

February Newsletter

Collective worship

We have continued with our value of Honesty. We invited the children to recall a word that means 'not telling the truth'. We learnt that the trouble with lies is that they can become bigger and stronger than we are. We shared a story using tissue to show how strong lies can become. We referred to the phrase 'a tissue of lies', saying that it means that lies are often woven together - in other words, more lies are added to the first. We also shared the Bible Story: Jeremiah 28 and then discussed the big question, 'Are you always truthful?' 'Is there a time when you can tell a lie?'

Mystery parents

We are looking for some parents who wouldn't mind coming into school on World Book Day (2nd March) to read a story to our children. The children would be given clues as to who is reading their story for them to try and guess and at the end of the story, we will reveal who was reading to them. If you are interested and free on that date, then please let Mrs. Reynolds know. We have had 2 wonderful parents who have volunteered but need 11.

World book day

World Book Day is Thursday 2nd March. We welcome children to come dressed as a character from one of their favourite books. We will start the day with 'Book and Biscuit' time. School will be open from 8:30am for parents to come and read with their children in the classroom. Parents with more than one child can wander between the classes with their children and read in each of their children's classrooms. The children will complete World Book Day activities throughout the day with a focus on a book written by an author from Northamptonshire. We will have mystery parents reading stories to the children as well as a pirate and a dinosaur!

Reading volunteers

We would like to have a parent reading crew who could come in and read with our children. Full training on how to read with a child would be offered. If you are interested, please let Mrs. Reynolds know.

Comic relief

We won't be holding a mufti day for comic relief this year as we are already asking so much of parents throughout March (World Book Day and PTFA Mufti for chocolate). Instead we are holding a joke competition. For a donation of 50p, children can write down their joke and send them to Mrs. Reynolds. The teachers will then pick a winner from each year group and an overall winner in school who will get the chance to tell their jokes in collective worship. If children would like to participate, please get them to bring a form home (available from the classrooms). Please send the joke and the money into school in an envelope. We can't wait to hear their jokes!

Lending library

Over the Easter holidays, we would like to build a lending library for children and adults. If you have any books you no longer want, please donate them to school via the office. These will be gratefully received. We are also in need of games and puzzles for all year groups.

Mental health awareness week

The 6th-12th February is Children's Mental Health Week, and our fabulous Year 6 Kindness Ambassadors are planning lots of activities to help all the children at St Mary's to be involved.

The theme for this year is 'Let's Connect', so we are kicking off the week with a themed Collective Worship, encouraging everyone to reflect on the different ways they can connect and how this can help our mental wellbeing. The collective worship will help children to understand that they are not alone, and that having healthy connections to other people is important for our health and happiness.

Later on in the week, the Kindness Ambassadors will be connecting to everyone in school by visiting children in their classes and handing out their own designed 'pocket guides to worry'. These have been created to help children recognise the signs of worry and provide them with some coping strategies to deal with their feelings. The children will be supported to understand that all feelings are normal, and that there are lots of things we can do to help us deal with them when they seem overwhelming.

They will also be creating worry boxes and handing them out to all classes, so children have another way of connecting to people and getting help and support with their emotions.

For some tips and ideas on how you can connect with your child and help them to make meaningful connections, visit

https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/media/wlwnqsg/cmhw2023_parents-carerstips.pdf

Homework on the Google Classroom

Our next homework project will be posted on the google classroom on 10/2/23. If your child does not have access to the google classroom, please contact the school office.

The homework is also outlined below:

The whole school are reading Greta and the Giants by Zoe Tucker for the new spring term and learning new geography skills as we explore the world around us. This will include mountains, The Amazon and the creatures who live here.

BUT our world is in danger and every day we learn more about how we could be doing more in our lives to help the earth become healthier and animals survive for longer.

Our oceans, skies, homes, animals and even our pets need our protection!

Your homework project is to help save our planet. You can do this in many ways, An artist, poet, song writer, inventor, we can all help!

