



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

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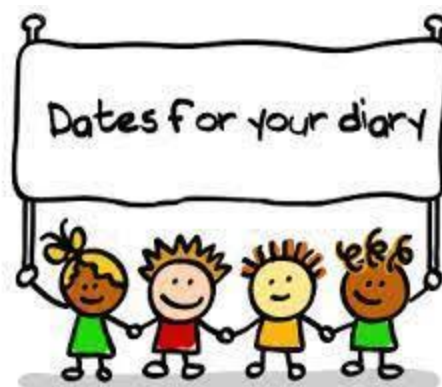
Headteacher: Samantha Griffiths

Assistant Headteacher: Helen Lambie

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St Mary's Catholic Primary School Newsletter

Friday 8th December



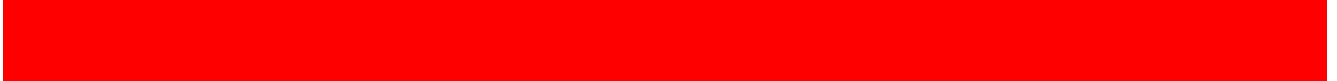
Date	Activity
14.12.23	Christmas Dinner
20.12.23	Year 6 – Height and Weight
21.12.23	Children break-up for Christmas
22.12.23	PD Day
08.01.23	PD Day
09.01.23	Children return to school



Christmas Dinner – 14th **December**

**Children can wear their
Christmas jumpers or
something that makes them
feel special.**

(Next Wednesday will be sausage rolls and not roast dinner due it being Christmas Dinner the following day)



Christmas Parties

In the last week of term children can wear their own clothes every day. They must wear their trainers though as they will continue to do PE. On various days, classes will be having their own little Christmas parties. All food, refreshments, and prizes will be supplied by school.

Be a Good Neighbour this Winter



Kindness costs nothing

Being neighbourly is about being helpful, friendly and kind to people that live nearby or who are part of our community. We might hope that our neighbours regularly see family and friends or go to local groups and activities where they can connect with others, but unfortunately this isn't always the case.

Around 7000 people over the age of 65 live alone in Telford and Wrekin

As the nights become darker and the weather colder if you can try and find five or ten minutes to check in on a neighbour or someone in your community who you know is living alone, you'll be making a big difference and you'll feel better too. Take my word for it! Being kind doesn't have to cost anything either.

Here are a few tips about being a good neighbour this winter and helping Telford be kind:

1. Just say 'hello' and ask how they are doing.
2. Invite your neighbour round for a hot drink.
3. Swap warming seasonal recipes, from winter soups to homemade stews. Make extra to share with them.
4. Is it snowing and you're planning on clearing your drive? Why not offer to do your neighbours too?
5. Wrap up warm and go for a short walk with your neighbour.
6. Ask if they have any hobbies or interests and if they know or go to what is happening locally. Maybe they would like to go in the future?
7. Drop a card through the door. If you have young children get them involved too in drawing or writing. You could see if your neighbour would like to listen to them read.
8. If you're off to the shops to stock up for the dark nights ahead, ask a neighbour if they need anything picking up or if they would like to join you.

"My neighbour has a cat and regularly runs out of cat litter. Those bags are heavy so if you do help out you may get a little workout too!"

9. Not everyone celebrates Christmas but whatever your plans can you share a meal together?
10. Call in on a neighbour and see if they need anything to help keep them warm and well during the winter months.

[Visit the Telford and Wrekin Council website to find out more about being prepared for winter.](#)

Thank you for being a good neighbour! We'd love to hear about all the amazing ways you connect with others in the community. Please share your 'Be a Good Neighbour' stories and ideas on Facebook and Twitter using the #TelfordKind hashtag.

