

February Newsletter

Welcome



Where did that last term go? I hope it has been a good one to you all and you are enjoying seeing the lighter days and nights creep in.

Collective worship

We have continued with the value Honesty and we have linked this with the British Values of Mutual Respect and Rule of Law.

We have continued to discuss the big question: 'Why is it important to be honest, even when it is hard? The children have begun to answer this and justify what they think.

We have also continued to look at the protected characteristics and rights of the child in our Wednesday Worships, again answering big questions.

'Who should be involved in key decisions for the world?'

Children have explored and discussed that we all have the right to live in a protected environment. We have a say in how the world changes but it also our responsibility to protect it.

British Value: Democracy

Protected Characteristic: Race

Rights of the Child: Everyone has a right to have a safe place to live.



Safeguarding

This term, we have been thinking about what support is out there for parents and staff to help keep children safe. After half term, we will be talking to the children about 'stranger danger' and 'safe strangers' but have also included a useful hand out for parents with this email. Please take the time to talk to your children about safety, particularly if they walk to and from school alone.



Another focus has been Safer Internet Day and this year's campaign is helping to protect children from online scams. Scams are becoming more advanced and can take many forms, from phishing emails to fake images and videos used for blackmail.

Half a million children in the UK are impacted by online scams*, so to help you protect your children from online scams, we're sharing our brand new scams advice hub including the **different types of scams**, what you and your child can do to **prevent** them and what to do **if your child is a victim of a scam**.

We have taught the children the 3Rs to help them know what to do if they spot an online scam:

Recognise the signs like offers that seem too good to be true.

React by stopping to tell an adult and avoid clicking on any images or engaging in any way.

Resolve by not panicking, report it and take action quickly.

More information can be found via this link. https://www.internetmatters.org/issues/online-scams/?utm_campaign=591062_NL%2007%2002%2025%20-%20DM%20-%20SID%20-%20Send%20home%20to%20parents&utm_medium=email&utm_source=email_internal&dm_i=7MSZ,CO2E,1GNT3M,1C82V,1

Social media

We hope that you have been enjoying our posts on Instagram. If you haven't yet followed us, we can be found under the name **stmaryscebl**. We will be posting regularly to show you some of the amazing learning that is happening in school.



Family Maths and Science Sessions at Bishop Stopford School

At Bishop Stopford School you are able to enjoy Family Science sessions. They are promoted as being for years 5-8. Please see the link below if you are interested in booking:

<https://expertedlive.org/family/>

The Family courses run in 4 week bundles. The idea is that families watch the sessions together. They run polls throughout the sessions, answer questions from the previous session and set follow up tasks if you want to do them. Each session is only half an hour long so they are really accessible.

Aerosol and perfume

We have some staff who are susceptible to adverse effects from aerosol/perfume sprays. We are asking, where possible, for children to please wear non aerosol deodorant and avoid perfumed products.



Children's Mental Health Week and Time to Talk Day

We celebrated another successful Children's Mental Health week in school last week. As well as learning more about the value of looking after our mental health, and understanding how to promote our mental wellbeing, we have explored lots of activities around expressing our emotions and recognising the importance of talking about how we feel.



As part of the week, we took part in Time to Talk day on Thursday 6th February. This is an initiative set up with Mind, the mental health charity, and aims to encourage:

"All of us to learn more about mental health, in order to lessen the stigma and encourage those who need support to come forward. There is no shame in asking for help. The more open we are to listening to how people feel and talking about our own emotions, the easier it will be for those who are struggling to speak up".

The school Kindness Ambassadors took a lead role in planning and organising a morning of activities for the whole school. They invited all the children to come to the hall for some juice and a biscuit, and to participate in some fun activities in our 'conversation station'. This involved encouraging them to talk about how they feel, to think about the people they can talk to if they need support, and what they can do to protect their mental wellbeing. The Kindness Ambassadors did a fantastic job and the children really enjoyed the chance to come together and join in the conversations; some really interesting chats were had!

Breakfast Club donation from Sainsburys

We are so lucky to have a good relationship with Sainsburys and they are always so generous. We received a donation recently including cereal, breakfast bars/shakes and breadsticks for our Breakfast Club. This all helps to ensure children can start the day with a filling breakfast before school.

Breakfast Club is open to children from 07:45am to 08:45am & breakfast is prepared up until 08:20am. In order to have time to prepare breakfast for the children, and that they have time to eat without rushing, children will need to arrive by 8:20am if they wish to eat. Sessions can be booked on ParentMail up to 24 hours before.

Baby Boom

We are very excited to share the news that we have several members of staff expecting. Miss Spence (EYFS Teacher) will be going on maternity leave at Easter. Mrs Oliver (Year 1/2 Teaching Assistant) is also expecting and is due in May. Mr. Gasparotto (Year 5/6 Teacher) will become a father for the first time in July. We send them all our love and cannot wait to meet all of the babies over the coming months.



Number day 2025!

A Fantastic Celebration of Maths!

