



Archdiocese of Birmingham

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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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: - 'Intentional and Prophetic'



Dear parents and carers,

27 February 2026

Theme – 1st week of Lent – Fasting

This week we entered the season of Lent, a time in the Church's year when we pause, reflect, and make space to grow closer to Jesus. Although Ash Wednesday fell during the half-term break, the children have returned with a thoughtful attitude towards this special season. Across school, we have been reflecting on Jesus' time in the desert and the meaning of fasting—not simply giving something up, but creating room in our hearts for prayer, acts of kindness, and almsgiving.

Lent prayer bags – a chance to pray together at home as a family

Our Spiritual Council has worked incredibly hard to prepare the Lent Prayer Bags, which have now begun going home. These offer a lovely opportunity for families to pray together during Lent. We would be delighted to see how you use them—please feel free to email photos to the school office or share them on X using @StMaryB17.

M&M Productions of Oliver Twist for KS2

A real highlight of the week was the Oliver Twist production for our KS2 pupils. The performance was exceptional and such a memorable experience for the children. Opportunities like this enrich the curriculum and help our pupils develop confidence, imagination, and cultural awareness—an important part of their wider education.

KS2

Thank you also to our Reception staff and all the parents who joined the Early Maths Workshop, this afternoon. It was wonderful to see such strong engagement and enthusiasm. Your partnership makes a real difference to the children's learning.

Next week: –

Next week is shaping up to be a very full and exciting one, so I wanted to give you a brief overview of what's ahead.

Decorate an egg competition

Our School Council are working hard to raise funds for a new activity trail, and we are excited to launch our Decorate an Egg competition. Children are invited to bring in a creatively decorated hard-boiled egg on Monday, with the £3 entry fee paid via School Gateway. All entries will be showcased in our very own "Egg-hibition" on Friday 6th March at 3:45pm, where families are warmly welcome to come along for a small entry fee. Every penny raised will go directly towards the new trail. We can't wait to see the children's imaginative designs—time to get painting this weekend!

Book character costume or pyjamas for Thursday 5th March

We are looking forward to celebrating World Book Day next week with a range of reading-themed activities across school. Children are invited to come dressed as their favourite book character, or, if they prefer, in their cosiest pyjamas. To support families, we are holding a costume collection in school, with donated outfits available for any child who would like one. Donations are welcome until Monday 2nd March, and children who donate a costume will be entered into a prize draw for Scholastic book vouchers to use at our book fair.

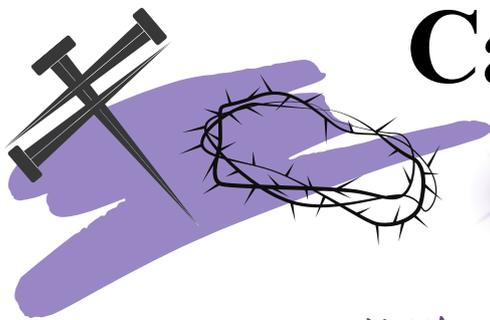
National Careers Week

Next week is Careers Week, and we are delighted to be welcoming a wide range of visitors into school. Throughout the week, pupils will hear from professionals across many different fields, helping them broaden their understanding of the world of work and see how their learning connects to real-life opportunities. These experiences are an important part of our commitment to the Gatsby Benchmarks, giving children meaningful encounters with employers and raising their aspirations for the future.

We are incredibly grateful to the parents who have kindly offered their time to speak to the children about the jobs they do. Your support enriches the week and makes these opportunities possible. If you are delivering a talk, please send any PowerPoints or resources in advance so we can ensure everything is ready for your visit.

Thank you all for your ongoing support and I wish you a very happy weekend,

Mrs Yorke,
Headteacher



Catholic Life



Matthew 4:1-2

'Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, He was hungry.'

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- That Jesus' temptations in the desert reveal His complete trust in God the Father.
- We must trust in Him and remember that He is always with us.
- We must ask for His help when we are tempted or when we face difficulties.



