



**St Mary's Catholic Primary School**

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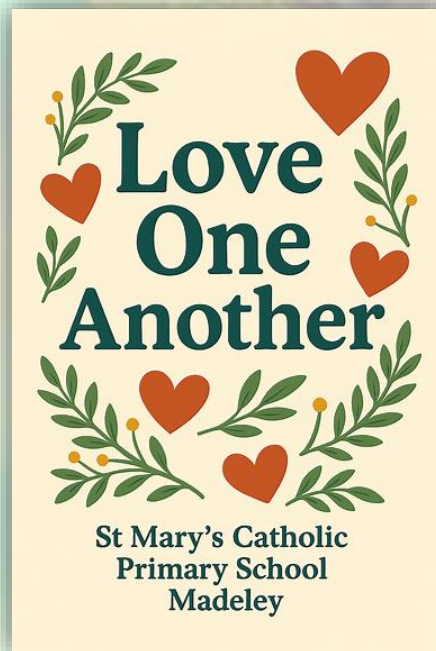
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## St Mary's Catholic Primary School Newsletter

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2026**



### St Mary's Care Club

#### **Proposed After School Wraparound Care**

We are currently exploring the possibility of introducing **St Mary's Care Club**, a new after school wraparound provision that would support children and families by providing care **until 5.15pm** each day.

Our intention is to offer a calm, safe, and nurturing environment where children can unwind at the end of the school day. We are very mindful of keeping costs as low as possible for families; however, there are unavoidable expenses involved in running this type of provision. These include staffing costs (with trained staff holding paediatric first aid), lighting, heating, equipment, furniture, and the provision of a snack for children.

We are proposing a cost of approximately **£25 per week**, which represents excellent value for wraparound care. By comparison, arranging a childminder to collect a child from school and provide care each evening can cost up to **£16 per night**. This provision would therefore offer a more affordable, consistent, and school-based option for families who require extended care.

Places would be available **by application only** and allocated based on the depth and breadth of need. St Mary's Care Club would run **in addition to the after school clubs that already exist**, such as sports or enrichment activities, and would not replace them.

Before we move forward and make firm plans, we would like to gauge interest from parents. Please complete the short form at the bottom of this

newsletter to indicate whether this provision would be of interest to your family.

If there is sufficient demand, we would aim to launch **St Mary's Care Club from September.**

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to hearing your views.

### **Thinking of Joining Saint Mary's?**

We would like to remind our current families that if you know anyone who is considering moving their child from another school, or if they are looking for a school place for September, we warmly encourage them to book an appointment to come and visit St Mary's.

We are always happy to welcome prospective families into our school to see our learning in action, meet our staff and pupils, and experience the caring, nurturing environment we are so proud of.

St Mary's is a Catholic school that is **open to both Catholic and non-Catholic children.** We are committed to welcoming all families and all children, regardless of background. Every child who joins our school will be cared for, valued, and taught to the very best of our ability. This commitment sits at the heart of our vision and underpins everything we do at St Mary's.

If you know a family who may be interested in joining our school community, please encourage them to contact the school office to arrange a visit. We would be delighted to meet them.

## Innovative Water Bottle



As one of our parents was walking past me yesterday, Lottie Russell's Mum, her daughter was very keen to show me her water bottle, which had been personalised with her name. What particularly caught my attention was the thoughtful design behind it.



The bottle is made from durable plastic, meaning it will not smash if dropped, and it has a non-drip sipper nozzle. Even when turned upside down, the water does not spill. Designs like this can be especially helpful in school, helping children stay hydrated while avoiding accidents and spillages.

I do not usually include product recommendations in the newsletter; however, this appeared to be a practical and innovative idea that some families may find useful. The water bottles are made by the parent from our school community and are available for approximately £5 each.

I have included a QR link which, if you choose to click on it, will take you to the parent's Facebook page where you can find further information.

**Please note that this is shared for information only and is not a school-endorsed product.**

## WhatsApp, Messaging Apps and Primary-Aged Children – An Important Reminder

*Dear Parents,*

*We have had several issues these last few weeks related to children using WhatsApp and similar group messaging platforms. Children today are very capable and confident users of technology, often more so than adults. However, technical ability does not equate to emotional maturity.*

*Primary-aged children are not yet developmentally ready to cope with the full impact of group messaging and online communication. Increasingly, we are seeing difficulties arising from:*

- *inappropriate or unkind messages*
- *children being excluded from groups or deliberately ignored*
- *misunderstandings escalating quickly*
- *children being contacted very late at night, in some cases until 3:00am*
- *some children receiving extremely high volumes of messages, sometimes up to 200 overnight*

*These experiences can be overwhelming and distressing for young children and can have a serious impact on their wellbeing, sleep, concentration, and readiness to learn.*

*We know we may sound repetitive, but this message remains extremely important: **group messaging apps are not suitable for primary-aged children without very close adult supervision, clear boundaries, and restrictions.** Children should not be expected to manage these pressures independently.*

### **Age Recommendations (Minimum Age Guidance)**

*Many parents ask for clarity around age expectations. The following are **minimum age recommendations** set by platforms and supported by safeguarding guidance:*