Stay Warm and Well this Winter



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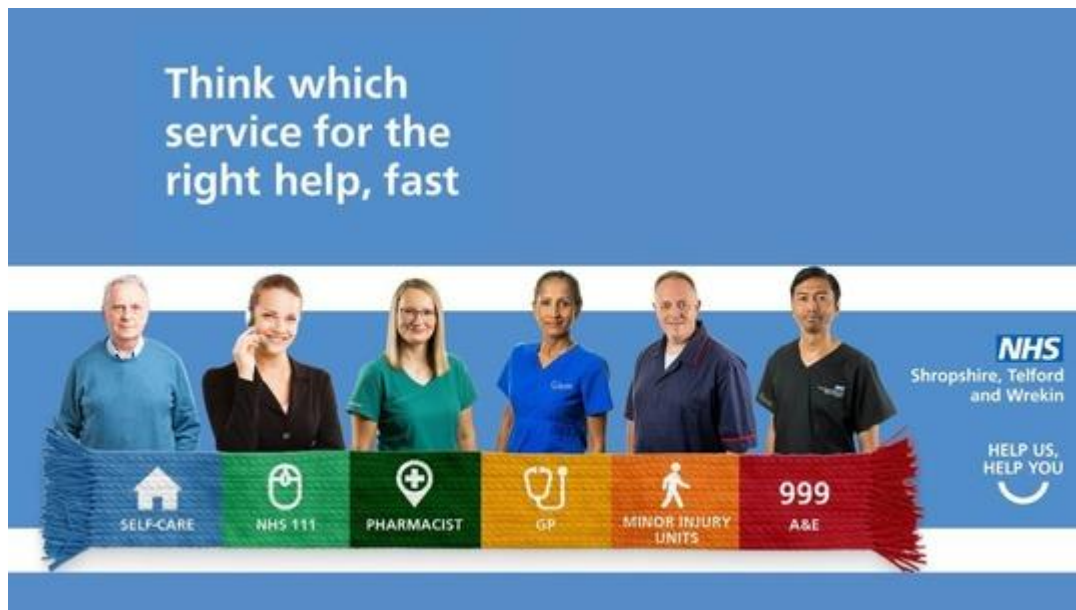
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Who You Gonna Call?



Think Which Service this Winter

As the colder, darker months arrive and pressures continue to mount on our local health and care services, it's more important than ever to do what we can to keep ourselves and our loved ones well this winter.

Here are some self-help and self-care tips for taking care of yourself and looking out for others:

- Get your COVID-19 and flu vaccinations if you are eligible
- Keep active, get outside and eat well
- Build your strength, balance, and coordination, and wear shoes or slippers with a good grip to help prevent falls
- Keep warm and heat regularly used rooms in your house to 18C
- If you are worried about money, struggling to pay bills or buy food, contact your local council for support
- Check in on older or unwell neighbours, friends and family members
- Keep your medicine cabinet stocked with painkillers, rehydration and indigestion treatments, anti-diarrhoea medicine, antiseptic cream and antihistamines, and a First Aid Kit
- Stay at home if you do get ill and wash your hands regularly
- Contact NHS 111 if you're worried about any symptoms

[Visit the 'Think Which Service' website for more self-care information and advice.](#)

Tai Chi for Mind Body and Soul



A personal story...

Carolyn, aged 68, from Hadley (pictured above, inset), shares her story with us about how Tai Chi has helped her to go from strength to strength despite battling health challenges:

"I suffer from osteoarthritis which became progressively worse last winter to a point where I thought I'd need carers.

I fought back by going to a chiropractor, having deep tissue massages, and through gels and vitamins.

By the end of last year I began to feel better so started exercising with stretches, walking and dancing in my kitchen to 70's music.

Then I began Faye Tai Chi Friend's weekly classes held at the Chinese Arts and Culture Centre in Telford. I was really glad to find an afternoon class for beginners, and it was everything that I had been looking for - gentle stretching exercises to benefit the body and mind.

I have been going to Tai Chi for about a month now; Diane who teaches the class is amazing and Grand Master Faye is usually there to greet the class too.

As Tai Chai is so gentle, and involves connecting mind to body, I have found that it's almost like I'm meditating the mind to move and connect with parts of the body, massaging organs and joints and sending positive energy to the body and mind.

