



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Newsletter

JANUARY 2026

Love, Grow, Believe, Achieve

DATES TO REMEMBER

JANUARY

Tues 27th - Full Governing Body Meeting

Thurs 29th - Streetwise workshops for Y6

FEBRUARY

Mon 2nd - Y3 reading workshop for parents/ carers (school hall)

Thurs 5th - Fundraiser event: Y3-Y6 Disco, 3.15-4.15pm

Fri 6th - Toddler Stay and Play session - free for all pre-school children

Tues 10th - Safer Internet Day 2026

Thurs 12th - Y5 & Y6 visit to Mary Immaculate High School

- Fundraiser event: Reception-Y2 Disco, 3.15-4pm

16th - 20th - Half term - school closed

Wed 25th - Y5 Cricket Final Tournament @ Sophia Gardens Cricket Ground

Fri 27th - **Teacher training day - school closed**

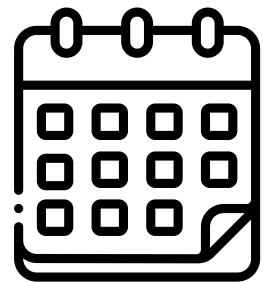
Wed 25th - Teacher-Parent Meetings - ONLINE

MARCH

Tues 2nd - St. David's Day Celebrations - wear Welsh national costumes. colours to school

Wed 4th - Teacher-Parent Meetings - IN-PERSON

Fri 6th - Toddler Stay and Play session - free for all pre-school children



EARLY COLLECTIONS

We are concerned about the number of children who are regularly being collected from school earlier in the afternoon. Children are missing valuable learning time even if they are collected 20 mins early.

We understand that there are occasions when this needs to happen but it should not be a regular occurrence. The office staff are unable to bring children to parents/ carers in the office after 3.15pm as we cannot leave the office unattended at this time. You will need to collect from the school yard.

the Lord
is my
Strength
and my
Shield

Psalm 28:7

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

This term we are learning about:



FOREST SCHOOL SPRING TERM

Below are the dates for each classes Forest School sessions this term. Please ensure your child has the following on those days:

- **to wear old, comfortable clothing and footwear** - long trouser legs/ no shorts - they will get dirty!
- **waterproof footwear** - e.g. wellies, walking boots, leather footwear. Do not wear fabric trainers or shoes. They will not keep your child's feet warm or dry.
- **waterproof coat** - we do recommend wetproofs (jacket and trousers) if you have any.
- **a change of clothing and footwear in a bag** - if it is wet/ muddy weather they will need to change out of wet clothing and muddy shoes when arriving back in school.

Dates:

Dosbarth Coch - Fri 13th March

Docbarth Melyn - Tues 3rd March

Year 3 - Wed 18th Mar

Year 4 - Tues 24th Mar

Year 5 & 6 - Tues 10th Mar



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

Advice for Parents & Educators

SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.

ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.

MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.

PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.

Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on a secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

X @wake_up_weds

f /www.thenationalcollege

ig @wake.up.wednesday

yt @wake.up.weds

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LATENESS

The number of children arriving to school late is increasing. We understand how difficult parking is around our school. However, children are missing learning time when they are late and can often be anxious to enter their classroom when everyone else is settled.

Please remember that lessons start promptly at 8.55am so please ensure they arrive at school on time.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

We are very grateful for all the support you give to raise funds for our school. Costs are continuing to rise and it is becoming increasingly expensive to take children on school trips. The funds you raise do help us to subsidise these costs.

This term the school will be holding the following events to raise money:

Y3-Y6 Disco - Thurs 5th Feb, 3-15-4.15pm

Reception-Y2 Disco - Thurs 12th Feb, 3.15-4pm

Mother's Day Gifts - Fri 13th Mar

Easter Egg Raffle - Fri 27th Mar



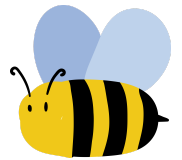
NURSERY PLACES FOR 2026

Applications for places in our Nursery for September 2026 open on 26th January.

If your child was born between 11 and 31st September 2022 and 31st August 2023, they are eligible for nursery education in September 2026.

We are almost full in our nursery class this year and places in our nursery class is filling up quickly. If you would like a place in our nursery please apply within the application window. **The closing date for applications is 23rd February.**

To apply online please [click here](#) or you can collect an application form from the school office.



Enter our **Super Draw**
Win a £1,000 Aldi Gift Card
 OR £1,000 CASH PRIZE

YOUR SCHOOL LOTTERY
 ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
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[Click here for tickets](#)