3rd November 2026

Newsletter

Autumn Term (Edition 8)

St Mary's CE Primary School

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers,



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

Welcome Back to a New Half Term

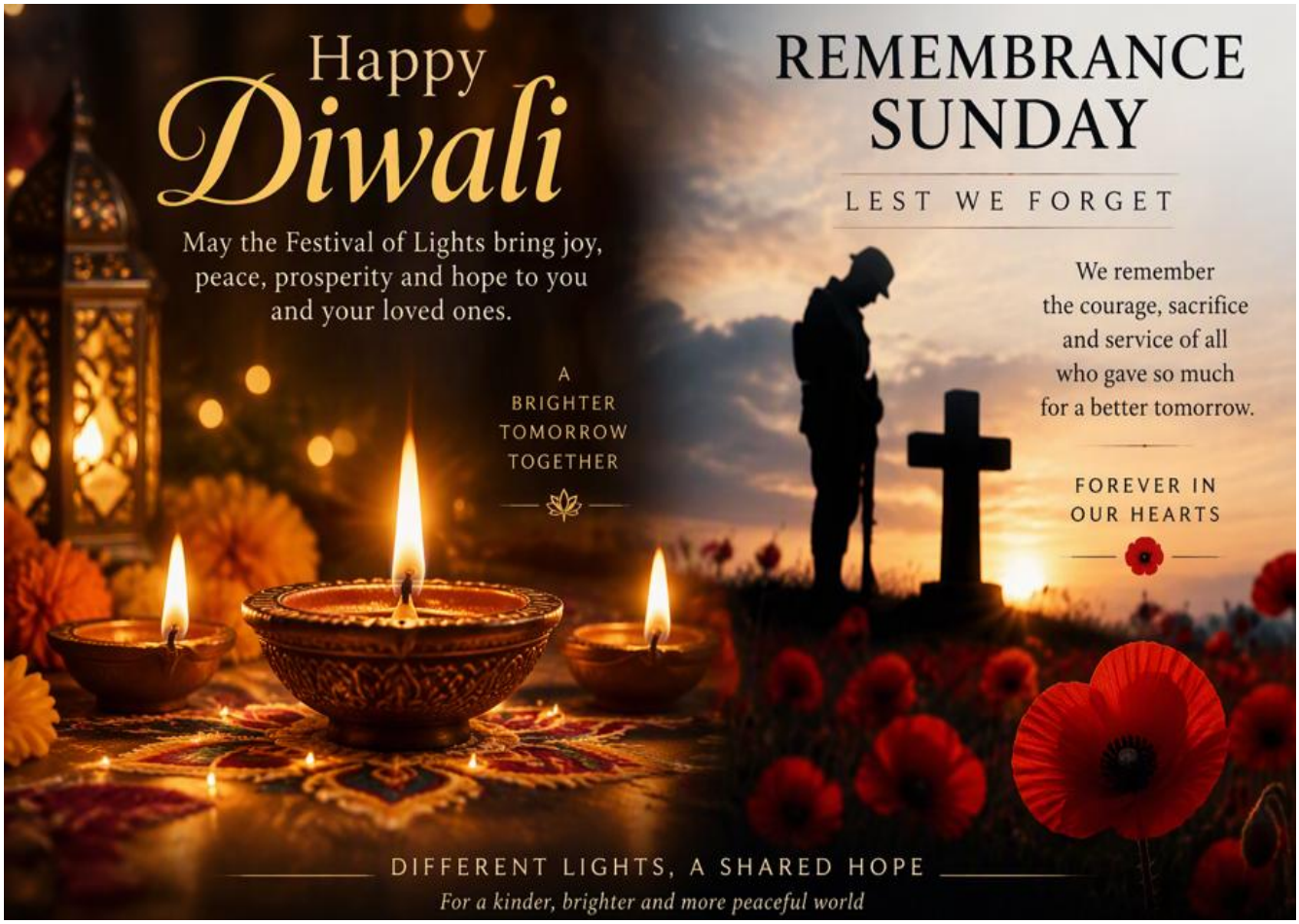
We are delighted to welcome our children and families back following the half-term holiday. We hope everyone has enjoyed a well-earned break and has returned refreshed and ready for all the opportunities that the coming weeks will bring.

