



Autumn Term Newsletter 3

Friday 16th October 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 few weeks for our school. This week our Year 5 pupils recently enjoyed an exciting trip to the National Portrait Gallery, where they had the chance to explore the gallery as well as take part in a workshop. We hosted a fantastic Parent Forum meeting where we got the chance to share successes as well as considering areas where we can work together to develop our school further. We were also delighted to welcome families to our very first prospective parent tour for Reception 2027. The visitors were very positive about our school - the staff and children really showed what a wonderful place it is.

During our latest Interim Executive Board (IEB) meeting, I was proud to share the wonderful progress our school has made over these past few weeks. I spent some time on Thursday looking at books with some of the children and getting them to talk me through what they have been learning this term. It was great to see how they have captured this in their retrieval rectangles. Look out for examples of these in the children's books or displayed in the classroom when you come to see either work on Tuesday 20th October after school.

As I shared at the Parent Forum meeting, improving attendance is a real focus for us this year. Please look out for our update letter and your child's individual attendance overviews which will be sent to you next week. We really need your help to ensure that every child learns every day.

It is hard to believe how quickly this term has flown by. When we return after the holidays we will begin planning for our Christmas celebrations. Look out for details of when our various services and events will be taking place. Thank you all for your continued support.

Mrs Emily Evans (Headteacher)

Attendance update

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
86%	92.1%	90.7%	96%	92.5%	97.5%	93.6%

Whole school attendance	93.2%
National Average	95.9%

Collective Worship Round Up

Our collective worship theme for the last two weeks has been 'Friends of Jesus.' Across the two weeks we have explored biblical stories which help children and adults to understand and reflect on the values of friendship, love, generosity, and change. Through the stories, we have been encouraged to welcome and value others, show kindness and compassion, give our time and resources to support those in need, and recognise that everyone has the opportunity to change and make a new beginning. Together, these acts of collective worship have helped us to explore how these values can shape the way we treat others and help us to build a welcoming, compassionate and generous community where everyone is valued, supported and given the opportunity to flourish.



Challenge for the week

Look for one opportunity to give something to help someone else.



Luke 7:36-39

Let's think about the story and what it means for us in school today.



- Think about a time when you walked into a room or onto the playground and felt new or unsure. What made you feel welcome?

In the story, the woman was very generous with her perfume, and Jesus was generous with his love and kindness.

- How can we show generosity and kindness on the playground or in the classroom today so no one feels left out?

Can you think of a time when you have changed your behaviour or attitude?

Maybe you have said or done something you wish you hadn't, what did you do to try and put things right?

In what small way can you choose to change this week?



Work Share Event

We are delighted to invite you on Tuesday 20th October to visit your child's class at 3:25pm for our first Work Share of the year. This will give you an informal opportunity to talk with your child's class teacher and to have a look at your child's work in their books and any displayed in the classroom.

Classrooms will be open until 4pm to give families with siblings a chance to visit each of their children's classrooms.

If you are unable to attend, please send a reusable bag in with your child for them to bring their books home in, to be looked at that evening. Please ensure that they are returned on the Wednesday morning ready for their lessons.

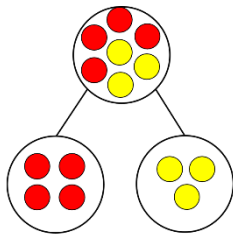
Year 6, as Mr Charlton will not be available on Tuesday 20th October we would like to invite you to attend on Thursday 5th November. At that time if you would prefer to see books overnight we can arrange that then too.

We are really looking forward to seeing many of you there to celebrate your children's start to this term.

Parent-Teacher Meetings

After the half-term break, we will be sending out details regarding our parent-teacher meetings, offering a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's achievements and next

Teaching and Learning News

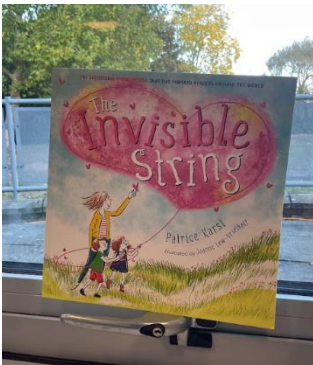


$$\underline{4} + \underline{3} = \underline{7}$$

HISTORICAL INFORMATION - 1970s, 1980s, 1990s		Current condition (today)	
Location (city and state)	Albany, NY		✓
Population (estimate)	100,000		✓
Climate (average)	40° F (40° C)		✓
Population (est.)	100,000 (1970s)		✓
Population (est.)	100,000 (1980s)		✓
Population (est.)	100,000 (1990s)		✓
Population (est.)	100,000 (2000s)		✓
Population (est.)	100,000 (2010s)		✓
Population (est.)	100,000 (2020s)		✓



In **Otter Class**, we are enjoying our guided reading sessions where we have been reading about The Stone Age. This week we have been focussed on key vocabulary and the skills we can use to discover what a word means.



In **Owl Class**, we have been learning about 'The Invisible String' in PSHE. The children designed their own strings for a 'What I bring to my string' activity. They chose their favourite qualities and wrote them along their strings.



Year 6 have been working hard in English to create a 'Travel Guide To Narnia'. They are almost finished creating final pieces and are very proud of what they have achieved.

The Rev. Nicolas has also visited and taught the children some more about the Trinity and how it affects the lives of Christians.



