



Archdiocese of Birmingham

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: [enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk)

[www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk](http://www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



St. Mary's mission: To love God above all things by: learning together, loving ourselves, loving each other, loving all people, loving life itself and constantly striving for excellence worthy of our God-given gifts.

## February is dedicated to the Holy Family

Our theme for the Spring term is: 'Options for the Poor and Vulnerable'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Curious and Active'



Dear parents and carers,

6th February 2026

### Theme – Shine Jesus' light

This week, our prayer focus has been inspired by the Gospel call to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Together, we have been reflecting on how we can shine God's light in our everyday actions — through kindness, hope, and wisdom in our classrooms, our conversations, and our work. We have talked about how living out our mission statement, "In all things love," helps us reflect Jesus' love to others. When we choose compassion, when we help one another, and when we act with courage and joy, God's light is shared, and our school becomes a place where every child can grow in faith, confidence, and happiness.

### Online Safety Week and Safer Internet Day

This week, we have been placing a strong emphasis on Online Safety across the school. As part of Safer Internet Day on Tuesday, the children took part in the BBC Live Lesson, which explored how to use the internet responsibly and how to stay safe when using new technologies, including AI. The session helped pupils think carefully about the choices they make online, the importance of protecting personal information, and how to recognise trustworthy content. Online safety remains a vital part of our curriculum, and we continue to teach children how to navigate the digital world with confidence, awareness, and care.

### No waiting – 'single yellow lines'

We are continuing to experience concerns around parking and waiting outside school, particularly on the single yellow lines. Please remember that single yellow lines mean no waiting at any time during their operating hours, which include school drop-off and pick-up. When cars stop or wait on these lines, the road becomes too narrow for two-way traffic, and we are increasingly seeing drivers mount the pavement opposite the school. This is extremely dangerous for our children and families who are trying to walk safely, and it makes modelling good road-crossing habits very difficult. I kindly ask all parents and carers to support us by parking safely and legally, helping us keep every child safe on their journey to and from school.

We believe that a stronger amount of complaints to the Council will strengthen our case to have something done about 'repeat offenders' outside school – It would be also very useful if you could report any offending vehicles to Birmingham City Council.

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20109/parking/1983/report\\_an\\_illegally\\_parked\\_vehicle](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20109/parking/1983/report_an_illegally_parked_vehicle)

As we come to the end of a busy and rewarding half-term, we break up today for a well-deserved week of rest. I hope all our children and families enjoy a wonderful break filled with fun, relaxation, and time together. We look forward to welcoming the children back, refreshed and ready for the new half-term, on Monday 23rd February at the normal school time. Enjoy the holiday and take good care of one another.

**Mrs Yorke**, Headteacher



# Catholic Life

*This week's Gospel and Prayer*

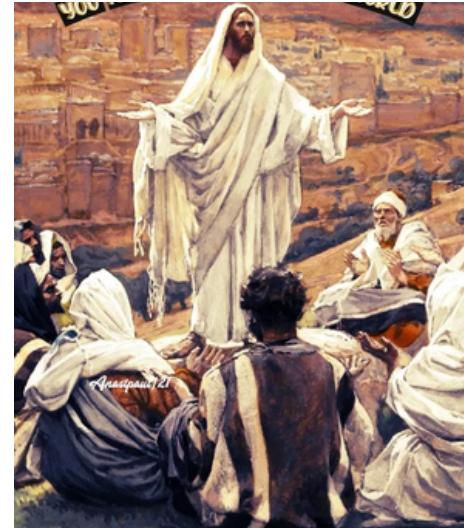
*Matthew 5:13*

*'Jesus said to His Disciples: "You are the salt of the Earth."*

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message, the children learn to:

- **Follow** Jesus, just like the first Disciples;
- **Be like** salt by making the world better, bringing out the best in our lives, and the lives of others;
- **Grow** in faith and love, and live out our mission with the help of the Holy Spirit;
- **Love** God, and others, through our words and actions

*Jesus loves you*



Year 4 Mass - 11.2.26

St. Josephine Bakhita



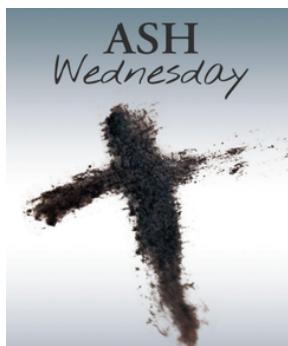
Year 4 led Mass this week in celebration of 4J's Class Patron  
- St Josephine Bakhita. The prayerful atmosphere, beautiful readings and joyful singing was wonderful.



