



St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Celebrating Birthdays at School

As a Healthy School, we are pleased to celebrate children's birthdays in a way that is inclusive, enjoyable and supports the wellbeing of all pupils.

On their birthday, children are welcome to come to school **wearing their own clothes** instead of school uniform.

Families are also invited, if they wish, to **donate a book** to their child's class library, creating a lasting gift that can be enjoyed by all children for years to come.

To help keep all pupils safe and to support healthy choices, we kindly ask that families do not bring sweets, cakes or other food treats for the class.

We recognise that many children have allergies, dietary requirements or personal preferences, and this approach ensures that every child can celebrate their special day in a safe and inclusive way.

We thank parents for their understanding and support.

Values

- St Mary's Christian Values for the **autumn term** are **love, respect and peace.**
- Our school Bible quote which we aspire for all children and adults to achieve is **'I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.'** (Proverbs 4:11)

Parent News, Section 1

Macmillan Coffee Morning at St Mary's



We are hosting a **Macmillan coffee morning** and cordially invite you to join us for a cup of refreshing tea and slice of delicious cake!

- Date: Friday 25th September 2026
- Time: 8.30am-10am
- Venue: Yew Hall

There will be an opportunity to participate in a **coffee morning quiz with a prize for the winner!**

Thank you to **Mrs Brown** (HR Manager) and **Mrs Grange** (School Business Manager) who are hosting the event, ably supported by St Mary's staff.

We look forward to seeing you there!



Parent News, Section 2

ELSA at St Mary's

As part of St. Mary's commitment to helping children learn, grow, flourish and achieve, we are proud to offer pupils ELSA support. ELSA stands for Emotional Literacy Support Assistant and is usually a member of school staff, who has completed specialist training and is regularly supervised by an educational psychologist to ensure best practice and safety.

What is emotional literacy?

- Understanding and coping with the feelings about ourselves and others.
- Developing high self-esteem and positive interactions with others.
- Being emotionally literate helps children focus better on their learning.

Some of the areas the ELSA may work on:

- Recognising emotions.
- Self-esteem.
- Social skills.
- Friendship skills.
- Anger management.
- Loss and bereavement.

How does the ELSA work?

- A regular slot during the school week for 30-45 minutes.
- Sessions can be individual or in small groups and tailored to the child's individual needs.
- Sessions are fun and might include role-play, puppets, board games, art and craft and stories.
- They include time to talk.
- A pupil's progress will be reviewed on a half-termly basis.

As a parent/carer, how can you help?

- By informing the class teacher if there are any issues that may be affecting your child.
- Please feel welcome to contact your child's teacher or the ELSA if you have any questions.



Parent News, Section 4

Collection of Children by Other Adults

Thank you to those who have successfully submitted emails this week to the **Collections** email providing permission for other adults to collect your child(ren) on your behalf.

collections@stmarys.slough.sch.uk

For clarity, we require an **email authorisation** on **each day** that someone other than a parent will be collecting your child/ren.

If this collection arrangement is to occur regularly, please clearly state this in your email, for example, “every day” or “every Monday”.

A template is provided below for your convenience.

Scenario 1:

- Date - xx/xx/2026
- My child's name: xxx
- My child's class: xxx
- I give permission for xxx to collect my child/ren on my behalf **today**.
- Password is: xxx

OR

Scenario 2:

- Date-xx/xx/2026
- My child's name: xxx
- My child's class: xxx
- I give permission for xxx to collect my child/ren **every day**.
- I give permission for xxx to collect my child on the following days: xxx and xxx.
- Password is: xxx

We are unable to allow a child to leave school with an adult who is not their parent unless we have email authorisation from the parent, and the adult confirms the password.

