

ST MARY'S C OF E (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

'A Christ-centred school with a child-centred curriculum'

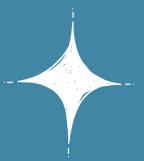


Week beginning 23rd February 2026

Message from Mrs Copus



Welcome back to the second half of Spring Term. We hope you had a great half term break and got to build memories together with family and friends. We're all well rested and back ready for more teaching and learning! During the break, we had all new cage fencing fitted around the recently installed decarbonisation boilers, which now look much neater and tidier.



Living Church Links

Our Christian values for this half term are Compassion, Wisdom, Justice and Peace. The children have been thinking about what peace means to them and shared ideas on templates of their hands, which are now proudly displayed on the board in our entrance hall.





News



Attendance

This weeks attendance was 94.4% - our target is 96.4%

94.4%

Spring 2 - Topics

South Africa and **Japan** class are thinking about 'Exploring Africa' and have already started with an African drumming workshop. A great collaborative task whilst exploring pitch, timbre and rhythm. **Mexico** and **China** class are thinking about 'Off with her Head' and are off to The Mary Rose Museum at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to start their topic. **NZ, USA** and **SL** class are looking at 'Urban Pioneers' whilst **Australia, India** and **Italy** class are learning about 'Memory Box' and are visiting The Weald and Downland Museum to learn more about the past. **UK** and **Thailand** class start learning about 'Starry Night' and we are looking forward to the planetarium coming to visit them in the very near future.

Inset Day - 13th February 26

Before the half term break we had an INSET day with the Weald locality of schools and we were lucky enough to have Scott Hayden from Basingstoke College visit us. He talked about the way technology is moving and the adaptations and advances of AI on children and teachers. It was an inspiring talk and left us with lots to think about.

PTA - Reading Corners

The PTA are supporting Reading Corners for the children's classrooms. Instead of an Easter Egg why not purchase something for a class reading corner - more details to follow soon.

Help Required - School Video



We are currently looking for someone who may be able to support us in updating our school promotional video. If you know of anyone with experience in this area, please let us know.





Things to know...

Meal Ordering

Please could we ask that when ordering your child's meal choice, you sit down together and choose their preferred option. We have had a number of children refusing to eat what was ordered for them and, as a school, we only receive what you have ordered to reduce food waste.

March cut off dates

Thurs 26/02 for w/c 09/03

Thurs 05/03 for w/c 16/03

Thurs 12/03 for w/c 23/03

EASTER BREAK

Dates for your diary

Tues 3rd March - Weald Book Award event at The Weald 6-8pm

Weds 4th March - Class photos

Thurs 5th March - World Book Day - see separate email

Mon 9th / Tues 10th March - Science days

Fri 13th March - Andrew Griffith MP

Fri 13th March - Reports home (Mexico in Summer Term)

Tues 17th / Weds 19th March - Parents evening

Mon 23rd March - second hand uniform sale 3.15-3.25pm

Tues 24th March - Easter play 2pm

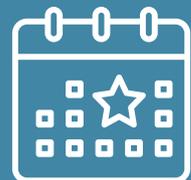
Weds 25th March - Lions book giveaway

Weds 25th March - Easter disco 5-6pm EYFS / KS1 - 6.15 - 7.30 - KS2

Thurs 26th March - Easter Eucharist - parents welcome

Thurs 26th March - Easter Eggstravaganza - bonnets competition

Fri 27th March - INSET DAY



Celebration Assemblies

India - 11th Mar Mexico - 12th Mar

China - 13th Mar

Australia - 18th Mar South Africa - 19th Mar



Curriculum

Learning

African Drumming



Children from China, Mexico, South Africa and Japan had the fantastic opportunity to work alongside Daniel Gilmore from Sussex Music Workshops. In the morning, groups from SA and Japan were immersed in an exciting African drumming workshop. They explored rhythm and percussion while discovering the cultural meaning behind the music, building teamwork, confidence and creativity along the way. Meanwhile, China and Mexico took part in a lively afternoon of chair drumming, collaborating to create their own rhythms and musical pieces.



