



# Summer Term Newsletter 3



Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2026



## St Mary's C of E Primary School Growing our community together *'Welcome, Nurture, Grow, Flourish'*

**Dear St Mary's Community,**

As we reach the end of another very busy and exciting half-term, I want to share some of the wonderful things that have been happening in our school. A special highlight was the lovely Reception class assembly; it was lovely to hear about our youngest children speaking and singing with so much confidence. When visiting classrooms this week, I have been delighted to see lots of focused learning taking place. It has been fantastic to watch our pupils working so well with their talk partners, sharing ideas and helping each other learn and to see how well our staff model tasks and support the children through their questioning.

I am also incredibly proud of our Year 6 pupils for their fantastic attitude during SATs week. They worked so hard and stayed calm and focused throughout. To celebrate their efforts, their special Year 6 leavers' hoodies have been handed out, and they had a wonderful celebration trip to Chessington World of Adventures! The excitement will continue after the holidays, as we look forward to the Year 4 and Year 6 residential trips.



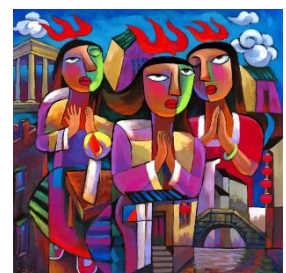
I hope you all have a wonderful half-term break. Enjoy the warm weather and the chance to get outdoors and have fun. We look forward to seeing everyone back for the final part of the summer term.

*Mrs Emily Evans (Headteacher)*

### **Collective Worship**

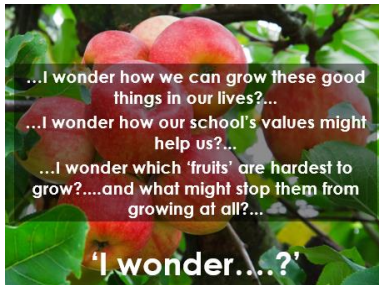


We were delighted to welcome the Insight team into school this week who have helped us to find out about Pentecost during collective worship. Pentecost marks the moment when God's Holy Spirit is given to the disciples, revealing a new way in which God is present and active in the world.



Pentecost is often described as the birthday of the Church. It is a time to reflect on how Jesus' followers were, and still are, encouraged and inspired to continue his work.

Later in the week, we have been thinking about how we can be the best version of ourselves. We looked at the Parable of the Sower and talked about how we can create the right conditions to grow. Linked to this, we explored the Fruits of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control.



The children spent time thinking about how we can show these fruits in our everyday actions, both at school and at home.

"Even a small choice to show kindness or patience can make a big difference to someone else."



St. Mary's and Year 6 are proud to be participating in an eco-project to collect and safely dispose of e-waste or electronic waste. The **E-waste Race** is an educational program and competition for primary schools that challenges students to collect old and broken electronic devices from their local communities. It aims to help teaches children about the importance of recycling, e-waste, and the circular economy in a fun, hands-on way. Please raid your drawers, cupboards and garages for any unwanted broken or working electronic equipment. It can literally be anything that is powered by electricity or battery,

but please remove any actual batteries as these cannot be recycled in the same way. Then please bring all your E-Waste in and Year 6 will do the rest. Finally, please don't forget to ask your friends, neighbours and family to do the same. Thank you in advance for your support.

### Year 3 visit to Wimbledon Synagogue



Year 3 have been learning about Judaism in their R.E lessons this half term. In class, they have learned about Jewish festivals including Bar/ Bat Mitzvah's, Passover and Shabbat. During the visit the children were able to explore the features of the synagogue



with Tim and Ros who were very welcoming and informative. What a brilliant way to celebrate their learning!

### Celebrating learning in Butterfly Class



This half term the children in reception class have been learning about insects and minibeasts. They have watched caterpillars grow and change into butterflies and recently welcomed Beekeeper Zoe who explained how she cares for her bees and shared some interesting and fascinating facts!

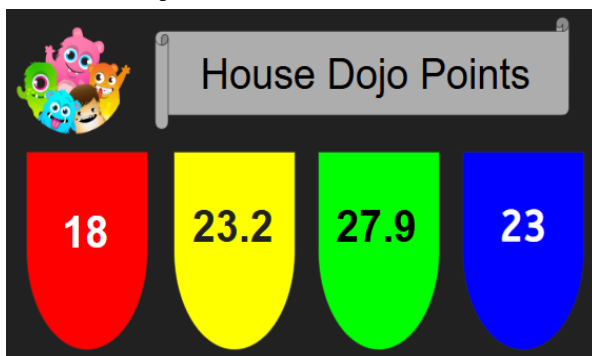
This week, the children shared their learning with their parents and the rest of the school in their very first class assembly. They



performed with confidence and enjoyment and Mrs Reid and Mrs King were incredibly proud of them all. Well done Butterflies!



### House Dojo Points



Congratulations to Yellow Team who were the half term winners of our Dojo points competition, we hope you enjoyed your end of term treat!

Well done to everyone who earned points for their team this term. I wonder who our next winners will be?

### Online Safety

With its end-to-end encryption and huge popularity, WhatsApp is often seen as a private and secure way to stay in touch; however, that same privacy can make it harder for trusted adults to see when things go wrong. This guide explains how features like group chats, disappearing messages, 'Channels' and location sharing can expose young users to pressure, unwanted contact and inappropriate content. Alongside the risks, the guide offers practical advice to support meaningful conversations, encourage safer settings and build young users' confidence in navigating WhatsApp responsibly.