On 7th February 2025, we joined schools and nurseries across the country in celebrating 25 years of Number Day! It was a fantastic opportunity for our children to engage with maths in a fun and exciting way while supporting an important cause.



From taking part in Buddy's Key Challenge to getting creative with 'Dress Up for Digits', our pupils had an amazing time solving problems, working in teams, and making maths memorable. Number Day wasn't just about learning—it was also about giving back.

We are thrilled to share that we raised £207 to support Childline and the NSPCC's Speak Out Stay Safe programme, helping children across the UK feel empowered to speak up about their worries and get the help they need.

Thank you for all your support! The children had a fantastic day, and we can't wait to take part again next year!

PE and Sport – Laura

PE Kit



As you are aware we are in the process of changing our PE uniform (from September 2025 it will consist of the school logo navy PE T-shirt, school logo navy PE jumper, navy shorts, navy joggers/leggings and plimsolls/ trainers). However please note the old PE uniform is still permitted to be worn this academic year (white PE t-shirt, royal blue shorts or joggers, sky blue PE jumper and plimsolls/trainers).



Earrings must be removed for PE, and long hair tied back, children need to be able to do this themselves or arrive at school prepared. We are not allowed to put tape over the children's ears.

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.

If you are unsure which days your child will be completing their PE lessons, please contact their class teacher.

Sports Clubs

We are committed to providing a variety of sports clubs to children both before and after school. Please see the below clubs which are available for next half term.

Day / Time	Sports Club	Year Groups
Monday AM - 8:00-8:45am	Target Club	All Years
Monday PM - 3:15-4:15pm	Karate	Years 1-6
Tuesday PM - 3:15-4:15pm	Dodgeball	Years 4-6
Wednesday AM - 8:00-8:45am	Basketball	Years 1-6
Thursday AM - 8:00-8:45am	KS1 Gymnastics	EYFS to Year 2
Thursday PM - 3:15-4:15pm	Dodgeball	EYFS to Year 3
Friday AM - 8:00-8:45am	KS2 Gymnastics	Years 3-6

Lighthouse Trust – fundraising appreciation

We received the statement below and image from the Lighthouse Trust. We supported them with a mufti day last year.

‘Your fundraising enables us to bring prayer and reflective spaces into schools, share inspiring assemblies and support the health and wellbeing of our County’s Primary Schools.’



PTFA News

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

Email: stmarys.ptfa@yahoo.co.uk



- ❖ **Chocolate Bingo – 16th May**
- ❖ 2025 sees the return of the much-loved chocolate bingo
- ❖ More details to follow shortly

- ❖ **Clothing collection – Wednesday 5th March**
- ❖ All bags to be dropped off that morning by 9am

Next Meeting – Wednesday 19th March - 7pm at the School

We love to welcome new people, just come to reception.

We always need volunteers for the events at the school – if you can spare an hour of your time to help run these it is very much appreciated! Without our volunteers we wouldn't have things like Christmas Fairs, chocolate bingo, discos etc. Please contact the PTFA if you can help in any capacity.

Following our recent AGM & re-election of committee members, our current chair has confirmed this will be her last year in the role.

If you value the discos, pantos, Christmas cards, fairs, cinema, chocolate bingo, uniform sales etc. & have ever considered becoming involved, this is the year to get on board and ensure the future of your PTFA.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)



Individual Support Plans

Thank you all for your engagement with the review meetings this half term. It has been great to hear about all of the progress your children have been making this term. You will receive a copy of the reviewed ISP, the new ISP and the review meeting minutes in the week commencing **Monday 17th March**. If you have any questions about the contents of your child's plan, please do not hesitate to discuss this with your child's class teacher, or alternatively you can contact myself through the school office.

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...Emotion Coaching

Last week, we held a Walk in Wednesday all about Emotion Coaching. As it was Children's Mental Health week, we were thinking about the theme in school of **Know Yourself, Grow Yourself**, which was centred around embracing self-awareness to build resilience, grow and develop. Over the week the children completed various activities linked to this theme. To support with this, we held a parent session focusing on Emotion Coaching and how as a tool it can be used to support your children's emotional regulation.

What is Emotion Coaching?

- Emotion Coaching is a communication tool that uses moments of emotion to guide and teach a child or young person about more effective responses.
- Accepts all emotions as normal and healthy (but not all behaviours), and considers what the feelings, needs and emotions are behind the behaviour.
- It enables us to potentially diffuse and de-escalate situations by activating changes in the child's neurological system and allowing the child to calm down, physiologically and psychologically.
- Emotion Coaching helps children to feel seen, appreciated and cared for.
- Whilst the research is grounded in parenting, the principles hold true for any interaction (it can be used with your partner, friend, colleague etc).



We all have emotions

Six emotions are identified as hardwired and universal to all.

These are: Joy, Anger, Surprise, Fear, Disgust and Sadness.

We all have to learn to recognise emotions in ourselves and others, to accept that we cannot help feeling them and learn how to manage (self-regulate) them. A key message here is that all feelings are normal and natural but may need to be regulated into more socially appropriate behaviours.