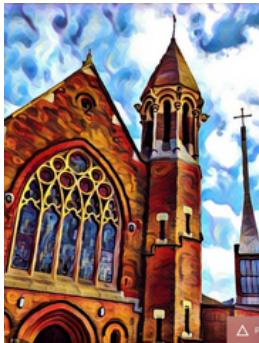
Ash Wednesday Masses: -

**St. Mary's Church**

**Ash Wednesday - 18 February**  
**Masses and Ashes at**  
**8.30am, 12 Noon and 6.00pm**



**Ash**  
Wednesday



Our next school Mass: - Year 6 Mass

**1st Week of Lent**

Our next Mass in Church will be on

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2026**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 6 will be leading us in our Mass, and Year 5 will also be in attendance.

All parents are welcome to join us.



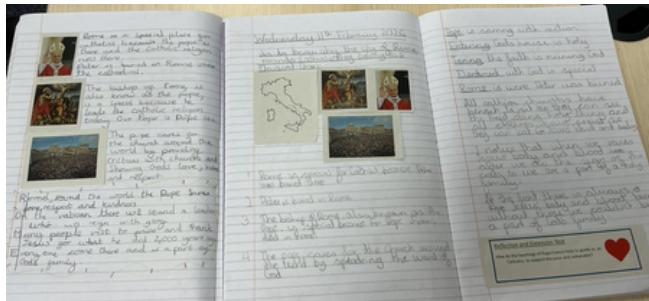


# Catholic Life

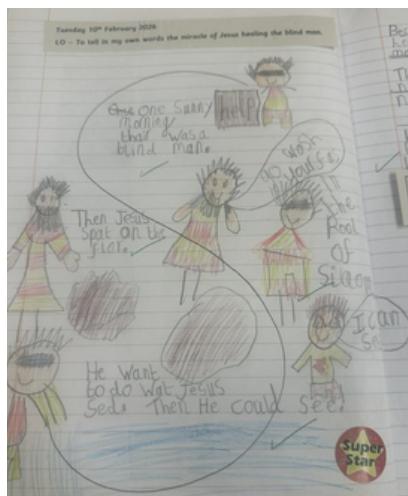
## Our lovely RE learning



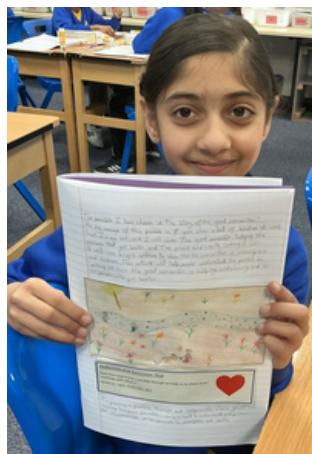
Year 4 have been learning about the Universal Church and how it was established based on the original teachings of the Apostles.



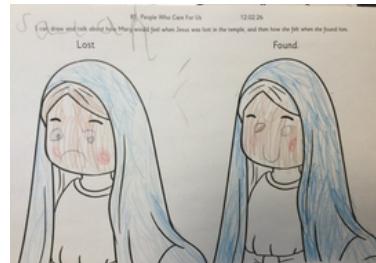
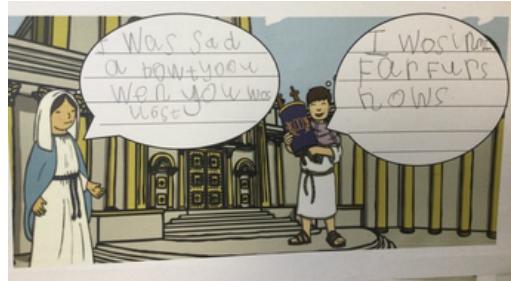
Year 1 have been learning about the miracle of where Jesus healed the blind man. The children experienced being blind-folded to empathise with how the blind man felt, they then retold and illustrated the story.



