

**24th April 2026**

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



## **Our week...**

What a busy week we've had! On Tuesday Dolphin's Class visited Blackpool Zoo. They were very lucky that the sun shone on them all day and the animals loved coming out to play in the nice weather! Staff attending the trip noted that lots of other visitors commented positively on our pupil's behaviour and manners which is always lovely to hear!

On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May David Attenborough will celebrate his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. As an eco school we felt it important to celebrate the work David has done to care for God's world over the years. On

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May pupils will be learning more about the work David Attenborough has carried out and we are inviting them to dress as an explorer, as an animal or even as David himself!

Non-uniform is also fine as well.

The DFE have declared this year as the Year of Reading! Reading sacks have been given to each class; these include a book, a pad and pen, a teddy, hot chocolate sachet and a book mark.

These sacks will be passed around the pupils encouraging reading at home. Next week, staff are also leading a reading robin where different teachers will pop into classes to read to the pupils.

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

This newsletter gives a great overview of what our school assemblies will cover this April 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 10: 1-10**

**"I am the door of the  
sheep"**



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## Attendance

Meerkats- 94%  
Ladybirds- 88%  
Wallabies-94%  
Rhinos- 97%  
Wolf Cubs-95%  
Eagles- 89%  
Dolphins- 93%  
Quackers- 95%  
Lobsters- 97%  
Whole School- 94%



## Stars of the Week- for being respectful by treating others how I want to be treated

Meerkats- Isla  
Ladybirds- Georgia  
Wallabies-Eva  
Rhinos-Camden  
Wolf Cubs- River  
Eagles-Lucas  
Dolphins- Maisy  
Quackers- Stevie  
Lobsters- Raza



## Team Points

  
Arrowsmith

4220

4805

  
Campion

  
Barlow

3270

3385

  
Southworth

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## **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.

**24th April 2026**

**PE Days**  
**13<sup>th</sup> April- 22<sup>nd</sup> May**



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

## **Upcoming Dates**

**8<sup>th</sup> May- David**  
**Attenborough Day**  
**(letter to follow)**

**11-14<sup>th</sup> May- KS2 SATs**  
**Week**

**12<sup>th</sup> May- Dolphins'**  
**Stay and Learn**  
**(letter to follow)**

**20<sup>th</sup> May- Crowning**  
**Our Lady (letter to**  
**follow)**

**24<sup>th</sup> June- Sports Day**  
**(letter to follow)**

## **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**



**H a v e a**  
**w o n d e r f u l**  
**w e e k e n d**

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

## UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

### REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

### PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

### COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

## IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

### LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

### LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

### CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

### FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

### MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

### RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.

## Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: [nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance](https://nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance)

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# DAVID ATTENBOROUGH DAY

CELEBRATING HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY

FRIDAY 8TH MAY

CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO DRESS UP AS  
AN EXPLORER, AN ANIMAL OR EVEN  
DAVID ATTENBOROUGH HIMSELF!



*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**