHE we have looked at the terminology of borrowing money and in RE we have researched how Easter is celebrated around the world.

Achiever

Oak's achiever this week is Benji. Benji has shown great determination this week to produce work of the very best of his ability. I have been especially impressed with his responses to comprehension questions. Not only has he answered them correctly, he has used details from the text to support his responses. Well done, Benji.



Value Achiever

Oak's value achiever this week is Henry. Henry has shown a fantastic work ethic this week and has really applied himself to produce work that's reflective of his capabilities. He's been supportive of his class mates and shown a real sense of community. Well done, Henry.





Attendance



TARGETS

Whole School Attendance Target is: **92%**

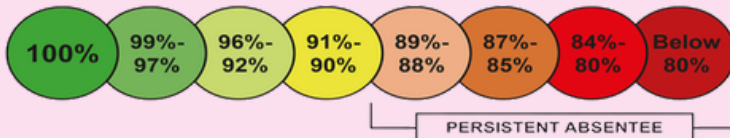
National Attendance Target is: **93.5 %**

Whole School Attendance this week is: **93.90 %**

Pupils with 100% attendance this week: **49**

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

On Time: First Time, Every Time



Which **CIRCLE** are you in?



THIS WEEK



Reception	75%
Year 1	92%
Year 2	100%
Year 3	91%
Year 4	100%
Year 5	98%
Year 6	94%

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

FOREST SCHOOL



This Week



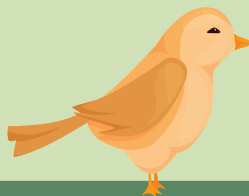
Acorn class got creative this week as we started to plan out and make a Fairy Garden. Harrison did a fantastic job of clearing an area at the base of the big willow tree. He dug out all of the old rocks and shells and the other children painted some new ones to create a colourful scene. We then put some light green crystal type stones around the base to make it look a little more special. The children also painted some empty food tins as we are going to put these up along a piece of string in the children's outdoor music area. Some of the children painted some large sticks, which they will use to bang the tins to make music. Some of the children also planted some runner beans with Mrs Smith. The Acorn class outdoor area is really starting to look lovely now, well done Acorn class!

Chestnut class also had a creative session this week and the children who had made clay fruit and veg last week, painted their creations. The children who had not yet made anything, were all given a piece of clay and tasked with making some different types of fruit and veg that we had not thought of yet. We did have a couple more carrots made but we also had some corn on the cob which was very impressive. I am looking forward to seeing these all painted and dotted around our allotment after Easter. During free play time the children enjoyed bug hunting and playing in the digging area. Well done Chestnut class!

Oak class had a great session this week as we took on a bit of an outdoor spring clean! The children had previously moved all of the logs from the boundary line so this week we raked up all the foliage and small twigs and sticks in preparation for planting our new tree saplings. We are lucky to have been given 10 wild cherry, 10 rowan and 10 silver birch saplings, which although small now, will grow to create a lovely row of trees along the side of our school field. This will hopefully encourage more wildlife to visit us at St Marys. The children also took a lot more compost down to our allotment. They spread the compost between the planters and mixed it with the soil in them already. The allotment is now ready and waiting for us to plant this year's vegetable after the Easter break. A large group of the boys spent most of the session cleaning all of our outdoor gardening equipment that had become quite thick with mud over the winter. Lastly, a group of the girls gave our Cross and the little picket fence a fresh coat of paint. As always, you worked extremely hard Oak class, well done!

Freddie Forest Bear had a lovely time with Evie-Rose last week and is now looking forward to going home with Ivy from Oak class this weekend. Ivy always tries her best at forest school but this week in particular; she really stood out in how creative and thoughtful she is about our natural environment and our forest school resources. Ivy took part in cleaning and sorting the mud kitchen and even built some new shelves to store the pots and pans on. She did this totally off her own back and she should be very proud of what she achieved. Well done Ivy, enjoy your weekend with Freddie.

Miss Wilson
Forest School Lead



Collective Worship

This week...

Mrs Fallon led a thoughtful and engaging collective worship this week, encouraging pupils to reflect on the importance of forgiveness.

She began by asking everyone to imagine starting the day with an empty backpack – light, easy, and carefree, like floating down the corridor as a superhero. However, as the day goes on, small incidents begin to add up: someone bumps into you without apologising, a friend ignores a message, or someone takes the last biscuit at break time. Each of these moments, she explained, is like placing a rock into the backpack. By the end of the day, the bag becomes heavy and difficult to carry.

