

# St Mary's C of E Primary School

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## Newsletter No. 9

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this finds you all safe and well and that you had a restful Easter break. The beginning of the summer term at St Mary's marks the start of our traditional May Day season and the children have already begun rehearsing, starting with Y6 who unplaited the ribbons of the May pole on Wednesday.

### May Day 2023: Friday 26th May

For families new to the school, May Day is a long upheld tradition at St. Mary's [here is a link to the event that we recorded in 2021](#) when we were unable to have an audience.

On Tuesday of this week, all children in school took part in a democratic vote to elect the key Y6 roles for the event. Y6 pupils spoke in worship, sharing something about themselves, and the children were reminded about choosing children who they observed to demonstrate the school's values in daily school life. Here are the results:



*Amy Driscoll: May Queen*  
*Sasha Oliver: Sceptre Girl*  
*Ben Pinfold, Elias Williams*  
*and Myles Wright: Heralds*

*We will have three heralds this year as two of these children had the same number of votes across the school! Many congratulations to the children who were voted into these specific roles.*

All of the classes will need to show great team work, cooperation and determination to complete their class dance successfully, so that it can be the best that it can be! It's always an event where the children feel so proud of their achievements. We can't wait!

A text will go out shortly, asking you to fill in a short form to let us know about lunch arrangements on the day. The majority of children go home and return at school at 1.15 for a 1.30 start to the event. Once the message goes out, please respond as soon as possible.

### What to wear:

- Traditionally, girls have worn white dresses on May Day. As we have done in recent years, we would like to offer girls the option of wearing something colourful instead if it means that they can wear a dress that they already own. Please don't feel that you need to purchase a new dress. Please note that the children need to be able to skip and kneel, so dresses should not be too long or too short. If you would like to borrow a dress for the day, please give us a ring. We have a small stock of white dresses that have been donated to the school.

**If for any reason, your daughter prefers not to wear a dress, for cultural or personal reasons, please do get in touch with your child's teacher.**

- Boys will need to wear a white shirt or polo shirt and dark grey school trousers or shorts. They can also wear a school tie if they'd like to, which is £3.50 and can be purchased on School Money Shop on Eduspot.

All children will need to wear suitable footwear for skipping; no sandals please. Plimsolls or canvas shoes are most ideal. We will share more details about the event nearer the time. We are looking forward to welcoming the Director of Education for St. Albans Diocese and the Chief Executive and Director of Education and Learning for Barnet to join us too.

#### **Ofsted:**

As you know, St. Mary's school was inspected last month and we are delighted that the inspection team recognised that our provision for pupils' personal development and the children's behaviour and attitudes were judged as outstanding! The school was judged good overall, which is an incredible achievement given the very ambitious inspection framework. The inspection report can be found [here on our website](#). We are so proud of the children and our St. Mary's family as a whole.



#### **Barnet Libraries Literary Festival Saturday 13 May & Sunday 14 May:**

Take a look at these free children, students & families events at the Barnet Libraries Lit Fest with award winning authors Natasha Farrant & Tanya Landman. These sessions are more geared towards children in junior classes.



A morning with author Natasha Farrant discussing her book 'The Rescue of Ravenwood'. Including a Q&A and book signing session. Age guidance: 8 to 12 years.

Finchley Church End Library

Saturday 13 May

9.30am – 11.30am

Book your FREE ticket and more information at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-morning-with-award-winning-author-natasha-farrant-discussing-her-books-tickets-518503135837>

A morning with Tanya Landman in conversation with Miriam Halahmy discussing 'The Battle of Cable Street' and 'Lightning Strike'. Including a Q&A and book signing session. Age guidance: children and teenagers 9 to 15 years & adults.

Finchley Church End Library

Sunday 14 May

9.30am – 11.30am

Book your FREE ticket and more information at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-morning-with-tanya-landman-talking-to-miriam-halahmy-about-her-books-tickets-518542042207>

#### **Curriculum letters:**

Please take a few minutes to read curriculum letters written by your child's teacher. These outline the learning that will take place this half term. We have emailed these to you and they are available on our website too.