Year 5 created posters based some of the Parables, and connected them to discipleship, faith, love and service.



Reception have been writing speech bubbles and drawing pictures about how Mary felt, when Jesus was lost and then found in the temple.



Year 6 compared the signs, symbols and actions of Baptism and Confirmation.

# Prayer

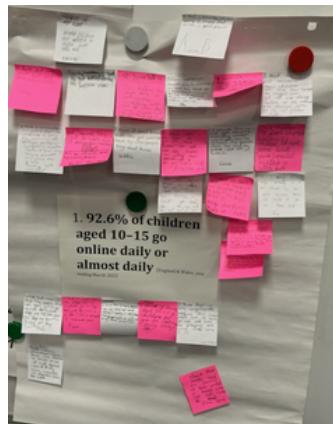


# Online SAFETY WEEK

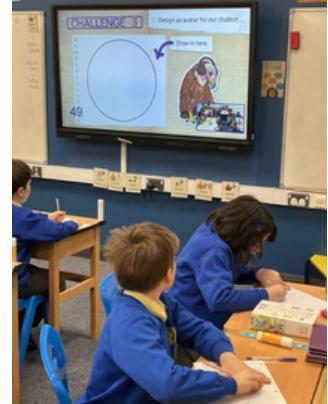
Key Stage 2 loved the BBC Teach Live Lesson this week – what's not to love about a catchy song about AI and the appearance of a vulture!



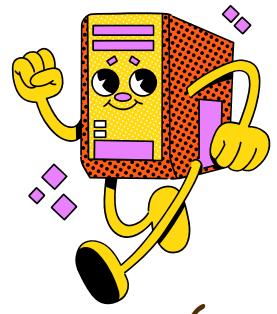
Year 4



Year 5



Year 6



## Online Safety and Early Help Coffee Morning Tuesday 24 February – 8:45am to 9:45am



Did you know that 31% of 8 to 17 year-olds have admitted to chatting to someone they didn't know when gaming online ...

Are you worried about Online Safety and want to know where to get help or support with issues around your child staying safe online (or any other parenting concerns)?

Come along to our Online Safety and Early Help Coffee Morning  
on Tuesday 24 February at 8:45am.

There will be presentations from Mrs Gidley, our Computing Lead, and Natasha Sims, Early Help Coordinator (Birmingham Children's Trust) and chance to ask questions and seek advice about any of your concerns.

Please sign up on School Gateway to confirm your place.

# Online SAFETY information for parents

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ROBLOX

Roblox is one of the most popular video games among children. In 2020, the game's developers claimed that more than half of the USA's children had played it. As a 'sandbox' title, the game lets players create their own gaming experiences with Roblox Studio to build custom levels, which can then be shared online.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

Roblox encourages players to interact online (including a group chat function), which could expose children to various risks. Scammers often attempt to trick young Roblox fans into exchanging their paid-for items for something which turns out to be of much lesser value – or something they never even receive. The in-game chat has some filters, but it isn't perfect: players can still send unpleasant messages, while predators can reach out to children directly.

**CONTACT WITH STRANGERS**

Roblox has private or VIP servers which allow people to play exclusively with their friends, but this costs money – usually a one-off payment. Most Roblox players will instead be on public servers that anyone can join. Servers can host games which focus on all kinds of aspects, including direct player interaction. Some lobbies, therefore, will put children at greater risk of contact from strangers than others.

**PUBLIC SERVERS**

**ONLINE DATERS**

These are also called 'ODers' and are quite common in Roblox. An ODer is an individual who joins a game with the intention of finding someone to date online – and eventually meet in person. Such online dating is against the Roblox community guidelines, but this doesn't usually deter such people. Some player-built Roblox levels have even been designed with online dating specifically in mind, and this will not always be obvious.

**IN-APP PURCHASES**

Roblox is free to download and play, but bear in mind that there are some extra costs. These are usually indicated with the symbol for 'Robux' (the in-game currency). Players are encouraged to make purchases in the game using real money. People can also buy extra Robux to spend on cosmetic items in the game, and it's also possible to purchase a private or VIP server.

### Advice for Parents & Educators

**SET PARENTAL CONTROLS**

Roblox comes with several parental control options, which are explained well on the game's official website. It's essential to enter the correct date of birth for younger players, as that allows Roblox to automatically apply appropriate chat filters. The game also allows parents and carers to set monthly spending restrictions and monitor their child's account.