Think of how the world is being harmed:

- Litter
- Air and water pollution
- Noise pollution
- Chemicals and plastics
- Hunting rare animals
- Even cleaning up our dog poop!

Can you create one of the following that will help save our planet?

- poster
- poem
- song
- short power point/Google Slide show to inform others
- A film or news presentation to share with other how we can help protect the world
- Draw up your design for an invention that will help the planet
- build your invention for others to see and maybe use
- If you like the outdoors, you could do some litter picking or other activity to help the environment, just remember to record the evidence!

No action is too small if we all do something. Like the Onceler says in The Lorax "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better it's not."

Walk in Wednesday

Our last Walk in Wednesday had a maths focus. If you missed it and would like more information, please contact Mrs. Eddy via the school office. Our next one will be 1/3/23, 2:45pm in the school hall. The focus for this has changed to online safety.

Parent Forum

We would love more parents to come and join our parent forum. We meet once a term with tea and biscuits and talk about ideas on how to keep moving the school forward. If you are interested, please talk to Mrs. Reynolds who can give you more details. Your voice is important to us and working in partnership is the best way to support our children. Our next meeting is 27/2/23 at 9:00am.

Parking

Parking on Latimer Close has become very dangerous and we have daily phone calls from parents and the residents of Latimer Close about this. We have asked many times that you do not drive down Latimer Close and instead park in one of the many car parks near school.

Our school council are currently writing a letter to the town council about the situation in the hope that something can be done. If you feel you would like to express your concerns, please do email the Town Clerk on townclerk@burtonlatimertowncouncil.org.uk

Sport at St. Mary's

PE Kit

A reminder to please ensure pupils have their full PE kit in school every day, this includes plimsolls/trainers, blue shorts and joggers/leggings, white t-shirt and a sky-blue PE jumper.

PE lessons will be both inside and outside so please ensure your child has gloves, a jumper and a waterproof jacket.

Earrings must be removed, and long hair tied back, children need to be able to do this themselves or arrive at school prepared.

PE is a valued part of our Pupil's education; we thank you for your support in ensuring they are suitably prepared for their physical education.

Healthy School Ethos

We were lucky to have Hollie a British Kickboxing champion visit our school this term. Hollie delivered an inspirational assembly to the whole school, telling her story of how she first got into the sport and what it takes to succeed.



She highlighted the importance of determination, commitment, positivity, work effort, consistent training and healthy eating.

All pupils took part in kick boxing lessons with her on Friday 3rd or will be on Friday 10th February, which we have received great feedback from many pupils.

Hollie will also be delivering Kick Boxing club on a Wednesday morning at St Mary's for anyone that wishes to learn more.

Children have continued to enjoy active lunchtime games and personal best challenges at lunchtimes delivered by year 6 leaders.

Pupils will be entered into a draw each time they attempt to participate with personal best activities, with winners announced prizes awarded at the end of each term.

School Sports Competitions

Since our last update we have attended another 2 inter school sports competitions, involving 21 children.

Tag Rugby Finals

On Tuesday 7th February we took 13 children to Wellingborough Rugby Club for a Tag Rugby county final after finishing 1st in the prior competition. The children did fantastic and showcased some excellent individual powerful, speedy and agile runs to score tries and remove oppositions tags. As the competition progressed pupils developed their game and worked well as a team with some fantastic passing and defensive links.

We finished 8th overall, drawing 2, winning 2 and losing 2.

KS1 Cricket

On Thursday 2nd February KS1 pupils attended a KS1 Cricket competition.

Children took part in a variety of batting and fielding events, encouraging overarm throwing, rolling, catching, bowling, batting and running skills. They earned points for their accuracy in batting and bowling activities.

St Marys finished 1st out of 6 schools.

We are unsure at this point if there will be a final to progress to later on in the year.