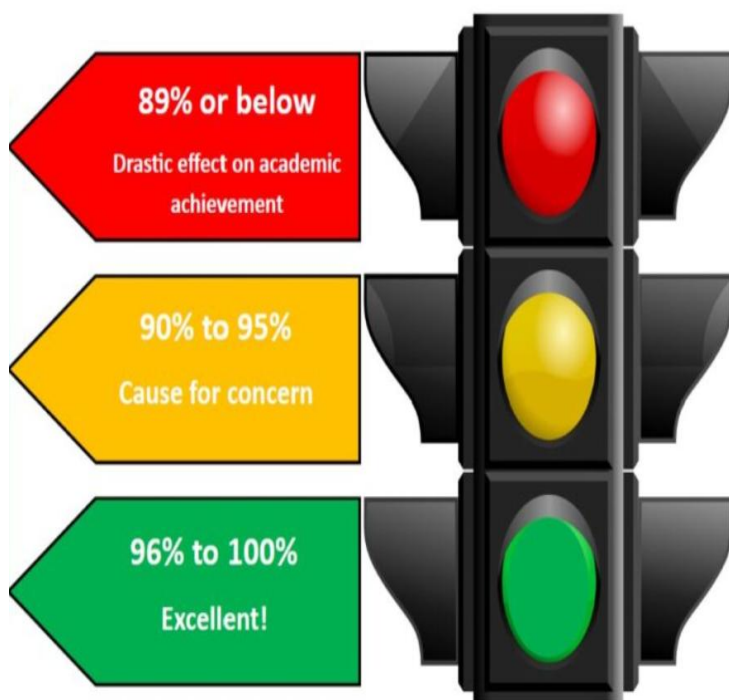
Thank you for helping the school to always keep your children safe.



Parent News, Section 5

Attendance at St Mary's

- Attending school every day is important for children to learn well.
- On the rare occasion children are absent, please report this on our **Study Bugs** system.
- If reporting your child's absence, clearly state your child's **name**, **year group**, **class** and the **reason why** your child is absent. We ask that you are **specific about your child's illness** so we can recognise trends and local outbreaks.
- We do not authorise holidays during term time, and you may be fined through the authority.
- Please try to arrange appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, please email the school office with conformation of the appointment: officestaff@stmarys.slough.sch.uk



GATES OPEN: 08:20 am

GATES CLOSE: 08:30 am

Children **must** be in class, registered and ready for learning at **08.30am**.

Please avoid lateness as this impacts on the front office and a calm start to your child's day.

Strong Attendance



We want all children to have the opportunity to participate in celebrations for strong attendance at St Mary's.

Children who achieve **96%-100% each term** and flourish in their school attendance will receive a **special certificate** and participate in an **exclusive special treat** to thank them for coming to school every day for a **whole term**.

Those who achieve **100% for the whole year** will receive a special celebration and receive some prizes.

Watch this space for details of the exciting autumn term 2026 'strong attendance celebration event' that only children with 96%+ attendance are invited to attend!



Attendance for last week

Nursery AM	93.8%
Nursery PM	51.2%
0Poppy	92.5%
0Bluebell	98.9%
0Daffodil	87%
1Damson	94.3%
1Cherry	96%
1Apple	96.2%
2Pear	98.3%
2Plum	99.7%
2Peach	90.3%
3Ash	91.2%
3Sycamore	92.8%
3Juniper	94.5%
4Larch	98.2%
4Beech	98.2%
4Oak	95%
5Hazel	90%
5Alder	92.4%
5Elm	86.3%
6Willow	86.2%
6Maple	83.3%
6Rowan	92.1%

96% or more is the target.

Classes with 100% attendance for the week earn a collective reward! 2 classes have earned the reward so far this year.

The senior leadership team have pledged that if 5 classes achieve 100% in the same week, they will come to school wearing superhero costumes!
Please bring your child to school every day 😊

Author Visit at St Mary's!

We are very excited to welcome children's author **Rashmi Sirdeshpande** to our school on **Monday 28th September**. Rashmi will be talking to the children about her exciting book series, '**Hari Kumar**', and sharing more about her work as an author. Children who have ordered a copy of the book will also have it signed by Rashmi after her visit.

If you would like to order a book for your child, please place your order by **11am on Friday 25th September**.

If this sounds like the book for you, make sure to click the link below so that you can get your own signed copy!

[Rashmi Sirdeshpande- 28th September - Chiltern Bookshops](#)



We are looking forward to a fun and exciting visit and hope the children enjoy meeting Rashmi and learning more about her book!

Science Club at St Mary's!