Year 6 Mass - 25.2.25

Year 6 led a beautiful Mass on Wednesday for the first week of Lent where the children reflected on the importance of penance.



Our next Mass: - Year 3 Mass
- 2nd week of Lent

Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 4th March 2026**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 3 will be leading this Mass and Year 4 will also be in attendance. All parents are welcome to attend.



Prayer

Lenten Prayer bags



As we have now entered the liturgical season of Lent, our wonderful Spiritual Council have prepared our Lent prayer bags. We hope that you enjoy using them with your children to support your reflection time and prayer at home. Please tweet any pictures of them being used and tag us in [@StMaryB17](#) or send pictures in to our [enquiry email](#).

Examples of prayer this week...

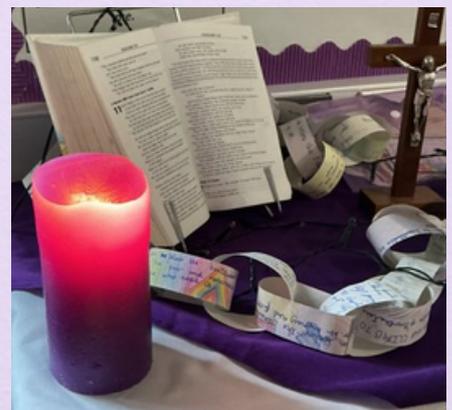
Reception held a special prayer service and offered their promises up to Jesus.



In child-led prayer, Year 5 thought about what it means to fast during the season of Lent.



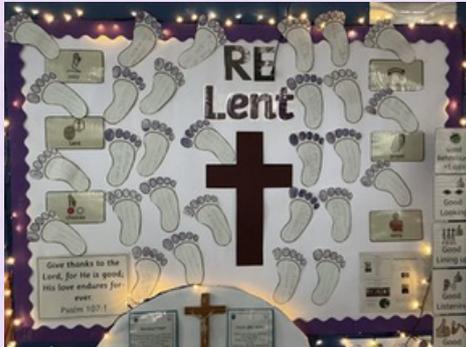
Year 6 have been using Mark 10 Mission as part of their morning prayer.



Catholic Life

Our RE learning...

Reception have written special promises to walk with Jesus this Lent and follow His example.

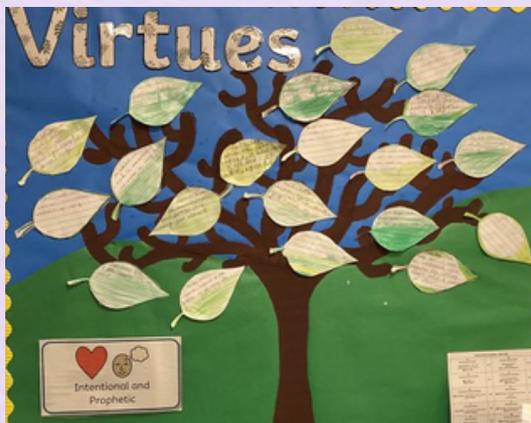


Year 5 have been learning about the three pillars of Lent.



All classes have been exploring the virtues for this half-term, and updating their virtues tree.

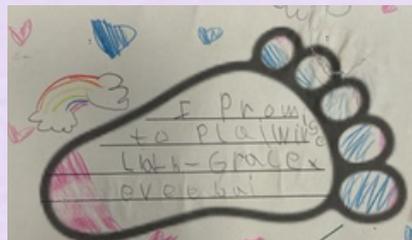
Here are Year 2 and Year 5's examples of how they are going to be intentional and prophetic.



During Lent, and inspired by their whole-class text 'The Night Bus Hero', Year 4 children are collecting for St. Basil's homeless charity. We would appreciate any donations.



Year 1 began their RE unit all about the liturgical season of lent. They started by thinking about the ways they can be more like Jesus during this special time. The children then made their own Lenten promises.