As we approach **Remembrance Sunday**, our school community will pause to remember those who have served and sacrificed for others. It gives us an important opportunity to reflect on courage, service, gratitude and peace, and to consider how each of us can help to build a kinder and more peaceful world.

We remember. We give thanks. We pray for peace.

We also send our warmest wishes to everyone celebrating **Diwali** this weekend. May the Festival of Lights bring joy, peace, hope and happiness to you and your loved ones.

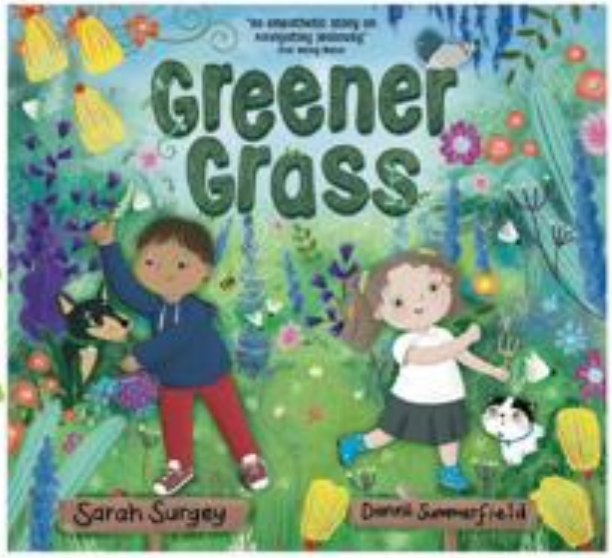
As we begin this new half term together, we look forward to continuing to **Learn. Grow. Achieve. Flourish.**



Parent News, Section 2

Author Visit at St Mary's

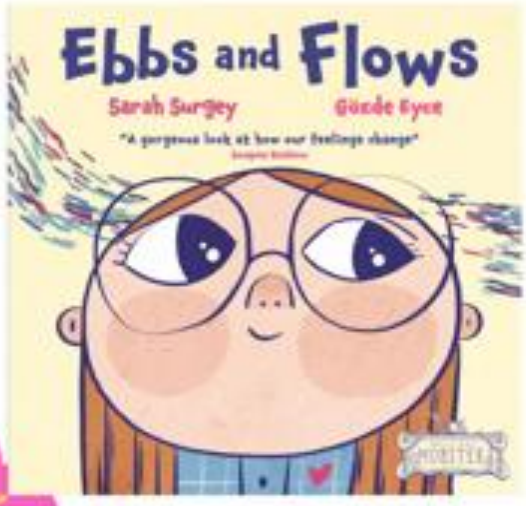
AUTHOR VISIT
SARAH SURGEY



PRE-ORDER A SIGNED COPY VIA SCHOOL £7.99

OR ORDER BOTH BOOKS FOR JUST £15!

Greener Grass is the story of two children and their very different gardens, discovering that what makes them different is what makes them special.



" Two heartwarming stories that remind us that all feelings are valid."
S. Mallon, Teacher

www.brilliantmonstersbooks.com

Parent News, Section 3

Author Visit at St Mary's

We are delighted to let you know that our children will be taking part in a virtual author event with **Sarah Surgey** on Wednesday 4th November. T

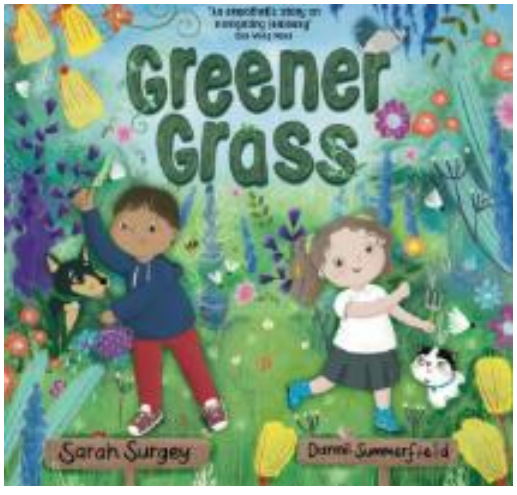
The event will take place during the school day, allowing the children to engage with the author, learn more about her books and celebrate their love of reading.

