



# Summer Term Newsletter 2



Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026



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

### Dear St Mary's Community,

It has been another busy couple of weeks at our school. I have particularly enjoyed visiting classrooms to see our students in action. From the secure understanding of fractions during Year 2 Maths to the creative use of subordinate clauses to build suspense in Year 4 English, the high level of engagement across the school is fantastic to see. It was also a pleasure to meet more of our parents and carers at the gate and during meetings and to spend time with more of our pupils in small groups to get to know them better; building these relationships is a highlight of my week.

I have also spent time this week meeting with our Educational Welfare Officer to discuss attendance. We know that consistent attendance is vital—it helps our children feel a true sense of belonging in our community and ensures they never miss out on the rich, daily learning opportunities we provide. Because our curriculum builds across each term, linking new concepts back to previous lessons, regular attendance is the best way to avoid persistent gaps in knowledge.

We have work to do to improve our whole school attendance and for this I am going to need your help! To keep you informed, we will begin sharing regular attendance updates in our newsletters and improving these figures is a goal we can only achieve with your support. We will be talking to the children about the importance of regular attendance and ask that you consider carefully whether any absence that your child is having is unavoidable.

Looking ahead to next week, we will see the Year 6 pupils taking their SATs Tests. We are incredibly proud of the way that they have approached the preparation for these and hope that they all approach next week just wanting to do their best.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend - see you back at school next week.

*Mrs Emily Evans (Headteacher)*

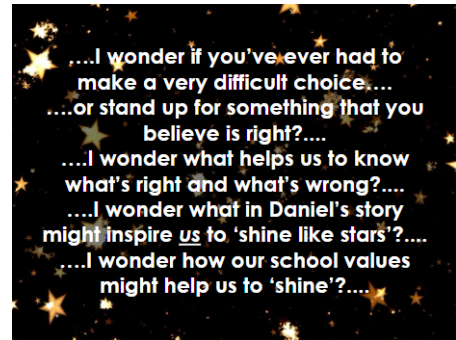
### Attendance update

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
88.5%	91.6%	92.7%	93.3%	97.7%	94.6%	94.8%

<b>Whole School Attendance</b>	93.4%
<b>National Average</b>	94.8%

## Collective Worship

**'Shine Like Stars'** Our collective worship theme for last week dare to be different was based on the book of Daniel. Despite living in challenging times Daniel stood up for his beliefs and his actions, and those of his friends, 'shone like stars' (*Daniel 12:3*). In our world today, we want to inspire resilience in our children, to be confident in who they are and what they stand for, just like Daniel, and to be positive role models in our school community, even when it might be difficult.



**'Let Me Tell You a Story'** This week we have begun to look at some of the parables that Jesus told. As human beings, we have storytelling in our DNA, and Jesus was a master storyteller using parables to teach about God's kingdom. During collective worship we have been able to wonder together at the power of a story to help connect us and help us to think about and shape our behaviour.



This picture, by Anne Brink, represents the parable of the mustard seed which is also the text upon which our school vision of welcome, nurture, growth and flourishing is based. Anne says 'I tried to depict a flourishing tree and a whole community, where people work and play in harmony, supporting one another, praising God and enjoying God's creatures and all of the wondrous creation. I wanted to suggest a.....world where people of all races, cultures and backgrounds share life in common, cooperate and live together.'

**I wonder how our school community might be a bit like this mustard tree?**

Here are some of the children's reflections from worship this week...

- *We want our community to be strong*
- *There is always room for everyone*
- *Small things can make a big difference*

## Curriculum Enhancements



Year 3 have been learning about special buildings in their local area as part of their history unit. Saint Mary's church is a grade 2 listed building and a trip to the church was the perfect opportunity to observe it more closely. The children discussed what makes the church building so special and thought of reasons why it needs to be preserved as well as thinking about how it made them feel, who visits it and what they liked about it.



## Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple



This week, year 6 took a short break from their SATs revision to visit the Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman Temple in Stoneleigh. The Hindu temple, established in 1994, serves the Hindu community in south-west London and Surrey.

One of the temple's devotees and volunteer Sai, carefully explained all about 10 of the deities that were central to the Hindu faith. In particular, she showed the children their presiding deity, Sri Raja Rajeswary Amman, who is the

mother of love and grace and who showers her blessings upon all and develops the goodness within us.

Part of the Year 6 Religious Education curriculum is to learn about all faiths and start to understand the different (and similar) beliefs and practices of other religions. Being in the temple, experiencing the sounds and smells and seeing the colourful shrines and offerings really helped to deepen their understanding. The children were all incredibly respectful, curious and engaged throughout and their excellent behaviour was appreciated and commented upon by the temple volunteers. We are very grateful for their welcome and generosity.



