23rd November 2026

Newsletter

Autumn Term (Edition 10)

St Mary's CE Primary School

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been another busy and positive week at school, with so many opportunities to **Learn. Grow. Achieve. Flourish.**
We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and effort our children continue to show.
Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support.
Have a lovely and restful week!



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

Choosing a Tutor Safely

If you are considering private tuition for your child, please remember that safeguarding is just as important as finding someone with the right teaching experience.

Before appointing a tutor, we encourage families to:

✓ Check their identity and ask to see an **appropriate, current DBS certificate**.
✓ Ask for and check **references and relevant experience**.
✓ Ask about their **safeguarding procedures**.
✓ Keep tutoring in an **open/shared space**, with a trusted adult nearby where possible.
✓ Keep communication **between the tutor and parent/carer**, rather than through your child.
✓ Consider the safeguarding arrangements carefully for **online tuition**.
✓ Talk regularly to your child about the sessions and remind them that they should always tell you if something makes them feel **worried or uncomfortable**.

The NSPCC advises that tutors should have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place, including necessary checks, safe working practices and clear professional boundaries.

A recommendation alone is not a safeguarding check. Parents and carers should always satisfy themselves that appropriate arrangements are in place before leaving their child in the care of a private tutor.



Parent News, Section 2

Applying for Reception Place at St Mary's C.E. Primary School

Children in St Mary's Nursery do not automatically receive a place in St Mary's Primary School Reception unit.

Please follow the link to apply for your child's Reception place:

Primary school admissions – Slough Borough Council

- The deadline for **Reception applications is Friday 15th January 2027**.
- You will receive your child's primary **school offer on Friday 16th April 2027**.
- **This is all completed through Slough Borough Council.**



Parent News, Section 3

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.

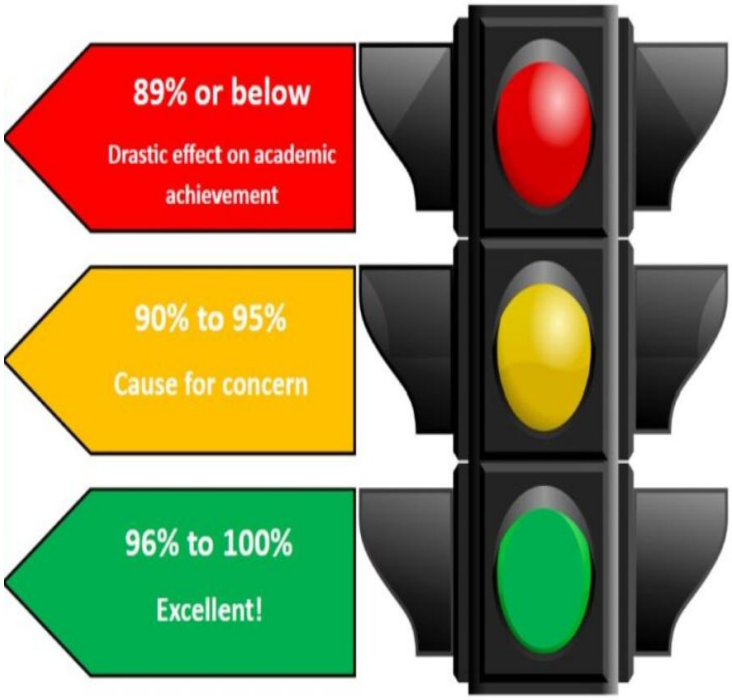
Thank you for helping the school to always keep your children safe.



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	84%
Nursery PM	96%
0Poppy	91%
0Bluebell	91%
0Daffodil	86%
1Damson	94%
1Cherry	97%
1Apple	95%
2Pear	97%
2Plum	96%
2Peach	90%
3Ash	84%
3Sycamore	89%
3Juniper	94%
4Larch	96%
4Beech	98%
4Oak	91%
5Hazel	98%
5Alder	92%
5Elm	86%
6Willow	95%
6Maple	99%
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 😊

Diwali at St Mary's!