**DISABLE PRIVATE MESSAGING**

Roblox's private messaging function raises the risk of children being contacted by people they may not want to speak with – potentially leading to bullying, harassment, toxicity and scam attempts. Keep in mind that the game allows you to disable messages from anyone who hasn't been added as a friend on your account.

**PRIVATE SERVERS**

If a child has friends to play Roblox with, paying for a private or VIP server decreases the risk of contact from strangers. Even then, however, the player who owns the server could invite other people – who might not be child friendly – to join them. Additionally, private servers can be set up in such a way that any player on the host's friends list can join, so it's important to discuss who children are playing with.

**MONITOR SPENDING**

If they don't understand they're using real money, it's easy for children to accidentally spend a sizeable amount in the game. Using parental controls to place limits on their spending will help avoid any nasty financial surprises. Ensuring that two-factor authentication is enabled on any payment accounts also makes it harder for children to spend money inadvertently.

**DEALING WITH STRANGERS**

At some point in their development, children must learn how to deal with strangers online. Show them how to block and report any users who are upsetting them or asking uncomfortable questions. Talking to them about what's okay to discuss – and what they should never tell a stranger – can help them understand how to communicate more safely with other people online.

**Meet Our Expert**

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.

**#WakeUpWednesday**

**The National College**

Sources: <https://www.theverge.com/2020/7/2/2133431/roblox-over-half-of-us-kids-playing-virtual-parties-fortnite>  
<https://corp.roblox.com/parents/>

X @wake\_up\_weds

f /wuw.thenationalcollege

Instagram @wake.up.wednesday

d @wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Release date: 13.10.2023 Last reviewed: 30.05.2024



A fabulous 2-0 win from our boys on Thursday night! Well played team



Our school netball team played so well in their first match of the season. Although the result didn't go their way, they showed fantastic teamwork and sportsmanship throughout. Well done, girls!



Our Year 5 Play Leaders had a fantastic time at Bishop Challoner this week! They learned lots of exciting, active playground games to lead with our KS1 children at playtimes.



## Signposting for half-term activities

This section is to sign-post activities that are taking place over half-term, which you may wish to engage with. As a school we are only sign-posting not necessarily endorsing these clubs.

Previous attachment

**feefo**   4.8/5 from parents

**THE STRINGS CLUB**

**HARBORNE ACADEMY, B15 3JL**

**ENTER NEWCUS10 FOR 10% OFF**

 *scan me*

**Make the school holidays unforgettable**

**BUY WOMEN BUILT**

**www.thestringsclub.org | 0121 296 9204**



- ✓ Tax Free & Childcare Vouchers
- ✓ 550+ 5\* Reviews
- ✓ Free Instrument Hire
- ✓ Flexible Days & Hours to Suit
- ✓ 1 Adult to 8 Children Ratio

**HARBORNE**  
**HALF TERM ACTIVITY**  
**HOLIDAY CLUB TIMETABLE**



TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
ICEBREAKER GAME	Pokemon Trainer Tag	Spongebob Bubble Chase	Scooby Doo Monster Chase	Minion Banana Grab	Tom and Jerry Chase
ACTIVITY 1	Glow in the Dark Dodgeball	Funtastic Toon Quiz	Basketball	Archery	Glow in the Dark Dodgeball
ACTIVITY 2	Invasion Games	Gymnastics	Dodgeball	Gymnastics	Tennis
ACTIVITY 3	NERF	Kids Vs Coaches	Table Tennis	Premier Olympics	NERF
ACTIVITY 4	Team Games	Tchoukball	Structured Sports and Active Play	Tag Rugby	Stay and Play

**20% DISCOUNT STILL AVAILABLE PLUS FURTHER 10% DISCOUNT WHEN BOOKING ALL 5 DAYS**





[www.premier-education.com/holiday-camps](http://www.premier-education.com/holiday-camps)



## Year 4 Harborne Library Visit - 24.2.26

Year 4 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.

4M will leave at 8:45am

4J will leave at 10:15am

If you are a parent who would like to attend and support walking to and from the library, please let the Year 4 staff know.