Some of the moves are so easy that I also use them at home in between classes if I feel stiff or cannot move freely. All in all I have found Tai Chi an extremely enjoyable experience.

I feel that if anyone has problems with joints and muscles Tai Chi is ideal as you can just do what you can, knowing that it will get better with time.

I would say that it's always worth trying Tai Chi, as there is always some part of it you can do, helping to contribute to a healthy body and mind programme so many of us need especially as we get older.

I have found that the concentration of positive energy relaxes my mind and helps with my pain management. For the hour of the class I don't have time to think of anything else and leave feeling reenergised.

I wish I had found out about this form of exercise much sooner!"

For details of Faye Tai Chi Friend's classes at the Chinese Arts and Culture Centre in Telford email fayetaichifriends@gmail.com

If you have a health or medical condition, always seek advice from a health professional before starting a new physical activity regime.

For support with increasing your levels of physical activity, losing weight, eating more healthily or improving your wellbeing, get in touch with our Healthy Lifestyles Service using the button below.

Contact the Healthy Lifestyles Service

Do You Know Your Numbers?



Drop in and get your blood pressure checked

Having high blood pressure can lead to an increased risk of heart attack or stroke. So knowing your blood pressure numbers can save your life. Around 1 in 4 adults in the UK have high blood pressure, and, if you're over 40, you should get your pressure checked at least every five years.

The Community Blood Pressure Project is out and about in Telford visiting local venues and events to take blood pressure readings and raise awareness of why it's important to 'know your numbers'.

[Visit the Healthy Telford blog to find out where our blood pressure checkers will be next.](#)

A Chance to Make a Change



If you could make one change to improve your health, what would it be?

For some people this might be lowering their blood pressure or cholesterol levels, reversing pre-Diabetes or eating healthier meals, moving more or stopping smoking.

What would you have to do to make it happen?

This is the part of the process that we all find challenging sometimes, for many different reasons. The Healthy Lifestyle Advisors understand this and work one to one to support people in making changes to benefit their health and wellbeing.

Healthy Lifestyle Advisors are based all over Telford and Wrekin and can offer video, telephone and face to face appointments for free. Use the button below to contact the Healthy Lifestyles Service.

[Visit the Healthy Telford website for more information about the service.](#)

Contact the Healthy Lifestyles Service

Raising the Flag for Disability History Month



This year, Disability History Month runs from 16 November to 16 December. Now in it's fourteenth year, this is an annual national event which is supported by a wide range of groups and aims to promote the rights of people with disabilities and their struggle for equality.

At **Southwater One** on **Thursday 14 December from 11am** Telford and Wrekin Council's Employee Disability Group are raising the flag for Disability History Month with a celebration event to increase awareness and show solidarity with local residents with disabilities.

There will be a number of information stands and materials from both internal and external services and a chance to hear from those with lived experiences and professionals.

[Visit the UK Disability History Month website for information and resources.](#)

Be Bright, Be Seen



Stay safe this winter

Whether you're commuting, walking the dog, out for an evening bike ride or making an active school run, there are few simple things you can do to keep yourself safe during the winter.

If you're out on your bike don't forget to switch on your lights – this is required by law. A white light on the front and red rear bike light, plus helmet lights are also useful for extra visibility.

Reflective clothing is great when you're out at night, it alerts other road users to your presence whether you are walking, running or cycling. This increased visibility can help a driver see you from a much greater distance away.

Hi-vis vests are really useful, but you might also use a backpack or coat with reflective strips. Flashing or reflective arm bands can be worn over clothing and reflective stickers on knees and arms are ideal for when you're out running.

Daylight and dusk are best for bright, fluorescent clothing as the fluorescent is activated by absorbing light.

Glow Ride in Telford Town Park

Why not join us for some wintery fun at the **Bike Hub Telford Town Park on Wednesday 19 December**? We're hosting another Glow Ride but with a Christmas theme! There will be two sessions:

- **5.30pm to 6.30pm** for families and novice riders
- and **7pm to 8pm** for advanced riders

So put on your Christmas jumper, grab your brightest lights and decorate your bike - we're going on a Christmas Glow Ride!