RHE - Network Rail



Network Rail visited us this week and delivered an informative assembly and workshops. They spoke to our KS2 pupils about the railways, highlighting the serious dangers of going near tracks and explaining how to stay safe including level crossings, potential hazards and the importance of making sensible choices around railway environments.

Year 5 then took part in dedicated workshops, where they had the opportunity to explore these important safety messages in greater depth and ask thoughtful questions. Railway safety is a key part of our RHE curriculum, particularly as we have railway crossing points within our village. We are very grateful to Network Rail for helping our children better understand how to keep themselves and others safe.





Curriculum

Computing - VR Headsets



Thailand and UK class enjoyed using new technology during their computing lesson to explore the planets and our solar system via virtual reality as part of their new topic 'Starry Night'. Thank you to Theo and Josh (Jap) for coming to help and teach the children how to use the headsets.



Cookery Club



Children at Cooking Club, which is provided by Pulborough & District Community Care Association, have been busy in the kitchen this term and what a fantastic time we've been having! Each week, they have been building their skills, working as a team and creating some fantastic dishes.



Diorama's



Well done to Zara (USA) who has been thinking about habitats and decided to make some diorama's at home showing what she had learnt. We love to celebrate such creativity!





Curriculum



Gardening Gang



It's fantastic to see our Gardening Club back up and running with brand new and improved beds and cages! The children have been busy deciding what to plant and are excited to get growing. A huge thank you to Mrs Hancock and Mrs Hayes for all their hard work and dedication in making this happen, we really appreciate everything you do!



Chinese New Year

UK and Thailand Class have been learning about Chinese New Year and enjoying some activities to celebrate the year of the horse. They have made lucky red envelopes, noodles and headed up to forest school to cook and try stir fry!



Urban Pioneers

USA Class started their new class topic with a WOW morning and 'travelled to Sydney by place'. They were also visited by one of our parents who is a physiotherapist and talked about bones, skeletons, x-rays and joints as part of their Science topic. The children looked at a model of parts of the skeleton and they asked and answered lots of different questions.





Curriculum

Half Term Reading

Thank you to those children (and parents!) who took part in our half term reading challenge to read in a peculiar place - we have loved looking at the photos submitted and Miss Callender will be making a display of them within school for all to see and enjoy.





Sport



Tag Rugby

On Tuesday, our Year 3 & 4 mixed rugby team travelled to Horsham Rugby Club for a fantastic Tag Rugby event. The children took part in a range of activities before playing games against other schools. They were incredible teammates throughout, supporting each other, showing great teamwork and giving their all in every activity and match.

A special mention to Zara, who kindly joined another team to help them out; such a wonderful example of sportsmanship and a real credit to our school!

Well done to everyone, and a big thank you to Mrs Castle for once again taking the lead of this event.



Netball

We are so proud of our amazing 8 netball players who represented our school at The Weald School Netball Tournament.

They showed fantastic team spirit, determination and true sportsmanship throughout the day and came away with a brilliant joint 3rd place! Congratulations to every one of you for your hard work and positive attitude. A big thank you to Miss Heasman for training and support our team.





Celebrations

Loving House Cup

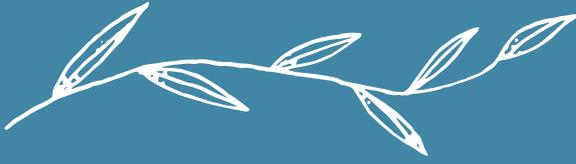
The children have collected Class Dojo points all week and this week's winners are
- St Michael's (Yellow Team).

Dojo's can be awarded for reading at home, kindness, politeness, upholding our school values, supporting our Christian ethos and extra curricular contributions to our school.