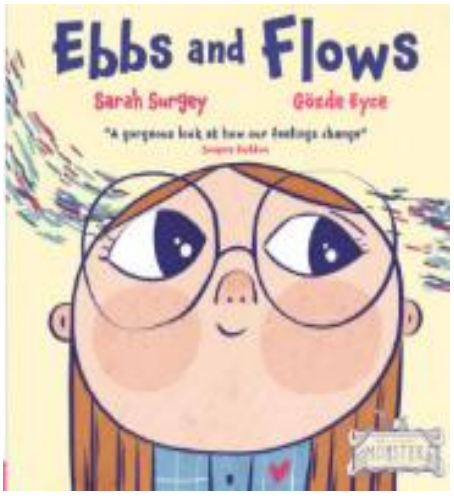
There will be an opportunity to purchase copies of Sarah Surgey's books:

- **Green Grass – £7.99**
- **Ebbs and Flows – £7.99**
- **Both books together – £15.00**

If you would like to purchase a book, please place your order and make payment via **ParentPay**.

The final deadline for orders is **Friday 6th November.** Please ensure that all orders are submitted by this date.





Parent News, Section 4

Harvest at St Mary's

This Harvest please help us help others by donating food and other items people need. Harvest gifts will be shared between our local community and **'Slough Foodbank'**, which helps provide emergency food to local people in need. https://slough.foodbank.org.uk

It would be wonderful if you could donate what you can so that local people in crisis don't go hungry.

Please make sure all food **is unopened, non-perishable, (NOT fresh**), with as long best before dates as possible and undamaged.

Harvest gifts can be brought into class or the front office from **1st October.** Together we can help others in our community flourish. Many thanks in advance.



Parent News, Section 5

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 6

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.

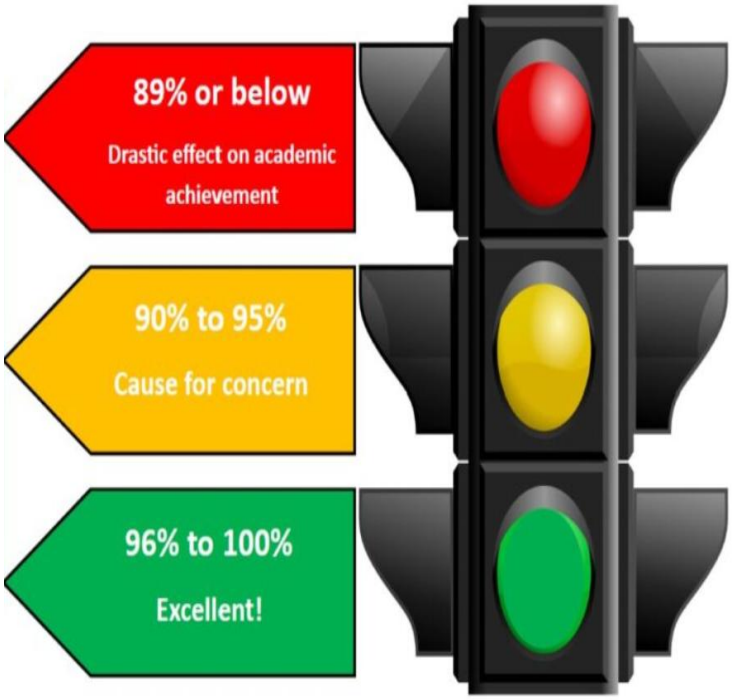
Thank you for helping the school to always keep your children safe.