Children in KS2 and KS1 experienced the festival of lights in a unique way: we switched off the lights, and students and teachers held battery-operated lights to recreate the homecoming of Lord Ram, his wife Sita, and his brother Lakshman to the city of Ayodhya. The school displayed cut-outs of Ram, Sita and Lakshman, and the assembly ended with the upbeat song Raghupati Raja Ram, during which our Hindu children offered veneration to their deities. Our Sikh children shared that they celebrate Bandi Chhor Divaas during Diwali, as it coincides with the commemoration of Guru Hargobind Ji's release from imprisonment.

Mrs Deans















Marvellous Meals in Minutes Club!

It was wonderful to see so many new faces yesterday, alongside some of our regular *Marvellous Meals in Minutes* members. The children got straight to work chopping and slicing a variety of delicious fruits to create their own colourful fruit kebabs. One of our newest members, Daniel, enjoyed the session so much that he wants to come every day! It's fantastic to see the children having so much fun while learning new skills and enjoying time together.

Mrs Williams





Nursery News at St Mary's!

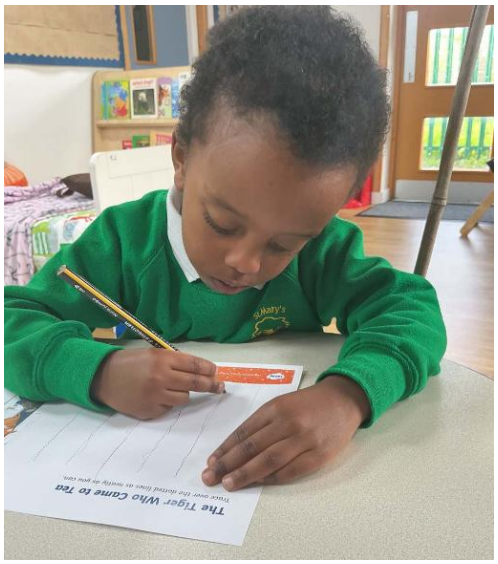
Maths

In maths we have been learning about position. The children have learnt the vocabulary in, out, in front and behind. During play they have been working on completing inset puzzles, working hard to fit the pieces into the puzzle, turning them when they do not initially fit. The children have persisted well with this and are successfully completing the puzzles now.



Writing

We are working on mark making and writing each day in Nursery, encouraging the children to create drawings which link to our weekly story or celebration. The children have been talking about characters from The Tiger Who Came to Tea and drawing an image. They are then working on writing their names to ensure they are clearly labelling their pictures. The children are continuing to gain confidence with their mark making and name recognition.





Remembrance Day

The children learnt about Remembrance Day and worked together to create a wreath. Morning Nursery were invited to the Remembrance Service with Key Stage 2, which we were delighted to attend. The children made excellent choices and were fantastic role models for the St Mary's Way. Children in both sessions observed the day and showed an understanding of why we recognise Remembrance Day.

Reception News at St Mary's!

The Reception Department have had a great time last week celebrating Diwali and dressing up in our special clothes. We even got to partake in some Bhangra dancing in our classrooms! We hope those who celebrated had a fantastic time with friends and family.

We had also had a special time in our classrooms on Wednesday 11th November – **Remembrance Day**. We made poppy wreaths and sat quietly and thoughtfully at 11am to remember those who help bring PEACE to our world.



This week we have begun our new focus book **The Owl Babies** by Martin Waddle. Three owl babies think that they have lost their mummy. They wait and wait for her to come home to the nest. They close their eyes and wish. Their Mummy does return - much to their relief and excitement – just like when our parents return to collect us at the end of our school day. We have also been making owls with playdough and drawing owls like artists and illustrators.







Year 1 News at St Mary's!

Remembrance Day

Year 1 classes created fabulous Remembrance Day poppy wreaths using red painted handprints. Working together, they added our school values of **Love, Peace** and **Respect** and showed great teamwork throughout and great care when cutting out the handprints.

We had a meaningful '**Window Moment'**, learning about the experiences of others, and thoughtful '**Mirror Moments',** reflecting on how we can show **love, peace** and **respect** every day. We were so proud of the children for the respect they showed during the Remembrance Assembly and the peaceful way they observed the one-minute silence.

We hope we will all learn from this and have many '**Door Moments'** taking our learning into our daily lives by showing kindness, respect and peace, helping to make our school and community a calm, caring place for everyone.