Our Science Club had an exciting time exploring **forces and motion** with our Rocket Balloon activity! Pupils investigated how air escaping from a balloon can make it move, using balloons and a simple string track. They made predictions, tested their ideas and enjoyed seeing whose balloon could travel the furthest! It was a fun and hands-on way to explore **pushes, pulls and Newton's Third Law** while developing teamwork and scientific thinking.



Marvellous Meals in Minutes Club at St Mary's!

Well done to Year 1 and 2, who did a wonderful job of washing, peeling, slicing, chopping and cutting an array of mouth-watering fruit to make their very own fruit kebabs. What a lovely way to learn new skills and enjoy a healthy treat together!



Nursery News at St Mary's!

This week, Nursery have started their learning journey at St Mary's. Over the week the children came in in smaller groups before having their first full session with us on Friday!

Carpet time

We have been practising sitting on the carpet for a few minutes at a time for singing, stories, and register. The children have been trying to sit on their bottoms with their legs crossed and are starting to do this independently. We are very impressed with how quickly the children are settling into this routine.

Playdough

The children have enjoyed exploring with the playdough and making things such as cookies and snakes with it. They have been working on rolling the dough, using tools to stamp into it and using rolling pins to create patterns.

Outdoor play

When outside, the children have started to engage with each other, and we have been trying to take turns with the toys. The children have worked very hard to tidy up at the end of our outdoor play times and have followed the instructions well.

An additional note for parents.

When bringing your child to Nursery, please do not park your car in front of the school gates. Access is needed at all times for both school staff, deliveries and those of the Yew Tree Children's Centre. Thank you.

Our staggered starts have now finished, and your children are due in Nursery every day for their session.

Stay and Play sessions start this week on Wednesday 16th September. We look forward to having you join us!

Nursery Department

Nursery News at St Mary's!



Reception News at St Mary's!

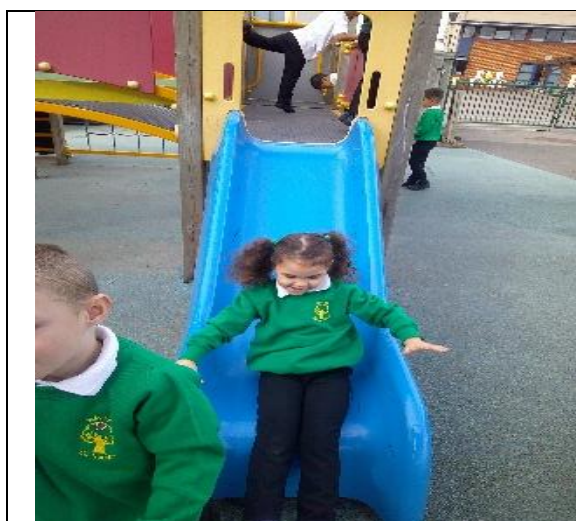
We are extremely proud of how our new Reception children are settling in. They have been enjoying exploring their new surroundings and trying out different activities. Reception staff were also impressed with how well they managed such a huge transition from Nursery to Reception- how brave you are!

We have already had been continuing with our phonics learning and many children remembered the sounds taught in Nursery which was great to see. Here is a link to an information video about the phonics scheme we use (we don't use the writing booklets just the reading resources)

<https://www.stmarys.slough.sch.uk/read-write-inc-phonics-parent-information/>

Phonics is an extremely important area of learning so we hope you will support and encourage your children at home to learn the SOUNDS of the letters. Many thanks in advance! A huge well done to our little learners for getting off to such a great start!

Reception Department



Year 1 News at St Mary's!

We are very excited to be back in school ready for all the adventures we'll encounter this year!

A huge THANK YOU to Mr Bradley, Mr Peterson and Mr Ballard who came in to help Team Year 1 revamp the outside area to help enhance our learning so we can LEARN, GROW, ACHIEVE and FLOURISH outside as well as in the classrooms.

We have been introduced to The Colour Monster, the story of a friendly monster who wakes up feeling confused because all his emotions—happiness, sadness, anger, calm, and fear—are mixed up. A little girl helps him sort these emotions by assigning each one a different colour, teaching him to recognize and manage his feelings.