When do we Emotion Coach?

Flipping Our Lid

Both children and adults can use this tool to recognise and if needed communicate when our emotions are rising **before** we flip our lid. This is the **perfect** time to Emotion Coach and build connections. Often emotions which are hard for children to identify such as jealousy, tiredness, boredom aren't always visible and often hard to communicate and understand. These can build up causing our lids to flip. We often regret the way we behave when we flip our lid. Remember flipping our lid from time to time is completely normal.

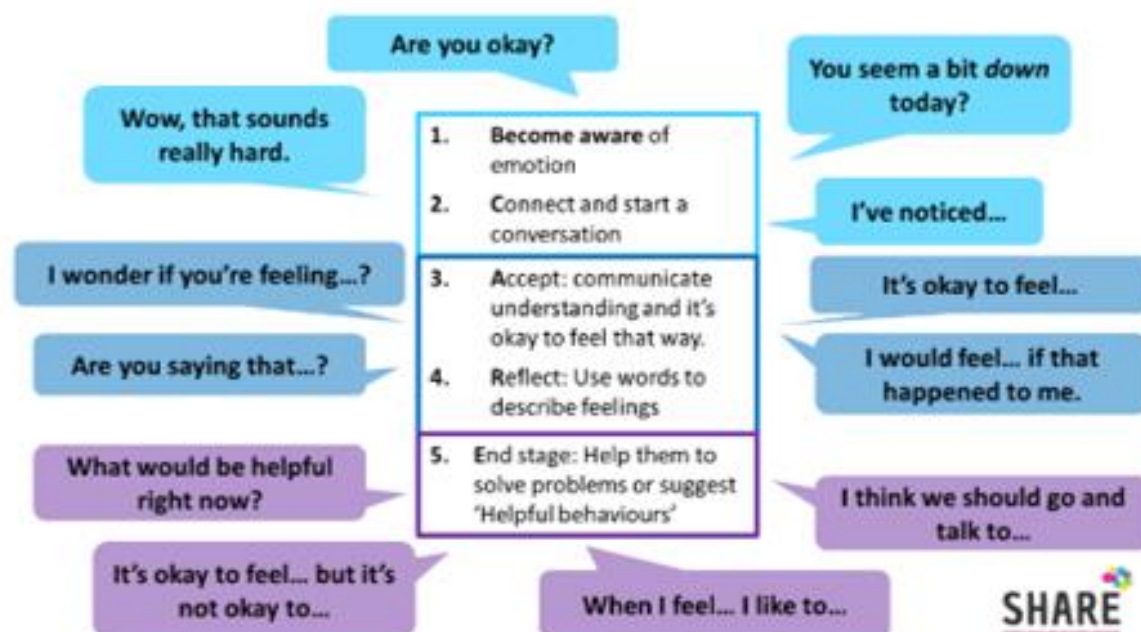
The thinking brain usually keeps a **lid on our emotions**. We still experience emotions, but we can still act and think rationally and logically. When we **flip our lid** our emotion brain is in control and makes our decisions. This can be called **fight** (shout, kick, throw), **flight** (run away), **freeze** (or forget things). We might say and do things that aren't helpful to us or others. In these moments, our brains need to take a break to **reflect** and **reconnect** before we can make thoughtful decisions again.



Spotlight on...Emotion Coaching

How do we Emotion Coach?

1. Become aware of the emotion and empathise with them. Especially if it is low intensity (such as disappointment or frustration).
"I can see that you're really worried about this, you're frowning and biting your nails; I hear you."
2. Validate the feeling and label the emotion. View their emotions as opportunities for connection and teaching. Listen and accept their emotions: avoid judgement. Help them use words to describe what they feel.
"Some other people are feeling worried about it too and it's completely normal at times like this."
3. Set limits on behaviour (if necessary). You may communicate that all wishes and feelings are acceptable, but some behaviours are not.
"It's not okay to kick the furniture though, it might hurt you or you might break something."
4. Problem solve. If appropriate, help them to problem solve.
"Let's have a think together about ways you can feel safer."



Adult Emotional Regulation

Emotion Coaching works best when emotional moments are approached by the adult in a calm and well-regulated manner. You can't co-regulate if you can't self-regulate!

Be aware of how you feel when your child is experiencing strong emotions. It might be appropriate to mention or highlight this to your child as this provides an opportunity for modelling how to understand and manage strong emotions.

For example: 'Mum is feeling quite tense right now, I'm frowning and I'm probably shouting a little. I'm not going to be able to help you when I'm feeling like this. I'm going to stop doing what we're doing, take some deep, slow breathes so my brain knows that I'm safe and it's ok to be calm. Could you help me by taking some deep breathes with me?'



Inside Out can be a great way to have open conversations with your children about feelings and emotions and a great way to bridge into Emotion Coaching. If you would like to find out more about Children's Mental Health Week, you can head to this link here [Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week - Official site](#) or google 'Children's Mental Health Week 2025'.