Mrs Fallon used this powerful image to explain how holding grudges can weigh us down. Although these “rocks” are caused by the actions of others, we are the ones who carry them. She reminded pupils that a grudge is something we hold onto in our thoughts, replaying moments that may have upset or frustrated us.


Drawing on the Bible, Mrs Fallon shared how Peter once asked Jesus how many times we should forgive someone, suggesting seven times. Jesus responded by saying not just seven, but seventy-seven times – teaching us that forgiveness should not be counted, but given freely.

She explained that forgiveness does not mean ignoring unkind behaviour, but rather choosing not to carry those heavy “rocks” with us. Each time we forgive, it is like removing a rock from the backpack, making life feel lighter and more positive. Mrs Fallon encouraged everyone to reflect on their own day and ask: “Do I really want to carry this rock around, or can I let it go?” She ended with a simple but powerful reminder from the Bible: “Forgive as the Lord forgave you.”

This meaningful message left pupils with a clear and practical way to think about their feelings, helping them to move through each day with a lighter heart.



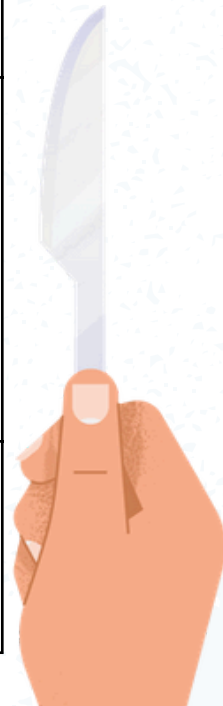
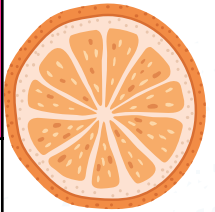
UPCOMING EVENTS



Date	Activity	Who
23rd March	Yr 5 and 6 Parents Residential Meeting 2pm in the school hall.	Yr 5 & 6 Parents
24th March	SATS meeting and SRE meeting 3:15pm in the school hall.	Year 6 parents
25th March	EYFS Parent Partnership Session.	EYFS
25th March	Easter Performance - Parents and carers invited in for 2pm.	Whole School
27th March	Easter Service at St Marys Church - Parents and carers to attend 2-3pm.	Whole School
30th Mar - 10th Apr	HALF TERM	Whole School
13th April	Return to School	

TERMLY MENU

This is our new menu which begins on 23rd February and runs through to taking us right up to 27th March. This is now published on ParentPay for bookings. We work a week in advance for bookings. The deadline for bookings is 9am Monday 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	Sausage or Quorn sausage V with mash, peas and gravy or Cheese / ham baguette	Roast chicken or Quorn fillet V with roast potatoes, veg and gravy or Cheese / ham baguette	Beef bolognese or Quorn bolognese V pasta bake with side salad or Cheese / ham baguette or Jacket potato with cheese / beans / tuna	Fish fingers or veggie fingers V with chips, peas and sweetcorn or Cheese / ham / tuna baguette
	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	Pitta bread pizza with cheese 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

Spring Term After School Clubs February - March 2026

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

All after school clubs will be starting w/c 5th January 2026 through to w/c 23rd March 2026.

Please note there will be no after school clubs w/c 23rd March 2026 with the exception of Mr Thomas' Multi Skills Club

KS1 & KS2 Games & Creative Arts Club – Tuesday: 3.15pm – 4.15pm

This after school club is available for all year groups and will be run by Mrs Carlier

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 Beard

KS2 Netball Club – Wednesday 12:00pm – 1:00pm

This lunch club is available for KS2 and will be run by Miss Francis. PE Kit will need to be worn, no jewellery!

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

This after school club is available for all year groups and will be run by Mrs Fallon

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

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)

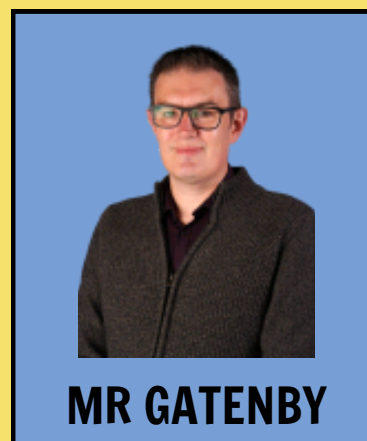


meet the **TEACHER**

ABOUT ME

A little about me to help the children and parents of St Mary's C of E know a little more about me before I begin after Easter.