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP



## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

WhatsApp is a free messaging app owned by Meta, allowing users to send text and voice messages, share multimedia, make video calls, and chat in groups. With end-to-end encryption, only the sender and receiver can view messages. This may offer privacy, but it also comes with risks that parents and educators need to be aware of.

### GROUP CHAT PRESSURES

Group chats enable multiple users to message in the same space, but this can also make it easier for young people to feel excluded or overwhelmed. Negative comments can escalate quickly, and young people may feel pressure to respond or stay engaged even when the conversation is uncomfortable or upsetting.

### EXPOSURE THROUGH CHANNELS

'Channels' are an optional feature that allows users to follow updates from public figures or organisations; however, there is no way to block this feature or filter its content by age. Young users may encounter adult or distressing content, including misinformation and harmful ideologies.

### SCAMS TARGETING YOUNG USERS

Scammers are increasingly using WhatsApp to trick users into sharing personal information. Common scams include fraudsters posing as family members in an emergency or tricking users into revealing security codes. These can lead to identity theft or access to private conversations.

### UNWANTED CONTACT AND LOCATION SHARING

WhatsApp users can share their live location, and if not managed carefully, this can allow others – even those in mutual groups – to track someone's whereabouts. Also, without the right privacy settings, young users may be contacted by strangers.

### DISAPPEARING AND HIDDEN MESSAGES

WhatsApp offers features like disappearing messages and 'Chat Lock', which can give users a false sense of security. While intended to protect privacy, they can be used by young users to hide inappropriate conversations or content, making it harder for adults to spot potential issues.

### COMMERCIAL AND AI CONTENT

WhatsApp now includes ads in the 'Updates' feed and has introduced an AI assistant – Meta AI – across the app, which cannot be removed. These additions raise concerns about targeting, privacy, AI use, and the type of content children and young people might interact with.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS TOGETHER

Help young users check who can see their profile photo, status, and location. Activate the 'Silence Unknown Callers' setting and set group chat invitations to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except...' for added safety.

### TEACH HOW TO SPOT SCAMS

Encourage caution around unusual and unexpected messages, especially if they involve money or codes. Help young users understand the signs of scams and what to do if they receive a suspicious message. Enable two-step verification to add an extra layer of protection.

### BE OPEN ABOUT HIDDEN CHATS

Discuss why children and young people might use features like disappearing messages or 'Chat Lock'. Encourage them to share if something made them uncomfortable, even if the messages are gone. Let them know that privacy should not mean secrecy.

### TALK ABOUT ADVERTISING AND AI

Explain that WhatsApp now includes ads and AI tools. Discuss the difference between genuine and sponsored content, and the potential for AI to share inaccurate or age-inappropriate responses. Encourage young users to think critically before trusting or interacting with these features.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



See full reference list on our website



## Dates for the diary



### Building confidence and managing anxiety in children

The **'Building confidence and managing anxiety'** workshop will help you learn ways to support your child in dealing with their big feelings, worries and fears. This workshop will give you practical ideas on how to help your child to think more positively and develop their self confidence. You will also be introduced to some helpful cognitive behavioural therapy concepts.

**What will the 'Building confidence and managing anxiety' workshop cover?**

- What anxiety is and typical fears and worries.
- Recognising when anxiety becomes a problem.
- What the cognitive behavioural model is.
- Practical strategies to help parents and carers to respond to their child when they are anxious.
- How to get further support if needed.



**When will the workshop take place?**

The workshop will take place on Wednesday 17th June at 2pm in school



Local  
May  
Half Term  
Guide

Hello  
KINGSTON  
KIDS

Enjoy a fun-filled May half term in Kingston with activities ranging from free library crafts and interactive museum trails to energetic indoor play and live theatre shows. Further details can be found here <https://www.hellokingstonkids.com/kingtonuponthames-may-half-term-guide>

**Summer 2026 Term 1**  
**Monday 13 April 2026 to Friday 22 May 2026**  
**(including bank holiday on 4 May)**

13/4/26	INSET day (pupils do not attend)
14/4/26	First day back for pupils
4/5/26	Early May Bank Holiday pupils do not attend
6/5/26	Year 6 visit to Hindu Temple
11/5 – 14/5/26	Year 6 SATs assessment week
18/5/26	Butterfly Class Assembly (2.45pm)
22/5/26	Last day of half term school finishes at 3:20pm
23/5/26-31/5/26	Half term break

**Summer 2026 Term 2**  
**Monday 1 June 2026 to Monday 20 July 2026**

1/6/26	First day back for pupils
1/6-5/6/26	Year 6 residential visit to Blackland Farm
8/6-12/6/26	Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check KS1 Phonics Screening Check
10/6-12/6	Year 4 residential visit to Thames Young Mariners
17/6/26	Building confidence and managing anxiety workshop for parents (2pm)
18/6/26	Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Sports Day (9am-12noon)
19/6/26	Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 Sports Day (9am-12noon)
22/6/26	Class Photographs
17/7/26	Last day of academic year school ends at 1:15pm
20/7/26	INSET day (pupils do not attend)
21/7/26 – 3/09/26	Summer holiday break