Year 2 News at St Mary's!

Humanities-Toys Through Time!

Year 2 had a fantastic time taking part in a *Toys Through Time* workshop with Saskia from Eton College. The children explored toys from the past, compared them with modern toys, and learned how toys have changed over time. They also designed and decorated their own skittles, showing great creativity. The workshop brought our Humanities learning to life in an exciting and hands-on way.

Families are warmly invited to visit Eton College's museums, including the Museum of Eton Life, Museum of Antiquities, and Natural History Museum. Admission is free every Sunday from 1:30pm to 4:00pm. https://collections.etoncollege.com/whats-on/weekends/ to find out more.





Remembrance Day in Year 2

Year 2 marked Remembrance Day by creating beautiful poppy wreaths in their classrooms. On 11th November, the KS1 children joined for a special assembly and observed a respectful one-minute silence to remember and honour those who have served and sacrificed for their country.

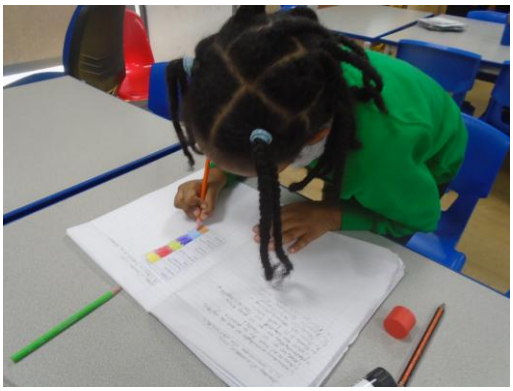


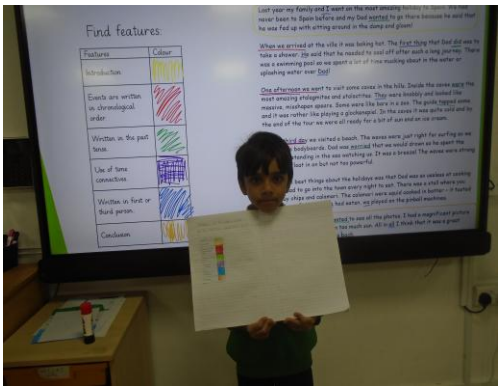
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Year 2 News at St Mary's!

English: Recount Lessons

In English, Year 2 explored the key features of a recount text using different colour codes. The children highlighted features such as time connectives, past tense verbs, and sequencing words, helping them to understand how recounts are organised and written. This activity supported their reading and writing skills in a fun and engaging way.









Year 3 News at St Mary's!

Science in Year 3

Year 3 have been busy exploring forces through a hands-on science investigation! We challenged ourselves to discover how far a marble would travel across different surfaces. We carefully released our marbles, measured the distances travelled and recorded our results. We then compared our findings, looking for patterns and discussing why the marble travelled further on some surfaces than others. We explored how friction affects movement and developed our scientific skills by making predictions, carrying out a fair test and drawing conclusions from our results. We had great fun putting our scientific thinking to the test!

Step Back in Time

Year 3 had an exciting adventure at the Chiltern Open Air Museum, where we stepped back in time to discover what life was like during the Stone Age!

The children became Stone Age hunters and gatherers, learning how our ancestor's found foc and survived using the resources around them. They had the opportunity to create their own Stone Age tools, putting their practical skills to the test, before having a go at spear throwing! also explored one of the most important survival skills of all – learning how to make a fire.

It was a fantastic hands-on experience that brought our history learning to life. The children showed great enthusiasm, curiosity and teamwork throughout the day and loved the opportu to experience some of the challenges faced by people living in the Stone Age. What a brilliant day of learning!









Year 4 News at St Mary's!

Larch class enjoyed their art lesson this week, learning about tints and shades and experimenting with paint to create colours ranging from light to dark. They carefully mixed different amounts of colour and white paint, developing their understanding of how artists create depth, contrast and a variety of tones in their artwork.







Year 5 News at St Mary's!

Spanish Leasson and Mask Making!