Parent News, Section 7

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	84%
Nursery PM	87%
0Poppy	86%
0Bluebell	95%
0Daffodil	86%
1Damson	86%
1Cherry	91%
1Apple	90%
2Pear	92%
2Plum	95%
2Peach	92%
3Ash	93%
3Sycamore	83%
3Juniper	96%
4Larch	92%
4Beech	96%
4Oak	84%
5Hazel	91%
5Alder	91%
5Elm	92%
6Willow	95%
6Maple	92%
6Rowan	92%

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 😊

Science Club at St Mary's!

Science Club members carried out an exciting investigation to discover why an egg sinks in plain water but floats in salt water. The children made predictions, observed the results and learned how adding salt changes the density of the water.



Art Club at St Mary's!

We are enjoying Art Club so much that we wanted to give you an update on our progress. We hope to complete our acrylic painting on canvas by mid-November. So far, we have completed the background and the structure of the main tree. We have been learning how to use chisel tip and fan paint brushes.







Nursery News at St Mary's!

Diwali

In Nursery we have been learning all about Diwali so the children can begin to understand and experience a range of festivals and celebrations linked to culture and religion. The children have been designing their own rangoli patterns, looking at images linked to Diwali and exploring with rice to fill in a rangoli pattern outside. They have been very engaged in learning about the festival.

We are celebrating Diwali in Nursery on **Friday 6th November**. The children are welcome to come into Nursery wearing bright, colourful clothes to celebrate the festival!





Physical Development

In PD the children have been working on coordination and object control by moving balls/ objects with their hands. The children were working on crawling and walking around and pushing their object with small taps. The children worked very hard on this and had great fun trying to manoeuvre around markers.

In Nursery we have been working hard on completing more physical activity to support the children with their core strength and stamina. Children aged 3-5 should be completing 180 active minutes every day, from the moment they wake up, to when they go to bed. Please promote healthy moving with your child by encouraging them to walk, cycle or scooter to Nursery instead of coming in a pushchair. Thank you.





Nursery News at St Mary's!

Stay and Play!

We have really enjoyed seeing so many parents come in and join us each week for stay and play. The children enjoy being able to show you what they do in Nursery and it is an excellent way to find out what the children are learning each week.

We look forward to seeing more parents join us next half term. Stay and play is every Wednesday and the timings are:

- **Morning- 8:30am-9:00am**
- **Afternoon- 12:20pm-12:50pm**



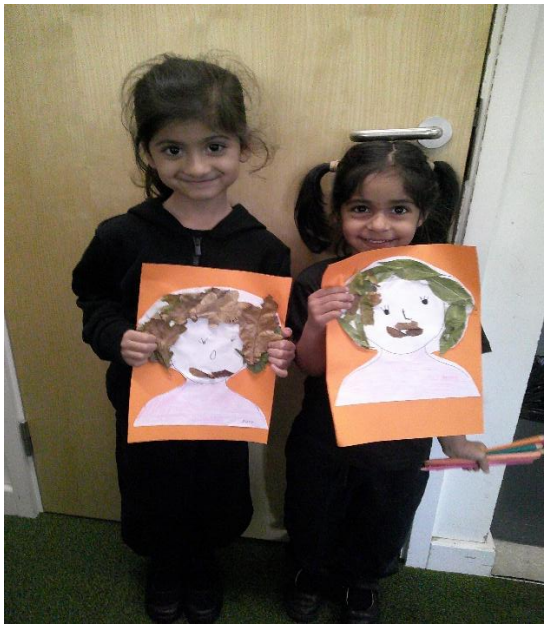


Reception News at St Mary's!

The reception children were hard at work this week, consolidating their learning on all things Autumn/ Harvest. We collected Autumn leaves and used them to create beautiful self-portraits, thinking about their hair and facial features. Some children in Poppy class had lots of fun creating their harvest fruit baskets, putting their fine motor skills to work with lots of cutting and sticking! Well done for getting through your first very busy half term at school.