[Visit Travel Telford's Facebook page for full details and for how to book your free place.](#)

For queries email thebikehub@telford.gov.uk

Madeley's Monthly Cuppa and Chat Sessions



Let's talk at Madeley Community Library

After the success of the Tea & Talk session that Madeley Town Council held on World Mental Health Day in October, 'Let's Talk...' has been launched and is set to take place on **the third Thursday of each month between 10am and 12noon at Madeley Community Library.**

Based in the library, this is a place and time for people to come and chat with the Wellbeing Officer about anything and everything, or simply to chat with others wanting some company. And there's not many who don't enjoy chatting with a tea or coffee in hand so the kettle is prepped and ready. There's no pressure to chat either, those wishing to enjoy a hot drink and a quiet browse of the great selection of library books will be left to relax and enjoy the peace.

This is an opportunity to bring people together, have a place to come and relax, and for the Wellbeing Officer to get to know the community and perhaps some of the issues that might be facing them as individuals.

The next session will be held on **Thursday 21 December, 10am to 12noon.** There's no need to book, just pop in.

For more information, contact Charlotte Dade, Madeley Town Council's Wellbeing Officer via charlotte@madeleytowncouncil.gov.uk or by calling 01952 567288.

Green Spaces Are Go is Still Going!



Despite the wintery weather, there's still lots going on for Green Spaces Are Go

In Lawley...

Lawley Men's Walking Group

Men of all ages and abilities are invited to join these FREE guided leisurely walks around Lawley & Overdale area to take in local nature, see historical landmarks and enjoy a chat:

- **Thursday 7 December 2023 at 6pm**
- **Thursday 21 December 2023 at 6pm**

Meeting at the Morrisons in Lawley. Please wear suitable footwear and outdoor clothing.

History Trail walks in and around Lawley

Explore the Rock and Old Park History Trail on a FREE walk to take in local nature and see some historical landmarks along the way:

- **Wednesday 13 December 2023 at 11am**

Meeting at Lawley Parish Council/Bournville Village Trust Office. Please wear suitable footwear and outdoor clothing.

[Visit the Lawley and Overdale Parish Council Facebook page for more details about all of these walk dates.](#)

In Lilleshall...

A Stroll Around Lilleshall

To celebrate the installation of 2 new kissing gates on the T50 to open up access to the beautiful Lilleshall Hill Local Nature Reserve, an easy walk of less than 4 miles followed by FREE refreshments in Lilleshall Memorial Hall.

- **Saturday 9 December from 11.30am to 1.30pm**

Meeting at Hillside, Lilleshall, Newport TF10 9HG

Have a go at Nordic Walking

Nordic Walking is great for fitness, exercise, weight loss and sociability. With its special pole walking technique, it harnesses the power of the upper body to turn walking into a gentle workout for all ages, fitness levels and abilities, due to the special walking poles which are provided for each walker which actually helps the person to move forward with every step as well as providing support. Followed by FREE refreshments in Lilleshall Memorial Hall.

- **Saturday 9 December from 11.30am to 1.30pm**

Meeting at Hillside, Lilleshall, Newport TF10 9HG

Telford Coronation Walks – Celebration Event

Blow away those Christmas cobwebs and get ready for the New Year by putting your best foot forward on this gentle walk through some wonderful winter landscapes. Ideal for working off Christmas pudding, cakes, mince pies and too much turkey! Choose between a short walk of just over 2 miles or a longer one, followed by FREE refreshments in Lilleshall Memorial Hall.

- **Saturday 30 December from 11.30am to 1.30pm**

Meeting at Hillside, Lilleshall, Newport TF10 9HG

[Book your free place on any of these Lilleshall Walks here](#)

From Our Environment and Neighbourhood Team...

Our Environment and Neighbourhood Team have organised some events to help you get to know your local green space. To book a place on any of these walks please email parks.greenspaces@telford.gov.uk or call 01952 384384.