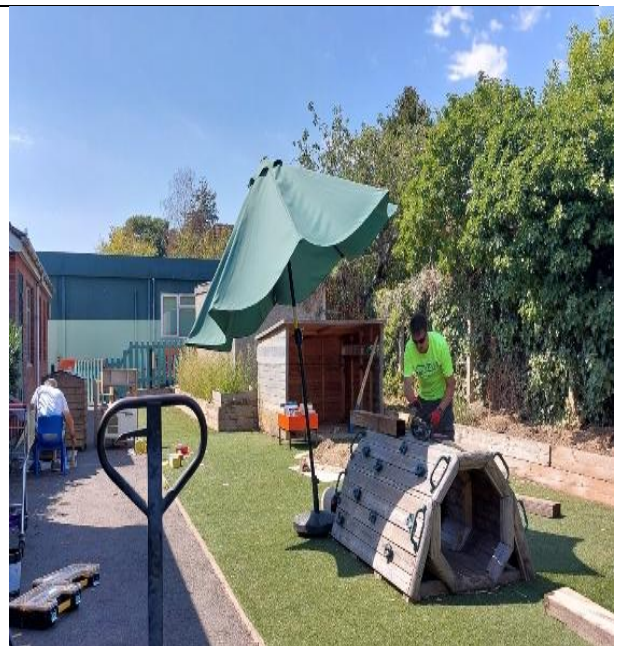
We have been doing some activities based on this story and there is a piece of homework about it too. We hope it will help us all settle back into school smoothly and have a wonderful year ahead.

Year 1 Department



Year 1 News at St Mary's!

Year 1 Department



Year 2 News at St Mary's!

Sorting Superstars!

In Year 2 Science, our pupils enjoyed a fun sorting activity! They looked at pictures of everyday objects and grouped them according to the materials they are made from, such as wood, metal, plastic, glass and paper. The activity helped pupils develop their observation skills and understand that different objects can be made from different materials.

Year 2 Department



Year 2 News at St Mary's!

Getting Active in PE

Year 2 had energetic PE lessons focused on sprinting! The children practised running with quick, controlled movements, developing their speed, balance and coordination. They enjoyed taking part in fun sprinting activities and challenges while learning how to improve their running technique.

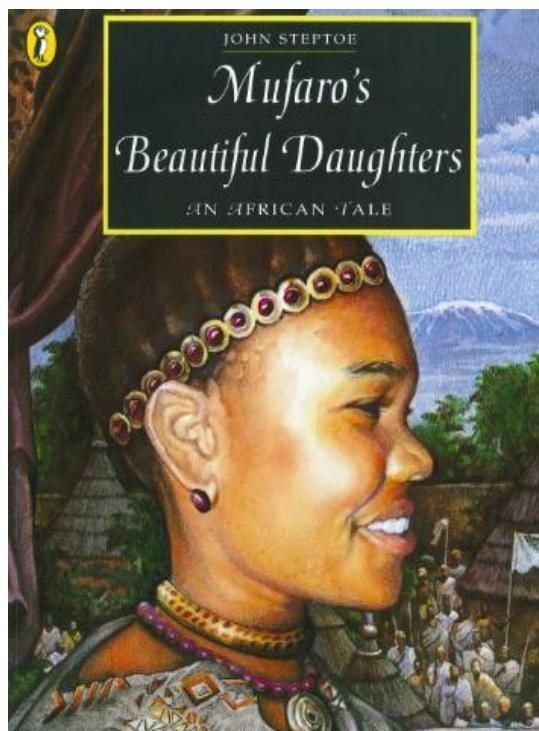
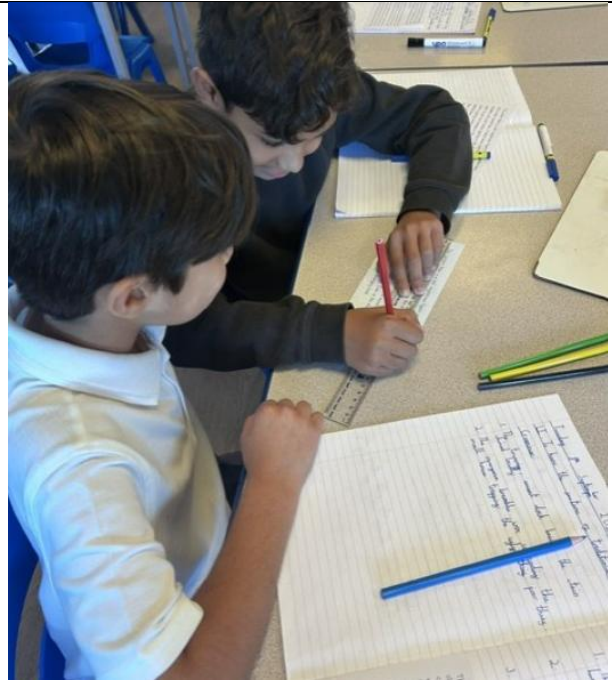
Year 2 Department



