

**16th January 2026**

# **Saint Mary's RC Primary School Weekly Newsletter**



## **Our week...**

Another successful week has been had in school. Pupils are all settled back into routine and are working hard. It's lovely walking around the classrooms and seeing them learning and thriving.

On Wednesday we had Mad Science in school. They delivered an assembly for the whole school and wowed us with their amazing science experiments! They will be holding an after school club in school from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. To book go to [northengland.madscience.org](http://northengland.madscience.org)

Vision Screening for pupils in Reception will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 where every child will be invited to have their eyes tested. A detailed letter will be sent to families and if you wish to opt out, details of how to do so will be on there.

We will be celebrating NSPCC Number Day on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January. Mrs Lomberg, our maths lead will be sending a letter about this soon. Pupils will all be taking part in engaging and exciting maths activities throughout the day.

### **This month's worship newsletter for families:**

This newsletter gives a great overview of what our school assemblies will cover this January and prayers for you to say together at home:

<https://www.tentenresources.co.uk/prayers-for-home/parent-newsletter/>

### **This week's Bible Scripture:**

John 1: 29-34

"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"



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## Attendance

Meerkats- 98%  
Ladybirds 96%  
Wallabies- 94%  
Rhinos- 95%  
Wolf Cubs- 99%  
Eagles- 96%  
Dolphins- 92%  
Quackers- 92%  
Lobsters- 93%  
Whole School- 95%



## Stars of the Week- for being safe by listening to adults in school

Meerkats- Andy  
Ladybirds- Kyren  
Wallabies- Jacob  
Rhinos- Reuben  
Wolf Cubs- River  
Eagles- Fabian  
Dolphins- Zaynab  
Quackers- Subhaan  
Lobsters- Eva S



## Team Points

  
Arrowsmith

5455

5625

  
Campion

  
Barlow

5660

5200

  
Southworth

**16th January 2026**

## **Wraparound Care**

We now have full wrap around care led by Play and Learn Scheme.

Times are as follows:

- Breakfast Club 7.30am-8.35am £7 per day including breakfast
  - Breakfast Club 8am- 8.35am £4 per day including breakfast
  - Afterschool Club 3.15-5.30pm £11 per day including a snack
  - Afterschool Club 3.15-4.30pm £7 per day including a snack
  - Afterschool Club 4.30-5.30pm (if pupils have already been in a club e.g. choir and wish to join afterschool club after this) £7 per day including a snack
- To book, please click the link: <http://www.pals.schoolipal.co.uk/>

For any questions, please email [playandlearnscheme@gmail.com](mailto:playandlearnscheme@gmail.com) or call 07930924993

Play and Learn Scheme have begun the running of the breakfast and after school club provision in school and this is going really well! Pupils who have attended this week have thoroughly enjoyed their sessions. Don't forget to register to use the service using the link so that you can book your child on at any time (more details below). If you are dropping pupils off at breakfast club or collecting from after school club please ring the black doorbell rather than the school doorbell.



## **School Uniform**

At Saint Mary's we take pride in our appearance and know that first impressions count. We strive for all pupils to look smart and tidy when in school.

Our uniform policy can be found here:

Any pupil not wearing correct uniform will be asked to wear spare uniform from school until this can be rectified. Parents and carers will also be informed.



## **Safe Parking**

Please respect that 260 children must enter and exit school safely each day. This partly relies upon everyone parking safely and with due regard for others, including our neighbours. Please do not park across drives or in restricted areas.

Please can we ask that the staff car park is kept clear for staff cars ONLY. Some parents/Carers are pulling into the entrance to the carpark, especially in a morning and this is preventing staff from parking and is causing traffic on Mayfield Avenue.

**16th January 2026**

**PE Days  
5<sup>th</sup> Jan- 12<sup>th</sup> Feb**



**Meerkats- Wed and Thurs  
Ladybirds- Tues and Thurs  
Wallabies- Wed and Thurs  
Rhinos- Mon and Tues  
Wolf Cubs- Wed and Fri  
Eagles- Tues and Wed  
Dolphins- Tues and Fri  
(swimming)  
Quackers- Mon and Fri  
(swimming)  
Lobsters-Friday**

## **Upcoming Dates**

**30<sup>th</sup> January- NSPCC  
Number Day**

**12<sup>th</sup> February- Meerkats  
Stay and Learn (letter to  
follow)**

**THURSDAY 12<sup>th</sup> February-  
School Closes for half  
term**

## **Church News**

**Saturday Mass 6.30pm**

**Sunday Mass 10am**

**Baptisms by appointment**

**If you have a child wishing  
to make their First Holy  
Communion please speak  
to Father O'Brien**



# SCHOOL ADMISSION 2027/2028

The Governing Body are in consultation in relation to the school admission categories for September 2027-2028 admission.

Our full admission policy for 2027/2028 can be found on our school's website:

<https://www.stmarysoswaldtwistle.co.uk/admissions/>



## CONSULTATION

The consultation will take place from Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December until Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026

## HAVE YOUR SAY

Any objections are to be put in writing to the Chair of Governors, Mr David Joyce at the school address by 3.30pm on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2026

ST MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
MAYFIELD AVENUE  
OSWALDTWISTLE  
BB5 3AA

# SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enraptures young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

## 1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

## 2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

## 3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Talking about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that our child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells are ringing, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

## 4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

## 5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

## Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



## 6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

## 7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

## 8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making particular areas at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

## 9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for overall mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

## 10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns: you can provide the support they need.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-63204605>  
<https://pr.ousocial.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/>

National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday



[www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com)



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@nationalonlinesafety

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*We love, learn and grow together with Jesus*

## **HOLIDAY LIST 2025/2026**

### **AUTUMN TERM 2025**

Re-open	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2025
Closure after school on	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
Mid –term closure	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> October- Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> October
Closure after school on	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2025

### **OPENINGS 73**

### **SPRING TERM 2026**

Re-open	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
Closure after school on	Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2026
Mid-term closure	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February
Closure after school	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026

### **OPENINGS 54**

### **SUMMER TERM 2026**

Re-open	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
May Day closure	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
Closure after school on	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2026
Mid-term closure	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> May – Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> May
Closure after school on	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2026

### **OPENINGS 63**

**Total openings 190**