Year 6 have been reading the Gospels and noting down how we should live our lives this Lent, according to Jesus' teachings.

Spotlight on our 'Amazing Art'



Year 1 have created Modigliani inspired portraits

Year 4 are very proud of their Picasso inspired portraits on display in school



Year 4 are now working on their mosaics in Art lessons.



Oliver Twist Performance for KG2

KS2 loved the performance of Oliver Twist this week - the acting and singing was superb and it was a wonderful treat for the children! Year 6 enjoyed a special workshop with the cast afterwards also.





Online Safety and Early Help Coffee Morning Tuesday 24 February



Thank you to our parents/carers who attended the Online Safety and Early Help Coffee Morning on Tuesday. Mrs Gidley shared some essential information about children's online activity and how parents/carers can keep their children safe. This was followed by a talk from Natasha Simms, our local Early Help Coordinator, who spoke to our parents/carers about all the help and support available to our families as part of the Early Help offer in Edgbaston. Feedback from the event was overwhelming positive with parents/carers welcoming the signposting of help and how schools are teaching children about online safety. 100% of attendees would attend a similar event in the future – a workshop to offer practical help to parents/carers on how to set up parental controls on online devices was discussed and this will now be explored as a potential future event. Watch this space!



For further information about Early Help, please speak to Mrs Noone or contact the Early Help office local to you. We can also provide details of all the parenting courses provided through the Family Hubs so please ask if you would like details.

HELP FOR ALL FAMILIES IN BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTNERSHIP

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EDGBASTON EarlyHelpEdgbaston@gatewaysf.org 0121 456 7821	NORTHFIELD EarlyHelpNorthfield@gatewaysf.org 0121 456 7821
ERDINGTON ErdingtonFamilies@compass-support.org.uk 0121 748 8199	PERRY BARR BirminghamEarlyHelpPerryBarr@family-action.org.uk 07385 464 482
HALL GREEN HallGreen.Families@greensquareaccord.co.uk 07570 953 519 (9:30am to 4:30pm)	SELLY OAK SellyOak.Families@greensquareaccord.co.uk 07483 090 434
HODGE HILL YardleyHodgeHillEH@barnardos.org.uk 0121 289 4875	SUTTON COLDFIELD SuttonColdfieldEarlyHelp@compass-support.org.uk 0121 748 8199
LADYWOOD BirminghamEarlyHelpLadywood@family-action.org.uk 07816 086 407	YARDLEY YardleyHodgeHillEH@barnardos.org.uk 0121 289 4875



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

NCW

National Careers Week - WB 2.3.26

Next week is National Careers Week, the children will have the opportunity to learn about a range of different careers, with a full timetable of various talks and visitors.



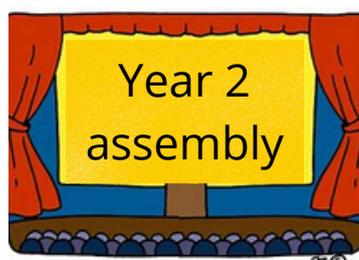
Chinese Menu - Tuesday 3rd March 2026

Next week, on Tuesday, we are offering a Chinese inspired menu as it was recently the start of the Chinese New Year. If your child isn't normally school dinners, but would like to have our Chinese themed menu - please let the school office know via Gateway by 2nd March 2026.



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.



Year 2 Assembly - 06.03.26

We are looking forward to welcoming parents of all Year 2 children into school on Friday 6th March for their year group assembly.



Reception trip to Attwell Farm on Thursday 12th March

Reception class are learning about where food comes from and farm animals. For this trip, children will need to wear their PE kit: warm, black / navy jogging bottoms, their school top and cardigan / jumper, and they should wear wellies/boots. Please ensure that your child wears a waterproof coat too.



Year 2 trip to Black Country Living Museum on Friday 13th March

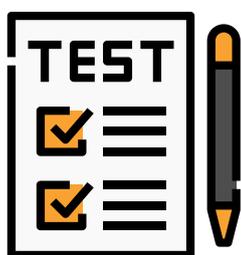
This trip has been carefully planned to complement their local history learning. Children should wear school outdoor PE kit and trainers; and dress suitably for the weather. They will return before the end of the school day.