Year 4 News at St Mary's!

This week, Year 4 enjoyed listening to the traditional tale, '**Mufaro's Beautiful Daughter's, an African Tale**' by John Steptoe . They began by recapping the features of traditional tales, then moved on to thinking about what makes a good character description. This will help them prepare for writing their own retelling of the story later in the term.

Year 4 Department



Year 5 News at St Mary's!

Alder class Year 5 have been learning about Anglo Saxons. The children were set the challenge of making a model connected to the topic. Have a look at the wonderful homework projects they have brought in.

Year 5 Department



Dive into A Great Story at St Mary's!

Reading Recommendations

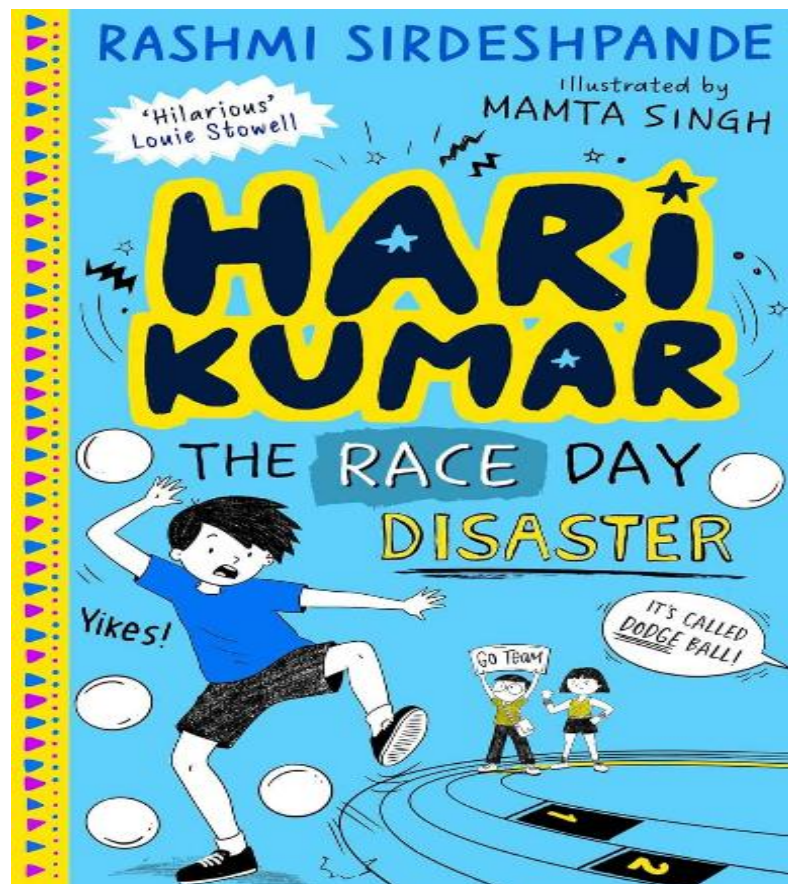
Get ready to laugh out loud! **'Hari Kumar: The Race Day Disaster'** is a hilarious book packed with funny moments, friendship, doodles, drama and amazing illustrations.

Hari's race day does NOT go to plan, and things quickly turn into chaos! With lots of laughs and plenty of surprises, this is a brilliant book for anyone who loves a funny story. Perfect for fans of Tom Gates and Loki! My favourite character so far has to be Nani. Reading about her fitness bootcamp had me in peals of laughter as I imagined this no-nonsense grandma making Hari and his friends do some intense cardio!

If this sounds like the book for you, make sure to click the link below so that you can get your own signed copy!