## TCS Mini London Marathon



On Saturday 25th of April and number of pupils joined thousands of other children and families to take part in the TCS Mini London Marathon. It was a fabulous way for children and adults to have fun being active together and experience the magic of the London Marathon. The children loved the energy, the competition and the camaraderie of the whole event, not to mention meeting Joe Wicks and chasing

Daddy Pig! Thank you to Mr Redmond and Miss Campos for organising us and taking part in the event as well as to all the wonderful parents and helpers who accompanied the children.



## Online Safety

Neurodivergent children are often drawn to technology, so early, supported experiences online are key. This guide explores how adults can model positive digital behaviour, set age-appropriate limits and create open, judgement-free conversations about online safety. It also highlights the importance of balancing screen use with offline activities to support wellbeing and development.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators HELPING NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN NAVIGATE THE ONLINE WORLD

Neurodivergent people tend to be early adopters of technology, and many influential innovators in this space are neurodivergent themselves. It's therefore likely that a neurodivergent child or young person may be drawn to the online world from an early age. This isn't a concern in itself, but understanding both the benefits and potential risks is essential. Here are ten key considerations to support safe and positive online experiences for neurodivergent children.

## 1 TREAT ONLINE LIKE THE REAL WORLD

You wouldn't allow a child to cross a road without guidance – you'd hold their hand, use a pedestrian crossing, and model safe behaviour. In the same way, a neurodivergent child's first experiences online should be supported by an adult who can guide and explain safe and responsible digital behaviour to them from the outset.

## 2 MODEL RESPONSIBLE USE

Children learn from what they see. Show all children, regardless of neurotype, what responsible internet use looks like. Reflect on your own use of social media and AI. Consider how often you use them and your own understanding of these platforms. Talk openly about when and why you use these tools, helping all children develop a balanced and informed approach.

## 3 KNOW YOUR LIMITS

Current government guidance suggests no solo screen use below the age of two, with a maximum of one hour per day for two- to five-year-olds. Screen time can support communication and connection when shared with an adult. However, passive watching can affect neurodivergent children's attention and language skills. Focus on the type of content they watch, encouraging slower-paced and meaningful material rather than fast-paced, overstimulating content.

## 4 CONSIDER AGES AND STAGES

For older children and teenagers, agreed limits are important. Screen time can be beneficial, but it should form part of a balanced lifestyle. Neurodivergent children may find online communication easier than real-world conversation, supporting their social interaction. However, it shouldn't be their only option. Encourage a range of activities, including creative play, physical exercise, and opportunities for real-world connections.

## 5 KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Discussions about online safety should begin early and continue as children grow. However, neurodivergent children may worry about getting things wrong or being misunderstood, meaning these kinds of conversations should feel open and fair, rather than like a lecture. If a child encounters a problem – such as a scam or inappropriate content – they need to feel able to speak to a trusted adult without fear of judgement or embarrassment.

## 6 BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

You aren't expected to be an expert, but it's important to stay informed about the platforms, games, or apps neurodivergent children use in order to provide practical support. Social media platforms have age limits, and many apps and games offer parental settings that can control access. Schools and families should work together to understand these tools, helping neurodivergent children use them safely while keeping up to date with new features and changes.

## 7 SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Children and young people often know more about current technology than adults, meaning it's important to recognise that controls may be bypassed. Clear, predictable boundaries should be used, based on trust and consistency, involving children in discussions that affect them helps them feel heard. This is particularly important for neurodivergent children, who may respond strongly to perceived unfairness.

## 8 UNDERSTAND AI CONTENT

The internet now includes large amounts of AI-generated content, including images, videos, and stories. These can be difficult to identify. Children should be encouraged to question what they see and check the information using trusted sources. Neurodivergent children may interpret content literally, meaning adult guidance is important in helping them recognise what's real and reliable – and what isn't.

## 9 EXPLAIN AI LIMITATIONS

AI isn't the same as a search engine. It generates responses based on prompts and patterns, and its accuracy depends on how it's used. Sometimes, it produces incorrect or unrealistic information, known as 'hallucinations'. Both adults and children need to understand this and learn how to check information carefully using reliable and trusted sources.

## 10 CLARIFY AI RELATIONSHIPS

AI can feel conversational and personal, but it's not capable of real relationships. It learns from patterns in user input rather than human understanding. Some neurodivergent children may experience a sense of connection with AI chatbots, particularly if they find social situations challenging. It's therefore important to explain that these are simulated conversations and aren't a substitute for real, human relationships.

## Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowrie is a neurodivergent former SENCO and Advisory Teacher who works with nurseries, schools, colleges, and businesses to improve inclusion for neurodivergent people. She is the Founder and Director of Neuroteachers and the author of "The Other 29 – How Supporting Your Neurodivergent Learner Can Improve Teaching and Learning for the Whole Class".



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See full reference list on our website

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## 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

### 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
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