Mothers' Day Inspire - 16.3.26 9:15-11:00 or 1:15-3:00

To celebrate Mother's Day, we are hosting a special play-based 'Parents and children Inspire workshop' in school. This workshop has been designed for mums but of course dads or any family member can attend. The person attending must be an adult over 18 years of age. We have planned some fun activities, led by staff in school, where you can work with your children across the year groups. More details to follow on Monday.

Tuesday 17th March and Thursday 19th March 2026



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.



Medication in School



In accordance with our policy (Medicines – Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions and Managing Medications Policy 2025 – 2027), only prescription medications will be administered at school providing the scheduled dose falls within the school day and where we have parents/carers' written consent. All prescription medications should be brought to the school office by an adult where a Consent to Administer Medication form will be completed and details of the medication can be added to Medical Tracker. Under no circumstances should medication ever be sent into school in a child's bag.

Furthermore, unless medications such as paracetamol, ibuprofen or similar etc have been prescribed, we cannot administer them in school. If a child requires pain relief during the school day, please ask your GP to prescribe the medication (and follow the above process as per our policy) or you are welcome to come into school to administer the medication yourself.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us ensure that all medication in school is managed safely and in line with our statutory responsibilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office, where staff will be happy to assist.



School Uniform Expectations



As you will be aware, wearing a school uniform is an important part of our school community. It helps promote our shared values, creates a strong sense of belonging, and reduces social pressure so all children feel equal and included. Uniform also supports focus and good learning habits by minimising distractions, while ensuring pupils are dressed safely, comfortably, and appropriately for school activities.

Our uniform guide is published on the school's website but we would like to draw your attention to the following:

- Children should only be wearing trainers when they are wearing their PE kit on a day when a PE lesson is scheduled. On a non-PE day, children should be wearing school shoes (NB – boots are not permitted).
- Children should be in their winter uniforms which includes a shirt/blouse and tie. Gold polo shirts are part of the school's summer uniform and should not be worn until after Easter.
- Only dark navy or black plain tracksuit bottoms can be worn for PE e.g.: no other colours and no cycling shorts or leggings.
- Only one pair of plain studs and a wristwatch are permitted (no smart watches) – jewellery cannot be worn to school for safety reasons.
- No extreme hairstyles e.g.: unnatural hair colours, shaved lines etc.
- Long hair must be tied back.

There is help available if you need support with school uniform – please speak to a member of the Pastoral Team for further information. Thank you for your ongoing support.

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

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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. Noone.

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 23/02/26-27/02/26

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	98	97	99	98	96	95	94	98	98	97	97	98	97	98
Lates	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	0	1	0	1	4
Whole School Attendance so far this year						97.11%			School Target				97%	

Well done **1L**: - Our attendance champions!

SAFETY information for parents

10 Top Tips on Supporting Children with SELF-REGULATION

Children need to learn to understand and recognise their emotions, while finding healthy ways to process them. Emotional self-regulation, however, depends heavily on age and development. While very young ones or children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may find it particularly challenging to self-regulate, nurturing these important skills can be hugely beneficial. Here are ten top tips for supporting children with their self-regulation.

1. DESIGNATE A TRUSTED ADULT



It's vital that children feel safe and know that there's someone they can always go to for help if they need it. Schedule consistent times for the child to develop a relationship with this person – ideally through play and games – allowing trust to grow and ensuring that the child is more likely to come forward if anything is wrong, rather than hiding their emotions.

2. MEET CHILDREN HALFWAY

Unless you know where a child is developmentally and tailor your approach to their needs, you're less likely to have an impact. In particular, younger ones and children with SEND can struggle to self-regulate and instead rely on others to help them. We call this 'co-regulation'. Rather than offering strategies for self-regulation, it could be better to start co-regulating with a trusted adult first.