Forthcoming Competitions and Festivals

We look forward to attending more competitions later this term and next including KS2 New Age Kurling, KS2 Boccia Finals, Year 3/4 Gymnastics finals.

Selected Pupils will begin preparations in school, please look out for invitations and further information via ParentMail.

Sports Clubs

Extra-curricular sports clubs are continuing again next term.

These clubs are great to allow children to be active, socialise and advance their PE education by inputting their skills into sport specific scenarios.

There are still spaces available on most clubs, please book via ParentMail when available.

Archery - Mondays - 8.00-8.45am - All years
Mini Sports – Mondays – 3.15-4.15pm – Years EYFS-2
Gymnastics – Tuesdays – 8.00-8.45am – Years Reception-2
Dodgeball – Tuesdays – 3.15-4.15pm – Years 3-6
Kickboxing – Wednesday – 8.00-8.45am - All years
Gymnastics – Thursdays – 8.00-8.45am – Years 3-6
Dance – Fridays – 8.00-8.45am – Years Reception- 6
Football- Fridays- 3.15-4.15- Years Reception - 6

If your child is enjoying their club and you wish to find a community club to progress to, please contact Mrs Patrick for advice on club links.

Holiday Sports

We have teamed up with PR Sports Coaching Ltd again this half term to provide a Festival of Sport Holiday Club this February half term at St Mary's.

Tuesday 14th - Thursday 16th February 10am-3pm (extended hours available).



St Mary's Pupils can access this club with 10% off, please use did county code PRSTMARYS and visit www.prsportscaching.co.uk to book your child place.



Online safety

Mrs Holt would like you to see the information guidelines showing age ratings and raising awareness of online safety on popular online platforms such as Tik Tok and Fortnite. They have been attached in a separate email.

PTFA News

Please like, share and keep an eye on our [Facebook Page](#)

Email: stmarys.ptfa@yahoo.co.uk



❖ Disco

Friday 24th February

- KS1 – 5.30-6.30pm.
- KS2 – 6.45-7.45pm.
- No mobile phones, all children to be collected by an adult.
- Pay on ParentMail before the 24th Feb. £3 includes tuck and drinks.
- Helpers still required for KS2 disco.

❖ Chocolate Bingo

- Friday 24th March evening.
- Fun family event.
- Information to follow soon on how to book your tickets!
- If you would like to help on the night, please get in touch.

❖ Rags 2 Riches

Next Collection Friday 23rd June

Please save any donations for that week

Wednesday 8th March 7pm

All welcome. If you have any ideas, fancy being a treasurer or secretary, or can help out at different events, join us at the school.



We are an Inclusive school, so everyone is always welcome to read, attend or access anything listed in this section of the newsletter.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)



ISPs

Thank you to those of you who have attended our review meetings this term. It was great to meet with so many of you and discuss the progress your children are making towards their targets. Following these review meetings, you will receive a copy of your child's reviewed plan, as well as a copy of their new plan on **Monday 13th March 2023**. If you have any questions about your child's new plan, please do not hesitate to contact myself or your child's class teacher.

Spotlight

At St. Mary's, we have children with a wealth of different needs. This section of the newsletter will highlight a particular area of need and explore how you can help to support your child at home. Each newsletter, we will explore a different area of need. If you have a specific area you would like us to cover, please send your suggestions into the school office.

Spotlight on...Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

If a young person has autism, they usually have difficulties with the following:

- Social communication and interaction.
- Restrictive repetitive behaviour.
- The use of imagination and play.
- Sensory sensitivities.

Some individuals with autism also have difficulties with language development and a learning disability (or both). They may have unusual responses to sensory input or aspects of their environment.