- **WhatsApp – 13+**
- **Social media apps (e.g. Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat) – 13+**
- **Online games with live chat functions – usually 12+ or 13+, depending on the game**
- **Group chats of any kind – not recommended for primary-aged children**

*It is important to note that these are minimum ages and do not guarantee a child is ready. Primary-aged children are still developing emotional regulation, resilience, and an understanding of social consequences.*

### **How Parents Can Help**

*We strongly encourage families to:*

- *delay access to messaging and social media apps for as long as possible*
- *closely monitor online activity and conversations*
- *set clear time limits on device use*

- ensure devices are switched off and kept out of bedrooms overnight
- keep regular, open conversations going about online behaviour and kindness

Thank you for working with us to support children’s wellbeing and safety. By working together, we can help them build healthy habits and positive relationships, both online and offline.

## School Fund and Breakfast Club Audit – Information for Parents

Dear Parents,

As part of our commitment to transparency and good governance, we would like to inform you that the school fund and breakfast club accounts are audited regularly in line with our legal and financial responsibilities.

These audits ensure that all income and expenditure are accurately recorded, appropriately managed, and used solely for the benefit of the children. This includes funds raised through activities, contributions, and payments related to the breakfast club.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School Breakfast Club Fund Receipts & Payments Account for year ending 31st March 2026			
Receipts	£	Payments	£
Current Account Balance 1.4.25	7,221.05		
Petty Cash Float at 1.4.25	22.95		
Breakfast Club Fees	8,864.87	Breakfast Club	0.00
Budget - Salaries	0.00	Budget - Salaries	2,405.08
Petty Cash Resources & Provisions	0.00	Petty Cash Resources & Provisions	1,079.86
Interest	0.00	Charges/fees	44.23
	8,864.87		4,532.17
		Current Account as at 31.3.26	11,383.81
		Petty Cash Float at 31.3.26	193.09
	<u>16,108.87</u>		<u>16,108.87</u>

**Note:**  
Audit fees relating to Breakfast Club have been paid from the PSF account and need to be reimbursed.

In accordance with the school fund guidance notes, I have examined the receipts and payments account, together with books, vouchers and documents relating to St Mary's Catholic Primary School Breakfast Club for the period ending 31st March 2026.

Audit work approved by: **T Drummond** T Drummond (CMIA)  
Principal Auditor

Date: **29/04/2026**

In my opinion the records have been properly kept and the receipts and payments account is in agreement with the books, vouchers and documents submitted and the explanation given to me.

pleased to confirm that the most recent audits have been completed and reviewed, and that our financial processes meet the required standards.

If you would like any further information regarding the audit process or how school funds are managed, please contact the school office and we will be happy to help.

Thank you for your continued support.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School School Fund Receipts & Payments Account for year ending 31st March 2026			
Receipts	£	Payments	£
Current Account Balance 1.4.25	22,478.01		
Audit of accounts	0.00	Audit of accounts	248.60
Bank interest	0.00	Bank Charges	47.75
Yr 6 Prom	0.00	Yr 6 Prom	429.00
Dinner money arrears	19.00	Dinner money arrears	0.00
Charity / Fundraising	535.45	Charity / Fundraising	419.15
Curriculum	1,171.68	Curriculum	120.48
Equipment/Resources	310.26	Equipment/Resources	0.00
Arhog	0.00	Arhog	1,051.20
Clubs	500.00	Clubs	0.00
Photos	244.40	Photos	0.00
Trips & Events	3,688.82	Trips & Events	4,413.10
Uniform	2,522.02	Uniform	2,298.92
	8,991.33		8,969.20
		Current Account as at 31.3.26	22,506.14
	<u>31,469.34</u>		<u>31,469.34</u>

**Note:**  
Audit fees include Breakfast Club audit fees of £93.60

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We  
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## **Parking in the Bus Stop – A Serious Safety Concern**

We need to address, once again, the ongoing issue of parents parking in the bus stop outside school.

Despite repeated reminders in previous newsletters, and despite the very serious road traffic incident that occurred nearby, we are still seeing cars stopping and parking in the bus stop at drop off and pick up times. That incident was extremely serious and, with different circumstances, could have resulted in fatalities. It is deeply concerning that we are continuing to see behaviour that significantly increases the risk of another accident, potentially with even more severe consequences.

Parking in a bus stop obstructs visibility, forces buses and other vehicles to stop or manoeuvre unsafely and puts children and families at risk. This is not a minor issue. It is a clear and avoidable hazard.

We understand that parking around school can be challenging at busy times. However, safety must always come first. There are alternative options available, including Legges Way car park, which is only a short walk away, and parking spaces near the doctors on Court Street. In many cases, the time it takes to look for a space close to school is longer than it would take to park safely and walk across.

Parking in the bus stop places children, parents, and the wider community in danger. We ask all families to take responsibility, make safer choices, and help us prevent another serious incident.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our school community safe.

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I would be interested in sending signing my child up to St Mary's Care Club.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_