3. FACTOR IN THEIR BASIC NEEDS



Remember that for a child to develop emotional regulation skills, their basic needs must be met first. Children who are hungry, tired, cold and so on – as well as those who have experienced adverse childhood experiences – may struggle to self-regulate. Before you develop strategies with any child, make sure they feel safe, secure and comfortable in themselves.

4. REMAIN PATIENT



If a child is struggling with their emotions, it can often become difficult to stay calm. Remember that dysregulation is beyond their control, so a display of frustration or anger could negatively impact the situation. Instead, children need to be met with comfort and understanding to help them manage these problematic feelings.

5. BE 'A DYSREGULATION DETECTIVE'



While some children can tell you why they became dysregulated, many others can't. You could investigate potential triggers by observing the child and talking to their family. When the child becomes dysregulated, note down details like the time, what they're doing and who they're with – the trigger may be someone they sit near, an unmet sensory need or something else entirely. Once we identify some triggers, we can help to avoid or overcome them.

6. USE SUITABLE LITERATURE



There are some wonderful books that can help you teach self-regulation to children. Reading these with a child can be especially powerful. Take time to discuss the content, ask questions about what feelings the characters had, why they felt that way and what strategies helped them. It can also be useful to refer back to snippets of these books at appropriate moments.

7. TRY SENSORY RESOURCES



An overlap between sensory needs and emotional regulation is possible. Children may struggle to self-regulate if they're experiencing sensory overload (a noisy classroom, for example). Positive sensory input can help calm them down. Use resources such as weighted blankets and fibre-optic lights. Of course, what works for one child might not work for another – so it's important to offer a choice of resources to discover which they prefer.

8. NURTURE INDEPENDENCE



If you feel it's appropriate, let children try out these strategies alone. Always offer them a choice: they could listen to music when they're feeling stressed, for example, or they could write down their worries or draw something to represent how they feel. This may take time for the child to get used to, so be patient. Encourage them to share any helpful strategies with a trusted adult.

9. MODEL GENUINE FEELINGS



Children learn a lot just from watching grown-ups. Don't be afraid to show your own emotions and self-regulation strategies. While you'll obviously want to avoid sharing anything too personal with children, they should still see us experiencing and handling our own feelings. Tell them how you are feeling, then show them how to respond in a healthy manner.

10. FORMULATE A PLAN



As much as we try to prevent children from experiencing dysregulation, it's always wise to have an appropriate plan for when it does happen. Discuss this strategy with the child (if appropriate) and their family. The best approach for an individual child is often a bespoke one; it's hugely important to know in advance what might help and what could worsen the situation.

Meet Our Expert

Osagino Durrant is an author, former teacher, special educational Needs Coordinator and the founder of the award-winning SEND Resources Blog, where she shares activities, advice and recommendations for parents and teachers of children with SEND.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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.



EASTER



HOLIDAY CLUBS

HARBORNE ACADEMY, HARBORNE RD, B15 3JL

**MONDAY 30TH MARCH - THURSDAY 2ND APRIL
TUESDAY 7TH - FRIDAY 10TH APRIL**

***£18.83 9AM-4PM (5-11 YEAR OLDS)
£14.00 9AM-1PM (4 YEAR OLDS)
£21.54 (20% DISCOUNT) 2ND - 15TH MARCH
£24.50 (STANDARD PRICE)**

**SCAN THE QR CODE OR VISIT
WWW.PREMIER-EDUCATION.COM/HOLIDAY-CAMPS**



Dates for this term

Spring theme -

Spring II Virtues

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 - 9:15am

12th March 2026 - all day

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

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)

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

Reception school trip to Attwell farm

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

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

School Closed:

- Monday 4th May 2026 - May Bank Holiday
- Thursday 7th May 2026 - local elections

INSET DAYS

- Monday 1st September 2025
- Friday 24th October 2025
- Monday 20th July 2026
- Tuesday 21st July 2026