#### **Collective Worship at Church:**

We are excited to welcome Reception to join us for fortnightly collective worship at St. Mary's Church starting next Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April. As with all classes, we really appreciate any help with walking to and from church. Please look out for a text message from me asking if you can volunteer some time!

## Online Safety:

Our children are digital natives. They are so at home with technology it's like an extension of themselves... The positives of technology far outweigh the negatives. Parents often fear the potential negative impact of social media, online-bullying, adult content and 'predators' – the media confronts us all with so many negative headlines and frightening stories. But the internet also offers amazing opportunities for learning, having fun with friends, creating and publishing ideas, pictures and video, collaborating and enjoying music and media. While it might be tempting to ban internet access or smart phones, this simply makes children more vulnerable when they go it alone. Just as parents teach children how to cross the road safely, staying safe online needs a similar approach.



## So, how do you enable your children to benefit from technology while staying safe?

Here are 5 key things you should consider doing at home:

1. **Educate yourself** - Go on Tik Tok, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube to find out what they are all about. Know the age limits for popular apps and why these limits exist. Ensure that children do not have access to apps that are designed for older users.
2. **Educate your children** - Talk about what you should and shouldn't do:
  - Don't share your name, address and any personal information
  - Don't say anything you wouldn't say to someone's face or that could be unkind
  - Do come forward and speak to someone if you see or hear anything inappropriate online.

Make sure your children understand that their 'digital footprint' can be seen by school, universities, colleges and employers in the future so it's important to exercise caution now.

3. **Monitor** - As far as you can, engage with your child and talk about what they are doing online. Younger children should only use the internet when they are in a family area and you can keep a constant eye on what they are doing. As they get older they will demand more privacy, but it's important to stay interested; keep the lines of communication open. **It's essential that online access on mobile devices is closely monitored.**
4. **Protect** - There are filtering systems available that will block unsuitable content. Some are free, others you can buy. Filtering can be very effective but no system is 100% fool-proof, so education remains key.
5. **Support** - We all make mistakes, particularly when we are young. Be approachable. Make sure your children know they can talk to you if something goes wrong. And make sure you know what to do if it does. Most sites now have 'report abuse' buttons where you can report inappropriate behaviour.



We have also referenced some excellent resources to support with Online Safety at home:


<https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/6-10/>

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/apps-guide/social-networking-and-messaging-apps/>

**TikTok**

TikTok is a popular social networking app that allows users to create, musical clips and short clips up to 60 seconds and add special affects to them.


Cost: Free | Minimum age: 13



**WhatsApp**

Free-of-charge, real-time messaging. You can share images and videos, take part in 'group chats' and share locations. You can only message someone if you already know their telephone number.

Cost: Free | Minimum age: 16



Did you know that these two popular apps are designed for children who are **secondary school age**?



### Summer 1 focus value:

This half term, we are thinking about Courage; learning about Bible stories where people have shown bravery and determination. We will also learn about key figures in society who have demonstrated these values.

A big theme linked with our collective worship focus will be 'thinking about others', particularly those that may not be able to advocate for themselves. We will be exploring taking courageous steps, out of our comfort zones, to try new things, and to take actions to improve the lives of others or the world around us.

### National Education Union Strike Days: Class Closures

You may have seen that there are two NEU industrial strike days planned for this half term, on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April and Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

**The following classes will be closed on each of those days:**

**27<sup>th</sup> April - Year 4**

**2<sup>nd</sup> May - Reception, Year 2, Year 4, Year 5**

Please note that siblings of children in these classes should still attend school if their class is not affected by the strike.



### Coming up this half term:

- Non uniform day – Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April
- Bank Holidays – Monday 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May
- Y6 SATs week - 8<sup>th</sup> May
- Y1 school trip – Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May
- Y2 school trip – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May
- Non uniform day – Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May
- May Day – Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May

### Other important summer term dates for your diary:

- Class photos – Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June
- Y5 secondary transfer meeting – Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June at 6pm in school
- Summer Fayre – Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June
- Sports Day – Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June in Oak Hill Park
- Y6 swimming week – w/c 3<sup>rd</sup> July
- Y5 swimming week – w/c 10<sup>th</sup> July

*From all of us at St Mary's, stay safe, stay well and our love and prayers are with you as always.*

**Maria Constantinou**  
**Headteacher**