## Oliver Twist – M&M Productions

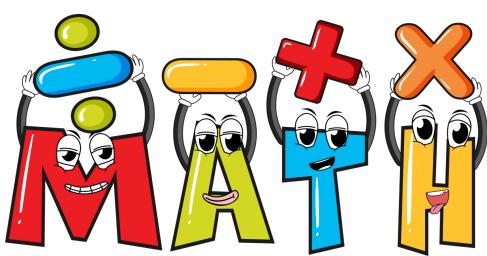
**25<sup>th</sup> February 2026 for KS2**

M&M Productions return to school on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> February to put on a performance of Oliver Twist for our KS2 children. We are asking for a £3 donation to support the cost of the performance and children can wear their own clothes on this day.



## Oliver Twist – Workshop for Year 6

Following the performance, the actors will be working alongside Year 6 children in a special workshop teaching them drama skills and more about the performing arts. What a super opportunity! We can't wait.



## Reception parent workshop for maths – 27.2.26 at 2:30pm

Reception parents are invited to attend a Maths workshop at 2:30pm on Friday 27th February. During the workshop, you will have the opportunity to find out more about how maths is taught in Reception and how you can help at home.



### School Council Fundraising

#### 'Decorate an Egg' competition - WB 2.3.26

To help raise funds for a new activity trail, children are invited to take part in our Decorate an Egg competition by bringing in a creatively decorated hard-boiled egg on **Monday 2nd March** with a £3 entry fee. All entries will be displayed in our "**Egg-hibition**" on **Friday 6th March at 3:45pm**, where families can come along for a small entry fee, with all proceeds going towards the new trail. Thank you for supporting this fun community event and helping us improve our outdoor play space.

National Careers Week



### National Careers Week - WB 2.3.26

In this week children will have the opportunity to learn about a range of different careers. We are putting together a full timetable of visitors - if you are available to talk to the children about your career, please let school know.



### World Book Day - 05.03.26

The children will be celebrating the wonderful world of books all day on Thursday 5th March. Children can come to school dressed as their favourite book character on this day. There will be a donation for charity that can be paid on Gateway.



### Other key dates

#### SATs Week for Year 6

Children in Year 6 will be taking their SATs Tests from **Monday 11th May - Thursday 14th May 2026**.

All Year 6 children are required to be in school every day during SATs week.

We are an operation encompass school. Therefore school is working alongside the police to ensure support for any child who has been involved in or witness to domestic abuse. Please find more information about this on our website or contact the school office.

## Pastoral Team

If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team

**If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team**

If you have a concern that a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm, or you receive a disclosure (intentionally or unintentionally) you must contact one of the following staff members as quickly as possible:



Laura Noone  
Lead DSL  
DHT



Louise Yorke  
Headteacher



Jade Preedy  
AHT



Rachel Jones  
Senior Teacher



Sharon Tame  
School  
Counsellor



Rachel Richards  
EYFS Lead



Shania  
Birchenall  
SENDCo

## Do not book holidays during term time

This is a reminder that holidays during term time are unauthorised. If you intend to take your child out of school during term time, we ask that you complete a holiday request form at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date where possible. Parents may be fined by the Local Authority for taking unauthorised leave of absence. Children need to be in school every day so please ensure holidays are only booked during school holiday time.

Good attendance, continues to be a school and government priority. Good attendance is 96% and above. Remember below 95% is a concern and below 90% is classed as persistent absence. If you have any problems with regards to getting your child to school or you are struggling to improve your child's attendance, please speak to Mrs. Yorke or Mrs. Davis.

We will announce the attendance for the previous week in this section of the newsletter each week.

## Attendance and Punctuality: -

Our attendance for last week was -

**Week 09/2/25-13/02/25**

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	96	92	97	92	97	97	99	97	91	96	96	96	97	98
Lates	8	3	3	2	2	4	10	0	1	1	1	0	1	3
Whole School Attendance so far this year					97.1%			School Target					97%	

Well done 3L: - Our attendance champions!