Y5 have been learning about the Spanish Celebration: The Day of the Dead. We had the opportunity to create clay skulls. We had lots of fun! 😊

The Day of the Dead is a holiday traditionally celebrated in late October or early November. The multi-day holiday involves family and friends gathering to pay respects and remember friends and family members who have died.

PE Lessons

This week Y5 have been really excited to start learning basketball skills.

Coach Pete taught us how to dribble the ball while being vigilant. We had lots of fun! 😊

Gurdwara Trip

Y5 had an amazing visit to the **Sri Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara** in Slough. They were expertly looked after by the amazing volunteers who led three sessions in t classrooms. The children learnt about the story of Guru Hargobind who freed 52 imprisoned kings. This day is celebrated by Sikhs as Bandi Chhor Divas, (The day Liberation). They also learnt about and had the opportunity to handle the 5 Ks: Kirpan, Kachera, Kangha, Kara and Kesh.

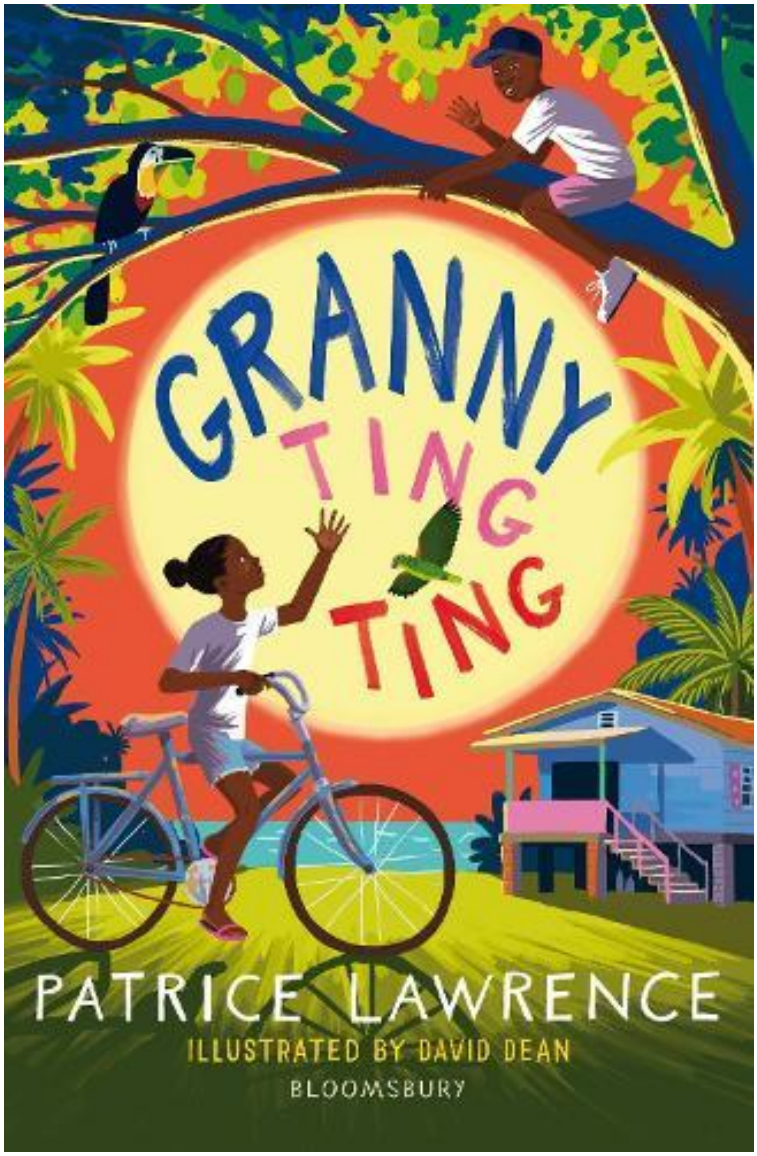






Reading Recommendations at St Mary's

This week's reading recommendation is Granny Ting Ting written by Patrice Lawrence, children's laureate.
This wonderful story is a great read because it introduces readers to Caribbean folklore, traditions and storytelling. It encourages us to think about the importance of family, where we come from and how the stories passed down through generations help shape who we are. It's humorous and touching with fun illustrations to help support developing readers.



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



0330 113 0330
(Mon-Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-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.

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**