

ST. MARY'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

*I am the vine and you are the branches.
you remain with me and I with you, then you will bear much
Love one another as I have loved you*
John 15

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been a hugely exciting time since the last newsletter: each year group has had its share of exciting learning and experiences. From a trip to a local forest school, to writing poetry, the children at St. Mary's have had a great few weeks.

In preparation for meeting the children's poet Roger Stevens next week, the children in year 1 crafted their own poems. The children have also been busy practising for their Black History Month assembly and have been learning the song "Lovely Day" by Bill Withers so do encourage them to share a rendition with you. Year 2 particularly enjoyed electing the class public servants. Looking ahead, the Year 2 team is excited to explore Ndebele art, inspired by the work of the South African artist Esther Mahlangu. The children will be creating colourful homes in her distinctive style, which they look forward to sharing with you at the Black History Showcase. Year 3 have been learning all about ancient Greece, creating their own painted pots and enjoying the myths and stories of this fascinating civilisation. Year 4 had a great time this week visiting the forest school at St. Saviour's. The children gathered around the fire to roast marshmallows and enjoy the outdoors together. Year 5 have been learning about the Victorians, the hardships of the workhouse and even the protests which led to the introduction of child labour laws. Finally, year 6 have been learning all about the second world war and the great toll it took on civilians. The children have particularly enjoyed the classic novel Goodnight Mr Tom and the writing they have produced based on the story is impressive.

This October, our school is celebrating Black History Month through a rich programme of learning and events. Our assembly series, themed "Standing Firm in Power and Pride," has begun, and we will also join the nationwide Big Live assembly to hear from inspiring Black role models and guest contributors. The assembly will mark the 70th anniversary of Rosa Parks' extraordinary act of bravery that changed history. On Friday 17th October, children are invited to wear a red top and, if possible, bring a small donation in support of the charity Show Racism the Red Card, standing together against racism. Throughout the month, children will enjoy immersive lessons in Art, History, and Music, with some year groups also experiencing a vibrant African Dance workshop.

It was wonderful to see so many of you at St. Mary's this week for our cheese and wine evenings. We hope you enjoyed the events as much as we did and we look forward to hosting similar events soon.

Our whole-school attendance this year is 97.6%. We're so proud of the effort families are making to ensure children are in school every day, ready to learn! Good attendance matters - every day in school is a day of learning, progress, and fun with classmates. Finally, I would like to close the newsletter with an inspiring line about perseverance from Galatians 6:9: "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

Best wishes,
Joe Pitchford

Attendance



Our whole school attendance for Week 4 was 98.01%.

Our whole school attendance for Week 5 was 98.07%.

Well done St Mary's!

Our whole school attendance for this academic year is: 97.6%

Gentle Reminder:

If your child is going to be absent due to illness, please leave a message for the office team on the school absence line by calling 020 8521 1066 and dialling 1.

Please ensure this message includes the reason your child is off sick - i.e. sore throat, temperature or stomach bug.

If you need to collect your child for a medical appointment during the day or they are late to school due to a medical appointment, you will need to provide the school office with an appointment letter/record.

Reflection

This week we begin our celebration of Black History Month, giving thanks for the wonderful diversity of God's world and the many voices that inspire us. We are especially marking the 70th anniversary of Rosa Parks' brave act of resistance, which reminds us of the power of courage and justice. In collective worship and in class we are exploring the poetry of Roger Stevens, which helps us reflect on friendship, advocacy, and being thankful for the small things in life. We are guided by the words of Paul: "Give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:18), as we learn to notice and appreciate everyday blessings.

As autumn approaches, we are also preparing for our Harvest Festival on Tuesday 14 October. Harvest is a time to thank God for His provision and to remember those in need. We have begun collecting donations for Holy Trinity Leytonstone Food Share, and we warmly invite families to contribute if they can. You can find more information about the foodbank [here](#). In sharing what we have, we live out the words of Jesus: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).

We look forward to sharing this season of gratitude, generosity, and celebration together as a school family.



Individual and Siblings Photos

Van Cols will be visiting St Mary's on 8th of October to take our individual and sibling photos.

Please ensure that your child is in full school uniform.



Important Messages

Medication

If your child has medication in school, please ensure that you have noted down the expiry dates to ensure we have the correct medication in school. If your child's doctor has made any changes to their medication or the procedure for caring for your child, please ensure the office is informed in writing of any changes and receives a copy of the documents from the GP.