I am very much looking forward to starting, having worked in the Berlesduna Academy Trust for the last six years and having visited St Mary's on quite a few very enjoyable occasions. I have been a teacher for many years, working in several different schools across Essex with many of these years teaching Key Stage 1 and also many years with older children. I live quite locally and attend Holy Trinity C of E services conducted by Reverend Jacqui, so it will be fantastic to be a part of the school she regularly attends.



I have a great interest in literacy as a whole, and am lucky enough to have been a phonics leader, a writing leader and a reading leader in several schools. Learning to speak with confidence is a vital skill, just as much as reading and learning to put those words into writing. Books can be relaxing and exciting at the same time, and reading can take us all to whole new worlds or help us understand the one we are in. I really enjoy helping children to learn to read, then to comprehend, and then to become a lifelong reader. I can promise you – I do read every single day.

I am extremely lucky to have two sons of primary school age (although it won't be long before one is in secondary school!) and we have a young dog. We enjoy doing lots of fun things together in the local area, for example going to Call Of The Wild or Danbury Lakes.

As a teacher, I have worked with all kinds of children and families. I appreciate that all of us are individual and all have different starting points and strengths as well as areas to work on. I believe the main thing is that we should all try our best, whatever that looks like. That is what I will be doing!

I imagine that most of you will be wondering what it will be like to have a new teacher after the Easter holidays, and my plan is to keep all of the best things exactly the same, and try to make a few things even better. I know that it can be strange to have a new start, but within a few days everything will feel normal. If anyone does have any problems or worries, parent or child, please do come to me about them, and of course all of the other school adults will remain the same and will be happy to help.

Thank you very much for reading this and I look forward to seeing you in Acorn Class after Easter.

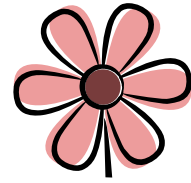
Mr Gatenby





Friends of St Mary's School

FOSMS



Welcome Spring!

Let's embrace the sunshine and fresh beginnings that Spring brings to our community!

Coins in a bottle

VERY LAST CHANCE - We still have our coins in a bottle challenge running in the classrooms, this little challenge is live until the **end of March**. Every penny raised will be given back to the class to purchase fun resources for the last term. The winning class will have their amount matched (up to £100) by FOSMS, so all is to play for. Please do send in a few pennies for your class Jar. Last year Acorn were the winners - can they do it again?

Easter Egg Hunt

We are planning our annual Easter Egg hunt for the children. We have purchased little chocolate eggs (alternative for allergies) and will be running a little hunt during the school day. We can only continue to do such fun things for the children as you support us so well - thank you so much!

Easter Raffle

We have our Easter raffle tickets on sale, due to the timing we will be selling them online and drawing them in time for you to take home your winnings after the Easter Performance!

You've got to be in it to win it.

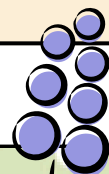
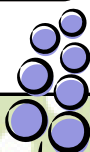
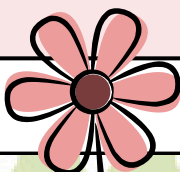
Please visit our website to get your tickets <https://fosms.co.uk/upcoming-events>



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 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.

Cherry Tree Primary School and Nursery
EYFS Teacher. Applications close 14th April 2026. Interviews 21st April 2026.

Fairhouse Primary School
Learning Support Assistant / SEN Support. Applications close 23rd March 2026. Interviews 26th March 2026. Class Teacher. Applications close 14th April 2026. Interviews 20th April 2026.

Merrylands Primary School and Nursery
Catering Assistant. Applications close 17th April 2026. Interviews week commencing 27th April 2026. Lead Teacher for Autism Spectrum Conditions. Applications close 19th April 2026. Interviews week commencing 27th April 2026.

Whitmore Primary School and Nursery
Class Teacher. Applications close: 22nd March 2026. Interviews 26th / 27th March 2026.

Willows Primary School and Nursery
Class Teacher - Fixed Term Contract. Applications close 24th April 2026. Interviews: To be confirmed.