We hope you all had a happy and well deserved half term!

Reception Department







Year 1 News at St Mary's!

Year 1 have had a busy and creative half term!

In Art, we explored how artists use control and pressure to create different types of lines, inspired by the work of London artist **Bridget Riley**. We then developed our skills further by experimenting with colour and creating self-portraits in the style of **Paul Klee**.

We consolidated our mathematical learning through a range of games using dice and dominoes. These activities helped us develop our confidence with number skills while having lots of fun.

We combined our artistic skills with our RE learning about Christian beliefs and how people are called to care for the world and show kindness to others. We reflected on how we can make a positive difference in our community and decided that, whatever our own beliefs or backgrounds, we all wanted to help those in need.

The children worked hard drawing, colouring, cutting and sticking to decorate Harvest Gift Boxes. These boxes will be filled with generous donations from St Mary's families and staff before being delivered to local neighbours. Any remaining donations will be shared with the local Foodbank.

We will still be collecting tins and packets of food for the next couple of weeks to enable us to help as many people as we can.

Well done Year 1 for putting our values of RESPONSIBILITY and LOVE into action! Our gifts will also help others in our community FLOURISH. Thank you all.

Year 1 Department









Year 2 News at St Mary's!

Story telling

Year 2 have been busy practising their storytelling and rehearsing *Hansel and Gretel* to help them develop their speaking, listening and performance skills. Through exploring the characters, actions and key events in the story, the children are building confidence and generating ideas for their upcoming extended writing. We look forward to reading their imaginative retellings inspired by their rehearsals!

Technology and Shopping

Year 2 enjoyed learning about shopping technology in their Computing lesson. The children explored different technologies used in supermarkets, such as barcode scanners, self-checkouts and card payment machines.

Dojo Awards!

Year 2 proudly celebrated the children who achieved their Bronze and Silver Dojo Awards this week. Their dedication, positive attitude and hard work have been recognised and rewarded. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and look forward to seeing even more children reach these milestones in the future!

Year 2 Department









Year 3 News at St Mary's!

As part of our History topic, the children have been exploring how people dressed during the Stone Age. They got creative by making their own Stone Age-inspired jewellery! The children made salt dough from flour, salt and water, carefully kneading the mixture before shaping it into decorations inspired by animal bones and teeth. This hands-on activity helped the children develop their understanding of how Stone Age people may have used natural materials to create jewellery and decorate themselves. We had lots of fun bringing history to life!

Year 3 Department



Year 4 News at St Mary's!

Harvest is a time for reaping, storing, preserving, and giving.
Year 4 pupils in Oak Class have been collecting food for our elderly neighbours and the local food bank. In doing so, they are preserving the tradition of giving that lies at the heart of St Mary's School. We will prepare food parcels after half term, so please continue donating packaged and tinned food.

Oak Class has been reading the fiction book 'MYSTERY OF THE EGYPTIAN SCROLL'. To boost engagement with the story, some pupils made Egyptian headdresses and took on the roles of ancient Egyptians as their teacher read aloud. Please also promote a love of reading for pleasure and purpose at home.

This week, Year 4 focused on drawing in proportion, inspired by the artist Nicola McBride. Using real objects for observation, the children practised drawing accurately while developing their understanding of 3D form, shading, texture, and shadow. They also explored how to layer colours effectively to create depth and replicate Nicola McBride's artistic style. We were very impressed with the care, creativity, and attention to detail shown in their artwork.

