



# St Mary's Catholic Academy



Newsletter No.1 – 4th September 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Welcome back to school.** It is good to see the children have returned safe and well. A special **welcome** to all our new children and families who have joined us in Foundation 1, F2 and across the school - we look forward to watching you grow and develop over the coming years.

Please read each newsletter carefully so you are informed about all that's going on in school.

## Dates for your diary

Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> September	Jungle Book performance – KS1 and KS2
Thurs 12 <sup>th</sup> September	9am Congratulations Assembly - <b>All are welcome</b>
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> and Thurs 26 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 6 – Narrowboat Trip – Group 1 and Group 2 Year 6 – Narrowboat Trip – Group 3
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> September	9am Macmillan Coffee Morning - <b>All are welcome</b> Harvest Festival – information to follow. 10am Assembly
Thurs 19 <sup>th</sup> September	Year 4 Geography field trip to Skegness
Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup> October	INSET – School closed
Thurs 3 <sup>rd</sup> October	9am KS1 Congratulations - <b>All are welcome</b>
Fri 4 <sup>th</sup> October	Black History Day
Thurs 10 <sup>th</sup> October	9am KS2 Congratulations - <b>All are welcome</b>
Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> October	Parent / Carer Consultations 1:30 – 3pm; 3:30 – 5pm
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup> October	Break up for Half Term
21 – 25 <sup>th</sup> October	Half Term – Week 1 – School closed
28 <sup>th</sup> Oct – 1 <sup>st</sup> Nov	Half Term – Week 2 – School closed
Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> November	School reopens and Individual Photographs Day

## Attendance and Punctuality

School attendance was positive last year, with only a small number of children identified as 'persistent' in their absence. We hope that excellent attendance can continue this academic year.



Punctuality is something we would like to see improve. The school gate **opens at 8:35am**. Families who live close by are often the people running through the gate after the bell at 8:45am.

Every child must attend school each day if at all possible. Please support us by ensuring your child is on the playground before 8:45am, so they can enter class on time. The school gate will be locked each day at 8:50am. If your child arrives late, **you must sign them in at the school office**. Our school attendance stands at 96.1% today.

Fines have increased for those families taking a term time holiday – see details later in this letter.

## We Need Your Help!



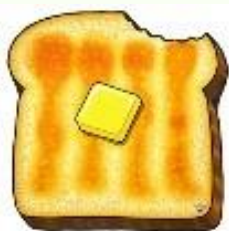
There are some exciting plans being made for improving lunchtime provision at St Mary's. Before we can start building up our provision, we need extra storage space. A small and a larger shed will need building and we are seeking volunteers to help. We think it will take a small team to build each shed (2-3 people minimum). If you think this is something you could help with or even better, take a lead role in, please come to the school office and express your interest in helping. If it would help, the school could be opened on a Saturday morning. Please share your interest and we will go from there.

### Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club starts at 7:50am. Last entry to have breakfast is at **8:20am**.

The cost of the club is £3.50 a day. Please pay in advance.

Children have a choice of cereals and toast and fruit juice or water is available to drink.



### St Mary's Nursery –

Places remain available for 2024 – 25



Please spread the word to ensure you and your family and friends don't miss out.

We can offer full-time or part-time places.

Please pop into the school office to sign up.



### School Uniform

Children have started the school term looking very smart - there are just a few reminders. Please ensure your child wears a sky-blue **shirt – not a polo shirt**. Jumpers should be **V-neck so the school tie can be seen clearly**.

Earrings should be small studs and headbands/clips must be simple and blue in colour – no bright colours or large decorated bobbles please.

Uniform will be closely monitored this year and your teacher has been asked to speak to parents where children aren't wearing full school uniform. Notes will be made in your child's school diary when your child does not meet the school uniform expectations.



#### A few clarifications:

- Long hair must be tied back – boys' and girls' and fringes must be short enough so that we can see children's eyes clearly.
- Winter **or** summer uniform is acceptable as long as it adheres to our uniform policy
- Winter uniform must include a tie
- Children can attend school without a school jumper in hot weather – this is recommended so they do not lose it
- Summer dresses should only be worn in warm/hot weather. If a child needs to wear tights to keep warm, they should be wearing their winter uniform.

### MacMillan Coffee Morning – 27<sup>th</sup> September at 8:45am

Please join us for tea and biscuits in the school hall on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September.

There will be a donation dish as we will be raising money for MacMillan Cancer Research. This is a great opportunity for families to catch up and for us to welcome new families to our community. We will provide more information nearer the time. All are welcome – save the date.



### ASDA CASHPOT for Schools

If you shop at Asda and use Asda Rewards, please support St Mary's by selecting our school. Asda will be donating 0.5% of your total spend to St Mary's. It costs you nothing. £7 was made in our first day.

Every little helps!



### **Trips, Visitors and their Cost**

We are aware of the challenges families face regarding finances and the cost of living. We strive to keep costs as low as possible when planning trips and visitors into school, but we also recognise the value of these visits and experiences in supporting your child's education.



This year, we are going to trial a new approach, enabling parents/carers to make payment over a greater time. Where possible, the cost of your child's trip will appear on Arbor within the first few weeks of September. You will receive a message. This means that you can start paying for the trip little by little, rather than in one lump sum. All we ask is that you have the total payment made 5-working days before the trip or visit takes place.

Each trip / visitor will be mentioned on your child's class newsletter so you are aware of payments expected throughout the year.

### **Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are Changing**

No holidays can be authorised. A Penalty Notice will be issued for 5 consecutive days of term time leave. Please note:

- INSET days are considered as school days and can be included in the 5 or more school days, where there was intent to be absent from school.
- Fines are per parent per child.
- The first offence Penalty Notice is £160 per parent per child (due within 28 days), reduced to £80 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.
- A second offence within 3 years will be a cost of £160 per parent, per child. No reduction is offered.
- A third offence within 3 years will lead to the case being presented to the Magistrates Court. There is no option for a Penalty Notice in this case. Fines can be up to £2500 per parent per child.



### **Sports Trips**

This year, we will be seeking parent helpers to offer support in transporting children to the event to reduce costs. Minibuses are costing £120+ per trip to Harvey Hadden. Please try to help if and when you can.

### **Parent and Visitor Code of Conduct**

All visitors including parents /carers are expected to:

- **Speak kindly to staff and each other**
- **Live by our school values**
- **Bring children to school on time**
- **Make an appointment with a staff member if concerns arise**

I hope you and your children are happy that the new term has begun and they have enjoyed their first day.

Please make an appointment with the school office if the need arises to speak to me. Your child's class teacher should be your first port of call but I am here if you need anything further than the support they can offer.

I look forward to serving you and your families this year.

Yours sincerely,

*Anne-Marie Bell*

### **Pupil Premium**

The number of children receiving Pupil Premium (PP) in school has reduced significantly. For each child registered as PP, we receive an extra £1,455. Trips are subsidised with this money significantly, so it benefits families and school.

An information leaflet will follow in a few days' time. Please apply.