[**Rashmi Sirdeshpande- 28th September - Chiltern Bookshops**](#)

Happy reading!



Rocksteady Music at St Mary's C.E. Primary



Hi Parent or Guardian,

Do you want your child to experience the magic of playing music in their very own band? Rocksteady Music School is the leading provider of in-school rock and pop band lessons for primary age children – and we're delighted to let you know we're teaching in your child's school!

How does it work?

With Rocksteady, children learn to play an instrument through weekly band lessons. It's the perfect way to learn new musical skills, make friends and have fun – all at school! Rocksteady lessons are also shown to boost confidence, wellbeing social skills and even academic achievement.

Your child will learn to play songs instantly through listening and playing. There's no music theory involved and lessons are designed to be fun, inclusive and accessible. They will be making progress in every lesson and can also achieve an Ofqual-regulated Trinity Music qualification, without having to take a single exam!

Here's what else you need to know:

- Most lessons take place during the school day. There's no experience necessary and all instruments for lessons are provided.
- You can choose if they shine on vocals, keyboard, drums, guitar or bass.
- Proudly watch as your child performs in their end of term concerts, showing just how far they have come!
- Rocksteady band leaders are professional musicians who inspire a passion for music and support your child every step of the way.

Places are offered on a first come, first served basis. There's a money-back guarantee for the first month and you can cancel at any time.

For more details on availability and cost, visit rocksteadymusicschool.com and find your school on the sign up page or call 0330 113 0330.

Best wishes,

Rachel Hawker | Director of Education



0330 113 0330
(Mon-Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 9am-6pm, local rate)
rocksteadymusicschool.com



**Find out what parents
say about Rocksteady** ➔

Diary Dates

Please check 'diary dates' weekly. As new school events are confirmed, the 'diary dates' section of the newsletter is updated. Each week's new confirmed dates are shown in [blue](#).

Autumn Term 1, 2026

22.09.2026	European Day of 'Celebration of Languages' Assembly for Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6
23.09.2026	Y6 Trip 1 for 45 children: Henley River & Rowing-Geography
25.09.2026	Macmillan Coffee Morning, 8.30-10am in Yew Hall
28.09.2026	Rashmi Sirdeshpande, author of 'Hari Kumar' book series visiting KS2
30.09.2026	Y6 Trip 2 for 45 children: Henley River & Rowing-Geography
30.09.2026	Y5 Trip to Butser Farm-History (Anglo Saxons)
02.10.2026	Rotary Club presentation of personal Dictionaries to all Y5 pupils
15.10.2026	Annual Optional Flu Vaccine Delivered by Berkshire Immunisation Team for Nursery-Y6
23.10.2026	Last day of Autumn Term 1

Half Term Holiday

02.11.2026	INSET for Staff
03.11.2026	First Day of Autumn 2 Term for Children
09.11.2026	Parent-Teacher-Pupil Meetings for EYFS (Nursery & Reception) and KS1 (Y1 & Y2)
10.11.2026	Parent-Teacher-Pupil Meetings for KS2 (Y3, Y4, Y5, Y6)
11.11.2026	Parent-Teacher-Pupil Meetings for EYFS (Nursery & Reception) and KS1 (Y1 & Y2)
12.11.2026	Parent-Teacher-Pupil Meetings for KS2 (Y3, Y4, Y5, Y6) Parents
08.12.2026	Christmas Lunch and Jumper Day for Reception and KS1 (Y1 & Y2)
09.12.2026	Christmas Lunch and Jumper Day for KS2 (Y3, Y4, Y5, Y6)
10.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Reception Parents at 2.30pm
11.12.2026	Christmas Jumper Day for Nursery
15.12.2026	Christmas Party for LKS2 (Y3 & Y4)
16.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Y2 Parents at 9am
16.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Y3 Parents at 2.30pm
16.12.2026	Christmas Party for Y1 and Y2
17.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Y1 Parents at 9am
17.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Y4 Parents at 2.30pm
17.12.2025	Christmas Party for Nursery, Reception, Y5 and Y6
18.12.2025	Last Day of Autumn Term 2 at 1.30pm

Christmas Holiday

04.01.2027	INSET for Staff
05.01.2027	First Day of Spring Term 1 for Children