- ❖ use your child's name so they know you're speaking to them
- ❖ keep language simple and clear
- ❖ speak slowly and clearly
- ❖ use simple gestures, eye contact and pictures or symbols to support what you're saying
- ❖ allow extra time for your child to understand what you have said
- ❖ ask the school or a relevant professional if you can get help from a speech and language therapist (SALT)
- ❖ try ways to help them communicate, such as [Signalong](#), [Makaton](#) or [PECS](#)
- ❖ read [tips from the National Autistic Society on communicating with your child](#)

Dealing with anxiety

Anxiety affects a lot of autistic children and adults. It can be caused by not being able to make sense of things going on around them, and feeling misunderstood or unaccepted by people who are not autistic.



Try to find out why your child's feeling anxious.

It might be because of:

- a change in routine – it might help to prepare your child for any change, such as a change of class at school
- difficulty identifying, understanding or managing their feelings
- a noisy or brightly coloured place – it might help to take your child to a calmer place, such as another room

Eating difficulties

Many children are "fussy eaters". Autistic children may:

- only want to eat foods of a certain colour or texture
- not eat enough or eat too much
- eat things which are not food (called pica)
- have problems with coughing or choking while eating
- be constipated, so they feel full even when they have not eaten much food



It may help to keep a food diary, including what, where and when your child eats. This can help you notice any common issues your child has.

SEND Support Services (SSS) offer workshops for parents on how to support children with eating difficulties. These can be found at

<https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/SEND/specialist-support-for-send/Pages/courses-for-parents.aspx>

Supporting your other children

Some children can find it hard if their brother or sister is autistic. If you have other children, there are things you can do to help them.

- make time for them whenever you can – try to do some activities with just them
- talk to them about what's going on and ask if they have any questions or worries
- let them have time on their own or with their friends – for example, sleepovers at friends' houses
- check the advice from **Sibs**, a charity for siblings of disabled children which can be found at <https://www.sibs.org.uk/>



Together, we can make a difference!

Abbie Price
School Inclusion Leader

Please see the below message from the SEND Team at North Northamptonshire Council.

- Does your child find it hard to concentrate at school?
- Is school providing your child with extra help in class?
- Does your child have difficulties with behaviour at home?
- Are you concerned that your child might have a special educational need or disability?
- Has there been a discussion with school about their additional needs?
- Do they have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), which has specific targets for them?

We are the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Team, and we offer support to schools so that they can help young people and their parents and carers when they are experiencing difficulties in school and home life.

In the past there has been the need for the time-consuming process of applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to get additional support in school. And EHCPs are only available to a minority of children, those who have significant SEND difficulties.

We aim to improve this by providing help to schools as early as possible and to a wider group of children. This means schools can apply and have access to the resources they need quickly. In addition, each school now has an allocated SEND Support officer who provides advice and support for children with SEND.

We have also recently established a Social, Emotional and Mental Health team, where schools can access support and advice from the specialist outreach team from Maplefields Special School.

And we know that we have more we need to do...

We are running drop-ins in February and March, where the local team are looking forward to meeting with parents and carers to find out how we can provide guidance and help in supporting your child.

This is in particular for those children who have had a special educational need identified, but they don't need to have received a formal diagnosis or have an EHCP. We would like to find out what is really important to you and your child, and how we can work more closely together to support local families.

To meet your local team and to find out how you can get advice and support, you can join in with our parent network events. This could be dropping in to chat to an educational psychologist or advisory SEND specialist, you may want to hear from our specialist team about a range of topics, or just pop in for a coffee to talk about our plans. You can meet us in:

- **Corn Market Hall, Kettering NN15 7QA**
- **28th February @ 4:30pm - 5:30pm**
- **Priors Hall Park Community Centre, Corby NN17 5EB**
- **7th March @ 4:30pm - 5:30pm**
- **Rushden Hall, Rushden NN10 9EP**
- **21st March @ 4:30pm - 5:30pm**

To register for the events, or for more information, please contact:

pamela.hobart@northnorthants.gov.uk

Please give your name and phone number with your child's name, date of birth and their school

Unfortunately, we cannot offer creche facilities. There is parking available nearby at all of these venues