The Archaeology of Apley

Take a step back in time and join us on a short historic guided walk around Apley Local Nature Reserve, to learn about the old Apley estate and its surrounding areas.

- **Tuesday 12 December 1pm to 3pm**

Meeting location: Entrance of woodland on Apley Castle Road, TF1 6RH. Parking area is on the left hand side by main entrance or additional on Peregrine Way TF1 6TH.

Spot the Birds of Dothill

Join us on a bird watching experience as we take a short, gentle stroll through the attractive surroundings of Dothill Local Nature Reserve. Make sure to download the Merlin App on your devices to record the sounds of the birds to help identify them.

- **Thursday 14 December 1pm to 3pm**

Meeting location: Severn Drive, by Dothill Primary School TF1 3JB. Parking along the road.

Bench to Bench 'Walk And Talk' through the Cockshutt

Join us on for a short guided bench to bench walk around the beautiful Cockshutt Local Nature Reserve, to become lost in nature and surrounded by wildlife.

- **Tuesday 19 December 1pm to 3pm**

Meeting location: The Nabb, at the top of Willows Road, St. Georges TF2 9AE.

The Magic of Trees of Apley

A stroll around the beautiful Apley Wood aimed at families with children - come along and learn all about the special collection of trees you can find in the wood, including tree-themed activities, plus hints and tips for tree identification.

- **Thursday 28 December 10am to 12noon**

Meeting location: Entrance of woodland on Apley Castle Road, TF1 6RH. Parking area is on the left hand side by main entrance or additional on Peregrine Way TF1 6TH.

In Randlay Valley...

A Winter Walk with the Friends of Hollinswood & Randlay Valley

The Friends of Hollinswood & Randlay Valley are providing a winter walk with FREE refreshments through the beautiful Randlay Valley.

- **Wednesday 27 December at 10.30am**

Meeting at The Hollinswood Pavilion. No booking required, but further information is available from Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council 01952 567961

In Holmer Lake...

Join in some light conservation work in a fun and friendly environment with the Friends of Holmer Lake and Madebrook. Suitable for all ages and abilities, you'll meet lots of friendly, like-minded people and finish each session with a hot drink and a biscuit to celebrate a job well done.

On the second Saturday of every month from 9.30 - 11.30am.

Meeting at the Holmer Lake Car Park, off Holmer Lane. Dates may change over the Christmas period - contact the Friends of Holmer Lake & Madebrook via their Facebook page to check.

[Visit the Friends of Holmer Lake & Madebrook Facebook page for more information.](#)

In Dothill and Telford Town Park...

Veterans TAB and Talk group

Veterans from all branches of the armed forces, key workers, and their families are being invited to enjoy a stroll through Telford Town Park and Dothill Park.

- **Every Monday from 6pm to 7pm at Dothill Park** meeting at Morrisons Daily, Dothill, TF1 3LN
- **Every Thursday from 6pm to 7pm at Telford Town Park** on the Veteran's trail

Dates may change over the Christmas period, please contact stuart.cook@allsportscoaching.co.uk to check, and for further information.

Telford Cyclones Junior Football Club

Telford Cyclones Junior Football Club are running three new teams, for Under 9's, Under 8's and Mini Cyclones for 3-4 year olds.

- **Under 9's: Wednesdays from 6pm to 7pm at John Randall School, TF7 4DS**
- **Under 8's: Thursdays from 6pm to 7pm at John Randall School, TF7 4DS**
- **Mini Cyclones: Saturday mornings at 10am to 11am at Oakengates Sports Hall**

For more details and cost per child email telfordcyclonesjfc@gmail.com

[Visit the Green Spaces Are Go page on the Healthy Telford blog for more details of the campaign.](#)

Alternatively, look for the **#greenspacesarego** hashtag on social media.

What's Going On in Libraries Over the Holidays?