Large Bags

Unfortunately, many children are bringing very large backpacks to school. There is little storage space available for such large bags and they pose a trip hazard. Please send your child to school with the smallest bag possible - ideally a bookbag.



ST MARY'S STARS



Asia had a very exciting opportunity recently when she was invited to Heart FM to raise awareness for GFS, a girls' club she attends. GFS is a charity and it supports girls in building confidence, trying new experiences, and exposing girls to careers where women are underrepresented, such as STEM.

Asia met presenter Jamie Theakston on his popular breakfast show and will be featured on air next Tuesday!!!!

Josiah proudly served as a mascot for both Chelsea FC and Tottenham FC. Josiah has also been making impressive strides in the Chelsea Under-7 Academy – a young star in the making!





Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 took part in exciting drama workshops. The children had a fantastic time exploring movement and expressions, developing their creativity and confidence through role play.

Year 4 Forest School Trip



The year 4 children immersed themselves in the Forest School experience - learning about building and enjoying a campfire, meeting the resident pet snake and engaging in creative loose-parts play.

It was a fantastic opportunity for the children to connect with nature, develop new skills and share memorable experiences together.

Young Transformers MAKERS OF CHANGE



Confidence

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Philippians 4:13





PRIMARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS 2026

Do you have a child who was born
between 1 September 2021 and 31
August 2022?

If so, your child is eligible to start
primary school in September
2026.

To make an application, please
apply online at
www.eadmissions.org.uk
by 15 January 2026.

For more information, visit the Waltham
Forest Primary Admission page:
[https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/
schools-education-and-learning/apply-
primary-school](https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/schools-education-and-learning/apply-primary-school) where you can download a
copy of the Starting Primary School 2026
brochure with full details on how to apply.

SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMISSIONS 2026

Do you have a child who was born between
1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015
or who is currently in Year 6?

If so, they are due to start Secondary School
in September 2026.

To make an application please apply online
www.eadmissions.org.uk by
31 October 2025.

For more information visit the Waltham Forest
Secondary admission page
<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/applying-secondary-school-place> where you can download a copy
of the Starting Secondary School 2026 brochure
which has full details of how to apply.



Healthy Snacks



We would like to remind parents and carers that St Mary's is a Healthy School. Children should not bring chocolate bars, crisps or fizzy drinks as morning snacks, if your child does bring these in, they will be replaced with a piece of fruit and sent home with them at the end of the school day. Please ensure that should you like to provide your child with a snack that it is a healthy option. Nut free cereal bars, yoghurt bars or fruit bars are recommended.

All children are encouraged to drink water regularly – please ensure that your child is bringing in their own water bottles, these can be refilled during the school day.

We are proud to be a nut free school!



Food Bank



We have now got a food bank located in our school office foyer. We are welcoming donations of tinned goods and non perishable items.

The food bank is open for any families struggling with the cost of living crisis. You are welcome to come into the office at any time to collect items that you may need.

Any extra donations will be donated to local food banks to provide support our local community.

Parent Workshops

We have online workshops for parents that cover a variety of topics. This can be located under the Parents Tab on our school website. We offer these workshops to support learning at home.



Term Dates: 2025-2026

Autumn Term 2025 First Half (37 Days)

INSET – Mon 1st, Tues 2nd and Wed 3rd September 2025

Start – Thursday 4th September 2025

End – Friday 24th October 2025

Half Term: Monday 27th October -31st October 2025

Second Half (34 Days)

Start – Monday 3rd November 2025

End – Thursday 18th December 2025

Holidays: Friday 19th December 2025 to Friday 2nd January 2026

Spring Term 2026 First Half (30 Days)

Start – Monday 5th January 2026

End - Friday 13th February 2026

Half Term: Monday 16th February – Friday 20th February 2026

Second Half (25 Days)

Start - Monday 23rd February 2026

End – Friday 27th March 2026

Holidays: Monday 30th March 2026 to Friday 10th April 2026

Summer Term 2026 First Half (29 Days)

Start – Monday 13th April 2026

End - Friday 22nd May 2026

Half Term: Monday 25th May 2026 - Friday 29th May 2026

Holidays May Day Bank Holiday: Monday 4th May 2026

Spring Bank Holiday: Monday 25th May 2026 (during Half Term)

Second Half (35 Days)

Start - Monday 1st June 2026

End – Friday 17th July 2026

St. Mary's Christian Vision

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I WITH YOU, THEN YOU
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(JOHN 15).