Year 4 Department

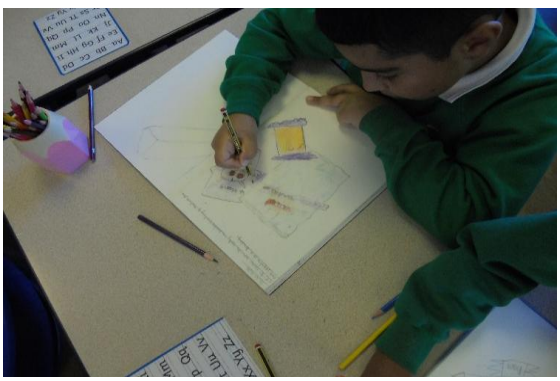












Rocksteady Music at St Mary's C.E. Primary



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:

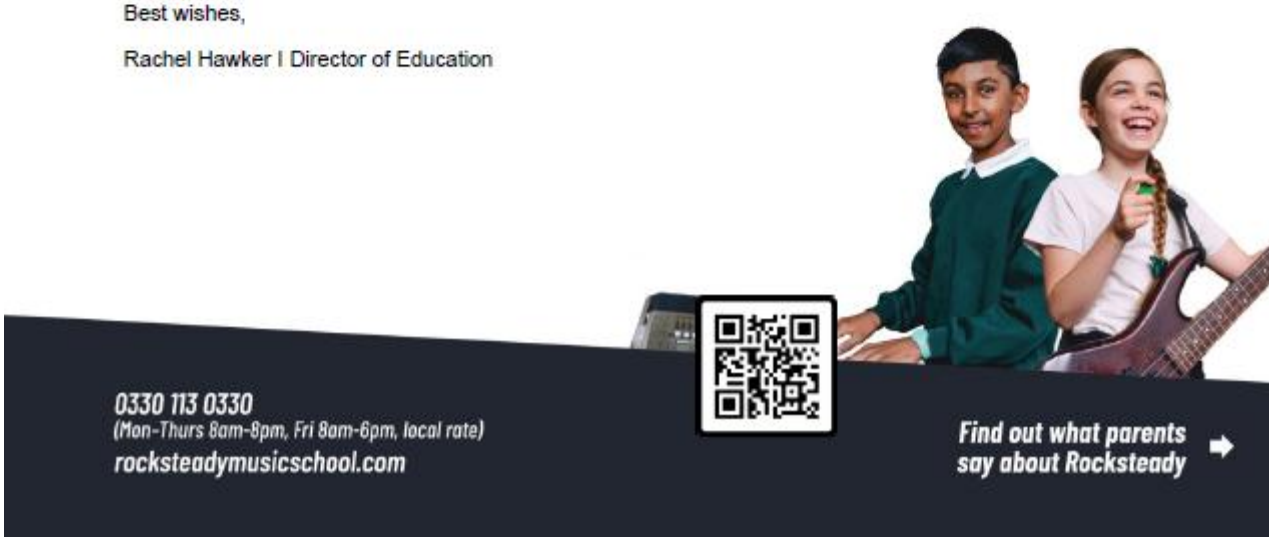
- Most lessons take place during the school day. There's **no experience necessary** and **all instruments for lessons are provided.**
- You can choose if they shine on **vocals, keyboard, drums, guitar** or **bass.**
- Proudly watch as your child performs in their **end of term concerts**, showing just 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 I Director of Education



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.

02.11.2026	**INSET for Staff**
03.11.2026	**First Day of Autumn 2 Term for Children**
09.11.2026	Individual Pupil Photo Day
09.11.2026	Parent-Teacher-Pupil Meetings for EYFS (Nursery & Reception) and KS1 (Y1 & Y2)
10.11.2026	Trip: Y5 to Gurdwara
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
16.11.2026	Y3 Trip to Chiltern Open Air Museum-History (Stone Ages)
02.12.2026	Y4 Trip to Ashmolean Museum-History (Ancient Egyptians)
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
11.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Y1 Cherry class Parents at 9am
14.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Y1 Damson class Parents at 2.30m
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 Apple class Parents at 9am
17.12.2026	Christmas Concert for Y4 Parents at 2.30pm
17.12.2026	Christmas Party for Nursery, Reception, Y5 and Y6
18.12.2026	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**