Christmas poetry on demand

Give the gift of a personalised poem this Christmas! Or maybe you'd like one for yourself! Telford & Wrekin Libraries are delighted to be hosting the poet

Brenda Read Brown for a poetry on demand session at **Southwater Library on Thursday 21 December**. The session will run **between 11am and 2pm**, and there's no need to book a place, so why not pop along and get involved?



Hop into the New Year

And for younger library goers, there will be craft sessions at Newport, Wellington and Southwater Libraries early in the New Year. Come along and make an origami frog to usher in a 'hoppy' new year! Sessions are on the following dates:

- **Wednesday 3 January, 2pm to 3pm at Newport Library**
- **Thursday 4 January, 2pm to 3pm at Wellington Library**
- **Friday 5 January, 2pm to 3pm at Southwater Library**

Suitable for children aged 4 - 11 years.

Places are free, but booking is essential.

Book Your Place

Stop Smoking This Christmas



A lasting gift...

Christmas is an expensive time when most people are counting the cost. Quitting smoking can help ease some of those stresses and worries. It could help offset household bills for fuel or food, or even pay towards a holiday or a trip away in the New Year. If you smoke 10 a day, you could be spending £40 a week and therefore around £1,600 a year.

There are so many benefits to quitting smoking. Within weeks you feel fitter and can breathe easier. And as the weeks and months go by you reduce the risks of a life-changing illness.

So this Christmas give your family (and yourself!) a lasting gift: a fitter, healthier and less stressed *you!* And maybe put something nice under the tree for yourself too, for your hard work and commitment to being smoke free!

Get in touch with the Stop Smoking Service

Time for the Quiz!



How healthy is your Christmas?

Are you on the naughty or nice list when it comes to your meals and treats during the Christmas period? Take the British Heart Foundation's fun quiz to find out.

[Take the Christmas Foods Quiz](#)

Mini-Vinnies Fundraiser for CAFOD

This Advent, the Mini-Vinnies would like St Mary's to support CAFOD and raise money for World Gifts.

CAFOD is the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development, a charity that helps the poorest, most hard-to-reach people around the world

World Gifts are a great way for pupils to learn about the joy of giving, and they help to transform

the lives of people living in poverty around the world. Your child will learn about how global gifts such as cows, solar lamps and water for a family help to change lives.

We have chosen to support CAFOD as a way for our pupils to put their faith into action. By raising money for World Gifts this Advent, we will be supporting our brothers and sisters around the world, inspiring our pupils to become active global citizens and living out our school mission.

For our Advent fundraiser, we are asking children to bring in a coin, or coins which the Mini Vinnies will use to spell out the word 'Advent' using a large outline on the ground. These coins will then be counted and the Mini-Vinnies can decide which world gifts St Marys will be able to donate to people in need. There are examples of some of the World Gifts that are available overleaf.

You can find out more about CAFOD together as a family by visiting cafod.org.uk/families

Thankyou for your support

Mrs Rushton and the Mini-Vinnies

Scarlet Fever- Message from Telford and Wrekin

We are starting to see cases of scarlet fever again in Telford schools, so we're bringing the matter to your attention to raise awareness.

What is really important to prevent scarlet fever potentially turning from a mild illness to something life-threatening, is early diagnosis and treatment. Therefore, making parents aware of the signs and symptoms and any cases you may have is important.

Signs and symptoms of scarlet fever

The early symptoms of scarlet fever include sore throat, headache, fever, nausea and vomiting. After 12 to 48 hours the characteristic red, pinhead rash develops, typically first appearing on the chest and stomach, then rapidly spreading to other parts of the body, and giving the skin a sandpaper-like texture. The scarlet rash may be harder to spot on darker skin, although the 'sandpaper' feel should be present. Patients typically have flushed cheeks and pallor around the mouth. This may be accompanied by a 'strawberry tongue'. As the child improves peeling of the skin can occur.

NHS information, including photos of the condition, is available on the [NHS Scarlet Fever Website](#).

Single cases should be advised to seek advice from their GP.



Our school's menu can be viewed here:

https://www.telford.gov.uk/downloads/file/388/st_marys_primary_school_menu