Online Safety

This online safety guide focuses on tips highlighting ways that adults can support young people's positive online behaviours and show them how to avoid getting into difficulty as they learn to negotiate the continually evolving digital landscape. In the guide, you'll find a number of tips such as protecting yourself, replying wisely and being forgiving and highlight ways that adults can support young people's positive online behaviours: by adopting and following 'netiquette', we can show them how to avoid getting into difficulty as they learn to negotiate the continually evolving digital landscape.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many issues which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

10 Top Tips for Respect Online: A DIGITAL WORLD FOR EVERYONE

Even before lockdowns inflamed the situation, one in every five 10- to 15-year-olds was experiencing bullying online: abusive messages, having rumours spread about them or being excluded from group chats, for example. Through smartphones and tablets, we're used to being able to communicate from anywhere, at any time – but digital devices became commonplace so quickly that it caused a problem: as a society, we haven't properly adjusted to how different they've made life. Our tips can help you to build positive relationships online and avoid some of the potential issues.

WHAT IS NETIQUETTE?

Etiquette is a set of rules to help us interact with others: like a code of respect. People follow this code every day (mostly without even thinking about it) and it can help us decide how to act in certain situations. 'Netiquette' (etiquette on the net – we see what they did there!) is the same, except it's designed to help us interact with others online, which is sometimes a whole different ball game.

- SEE THE OTHER SIDE**
Usually when we're online, we can't use the other person's body language or tone of voice to give us clues about what we can say to them, or how to say it. Try to think what the situation might be like for them, how they're feeling and whether we'd say the same thing if they were actually there with us.
- HIT THE PAUSE BUTTON**
Without a person physically there in front of us, it's easy to send something quickly – before we've really thought about whether it's helpful or kind. Just because we can do things quickly doesn't mean we should; it's better to pause for a second and think it through, instead of simply reacting.
- MIND YOUR LANGUAGE**
People have invented loads of different ways to communicate online (emojis, abbreviations like LOL, TBH and so on). Some of these can be triggering to other people (such as USING CAPS SO IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE SHOUTING!), so it's important to stay aware of the style of language you're using.
- BE SURE BEFORE YOU POST**
On social networks like Instagram or Facebook, vast numbers of people might see what you've posted. So if that's something negative about a person, it can feel hugely painful for them. If you're ever tempted to post something like that, ask yourself "do I really need to go public with this?"
- PROTECT YOURSELF**
Always think very carefully before sharing any personal information with someone else or in a group. Once something's been put online, the sender loses any control over where it goes and who might see it. If you've got any uncertainty at all, it's a good idea to talk to a trusted adult about this first.
- KINDNESS IS CATCHING**
Negative communication can spread rapidly online, but so can being kind and helpful (this happened quite a lot during lockdowns, for instance). A friendly, positive message can make a big difference to someone as well as helping us feel good about ourselves – so share the love!
- WAITING CAN BE HARD**
When we've sent a message or posted something online, waiting for a reply or for someone to respond can make us anxious. It could be helpful to think whether you really have to message or post right now – or if you could wait until a better time when it will cause you less anxiety.
- THE NET LOVES ATTENTION**
Most apps, games and sites use sophisticated technology that's designed to keep us coming back for more. It's important to keep this in mind when you feel the need to reach for your phone, tablet or console – once we understand this fact, it becomes easier to control how we use our digital devices.
- REPLY WISELY**
Sometimes it's tempting to fire back an instant response to a post or message we don't like. How we respond is important, however – whether we reply privately to the person or on a platform where lots of people will see it, for example, makes a big difference to how whoever is receiving the message will deal with it.
- FORGIVE AND FORGET**
Even though we try to avoid them, mistakes can – and do – happen online. They can sometimes feel like a bigger deal than they actually are. It's important to remember that we're all only human, and sometimes we mess up. Learn to forgive others and – just as importantly – to forgive yourself.

Meet Our Expert
Dr Carole Francis-Smith is an experienced counselling psychologist who, through her research, specialises in promoting safe and ethical online communications. She consults with businesses and organisations to support positive and effective communication online, often by considering some of the more hidden aspects of the medium.

NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/online-safety-research-shows-how-online-bullying-has-increased>
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355443_The_online_cyberbullying_effect

www.nationalonlinesafety.com @natonlinesafety /NationalOnlineSafety @nationalonlinesafety

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Diary Dates

20th October	Harvest Worship in school led by Revd Nicholas Work Share event - 3.25-4pm
26th-30th October	Half Term Break - school is closed
20th November	INSET - school closed to all pupils
24th November	Flu Immunisations (in school) Y2 visit Christmas Journey at The King's Centre
30th November	Y5 & 6 visit to The Rose Theatre
1st December	Parent/Carer meetings 3.30-6.30pm
3rd December	Parent/Carer meetings 3.00-7.00pm School closes at 2.30pm
9th December	KS1 (Squirrel & Hedgehog Class) Nativity 2.30pm
10th December	KS1 (Squirrel & Hedgehog Class) Nativity 2.30pm
14th December	Butterfly Class Christmas Celebration 2.30pm (parents/carers invited)
15th December	KS2 Church Service 2.30pm
16th December	Reception & KS1 Church Service 9.15am Christmas Lunch - whole school KS2 (Fox, Otter, Owl & Falcon Class) Christmas Concert 2.30pm
17th December	KS2 (Fox, Otter, Owl & Falcon Class) Christmas Concert 2.30pm
18th December	Last day of term. School closes 1.30pm
21st December -1st January 2027	Christmas Break - school is closed
4th January 2027	INSET - school is closed to all pupils
5th January 2027	Pupils return to school