**Spring theme -**

**Spring 11 Virtues**

**23rd February 2026 - 8:45am**

**24th February 2026 - am**

**25th February 2026 - 9:15am**

**25th February 2026 - pm**

**27th February 2026 - 2:30pm**

**WB 2.3.26**

**4th March 2026 - 9:15am**

**5th March 2026 - all day**

**6th March 2026 - 9:15am**

**10th March 2026 - am**

**11th March 2026 - all day**

**11th March 2026 - 9:15am**

**13th March 2026 - all day**

**16th March 2026- 9:15am 1:15pm**

**17th March 2026 - am**

**17th March 2026 - pm**

**18th March 2026 - 9:15am**

**19th March 2026 - pm**

**20th March 2026 - all day**

**24th March 2026 - am**

**24th March 2026 - 1:30pm**

**25th March 2026 - 9:30am**

**26th March 2026 - 9:00am**

**27th March 2026 - 6:30-8:30pm**

**WB 30.3.26**

**30th March 2026 - pm**

**1st April 2026 - 1:45pm**

**2nd April 2026 - 11:00am**

**2nd April 2026**

**Options for the Poor and Vulnerable**

**Intentional and Prophetic**

**Children return to school at normal time**

**Year 4 library visit - 4M (8:45) and 4J (10:15)**

**Year 6 Mass in Church (and Year 5 classes attend) - parents welcome**

**Oliver Twist workshop for Year 6**

**Reception parent workshop about Maths**

**Careers Week / Vocations week**

**Year 3 Mass (and Year 4 classes attend) - parents welcome**

**World book day - dress as your favourite book character**

**Year 2 Year group assembly**

**Year 3 library visit - 3L (8:45) and 3T (10:15)**

**Reception school trip to Attwell farm**

**Year 1 Mass in Church (and Year 2 classes attend) - parents welcome**

**Year 2 trip to Black Country Living Museum**

**Mothers' Day Inspire Event in school**

**Year 6 library visit - 6R (8:45) and 6O (10:15)**

**Parent Consultation Evening**

**Reception Mass in Church (with Year 6 buddies) - parents welcome**

**Parent Consultation Evening**

**Down Syndrome Awareness Day**

**Year 5 library visit - 5F (8:45) and 5M (10:15)**

**Year 6 Confirmation Workshop with parents**

**Whole School Mass - parents welcome**

**Year 6 prayer service for parents**

**PTA event - Spring Disco in Parish**

**Holy Week**

**Reconciliation Service for children in Years 4/5/6**

**Reception class - Easter Bonnet parade**

**Year 6 Stations of the Cross in Church for KS2 and parent**

**Break up for Easter Holidays**

**1:40 finish time - Reception classes**

**1:45 finish time - KS1 classes**

**1:50 finish time - sibling group**

**2:00 finish time - KS2 classes**

# Term Dates: -

## Academic Year 2025-2026

<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September - Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>
	<i>Half-term</i>
	<b>Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December</b>
<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January - Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February</b>
	<i>Half-term</i>
	<b>Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> February - Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April</b>
<b>Summer Term</b>	<b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April - Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May</b>
	<i>Half-term</i>
	<b>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June - Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b>

### School Closed:

- Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026 - May Bank Holiday
- Thursday 7th May 2026 – local elections

### INSET DAYS

- Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025
- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2025
- Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2026
- Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2026



# Star of the week

Congratulations to the following children who have shone in school over the last week:

Year RB	Lilla	For giving Paddington a safe, caring place to stay for the week!
Year RT	Jude	For trying really hard in his reading and writing!
Year 1F	Aoife	For striving for excellence in everything she does and for being a kind classmate.
Year 1L	Isabella	For her positive attitude and hard work in handwriting and exciting writing.
Year 2E	Eliana	For trying really hard in all her lessons to complete tasks
Year 2G	Oliver	For a gorgeous piece of artwork in art!
Year 3L	Josie	For always being a fantastic role model!
Year 3T	Erina	For amazing effort in her writing this week
Year 4J	Harrison	For great concentration and observation when doing his Picasso portrait
Year 4M	Aila	For being an excellent role model and following St Mary's Virtues
Year 5F	Amalie	For always showing great enthusiasm in French lessons.
Year 5M	James	For always working so hard in all lessons. So proud of your efforts!
Year 6O	Bello	being an incredible asset to the form and role model to others. She gives maximum effort always. Keep up the hard work!
Year 6R	Jennifer	For always ensuring her work is presented beautifully and tries her utmost hardest.