Celebrations



Vine Leaves

Jaxon (Ind) - Service - for helping Mr Hubbard and showing courtesy and kindness.

Dylan (UK) - Wisdom - for knowing so many countries starting with the correct letter during assembly on Monday. **Alfie P (SA) - Generosity** - for being chosen to do a solo piece in our African drumming workshop but offering for a friend to be the leader. **Josh (Jap) and Theo (Jap) - Service** - for assisting with the VR headsets and taking their responsibilities very seriously **Felix(NZ) - Humility** - for always stacking chairs for other children on his own accord without needing any recognition.

Finnley (SA) - Perseverance - for asking to read with an adult every day. **Victoria (SA) and Ayden (Jap) - Service** - for being consistently polite, respectful and hardworking. **Matilda (Ita) - Creativity and Wisdom** - for joining in so confidently during our class assembly. **Zara (USA) - Wisdom** - for helping her peers with ordering the Easter Story in RE. **Ben F (USA) - Perseverance and Service** - for being the first in the class to learn all his lines for the Easter Play. **Max (SA) - Responsibility** - for your consistent helpfulness and the boundless energy you put into helping with jobs in the classroom. **Ella C (SA) - Wisdom** - for your excellent progress in Arithmetic - this is testament to your determination and hard work.

Achievements



Amber (SL) - completed Stage 4 swimming



Alexa (Mex) - took part in a gymnastics competition and won multiple medals in floor, box and beam.



Celebrations

Celebration Assembly

Our **UK Class** were incredible in their celebration assembly! From Dough Disco and Squiggle while you Wiggle to songs and rhymes that build vocabulary, the children joined in with enthusiasm and confidently showed everything they've been learning. We're so proud of their hard work and growing confidence!



Sierra Leone Class had a wonderful morning sharing their learning with parents and carers! The children proudly talked about their Talk story, Little Vixen, and read their own versions. They also shared their mark making and printing in art, explained what they've been learning about skeletons, and wowed everyone with their gymnastics routines.



Italy Class put on a brilliant celebration assembly for their families. They proudly shared their monster drawings inspired by the book Not Now, Bernard! The children also treated us to some fabulous singing, including our maths counting song, a lively brain break tune, and a beautiful performance of the Earth Song from Little Big Sing. Their confidence, smiles, and teamwork made us all so proud.





Reaching Families

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person who has, or may have, special educational needs and disabilities in West Sussex?



EMPOWER

INFORM

SUPPORT

Reaching Families is a parent-carer led charity which aims to empower parent-carers and families of children & young people with special educational needs and disabilities in West Sussex through the delivery of information, training and peer support.

Making Sense of it All

In-depth parent-carer guide covering SEND issues from birth to adulthood

Umbrellas

Parent support groups based at locations across West Sussex and online, via Zoom

Training

Workshops and courses on a variety of issues delivered in-person and online

Face-2-Face

Peer based befriending for parents of children undergoing diagnosis

Animations

Short animated films on a variety of subjects

Fact sheets

Covering a range of SEND issues localised to the needs of West Sussex families

Benefits Advice Service

1-2-1 advice & claim checking support for families applying for DLA, PIP & Carers Allowance

NDP Navigation Service

Support service for parent-carers of children undergoing assessment on the West Sussex Neurodevelopmental Pathway (via referral from a professional)

Facebook Group

An online parent support group providing news, information and peer support

If you would like more information about how Reaching Families can help, please contact:

Email: admin@reachingfamilies.org.uk

Telephone: 01903 366 360

Reg Charity No 1150906



Reaching Families

www.reachingfamilies.org.uk

UMBRELLAS

Parent Support Groups

Spring Term 2026

Connecting parents and carers of children and young people in West Sussex with special educational needs and disabilities



Burgess Hill Umbrellas

Tuesdays, 10 am - 11.30 am
The Cherry Tree Centre
13th Jan / 3rd Feb / 3rd Mar

Littlehampton Umbrellas

Wednesdays, 10 am - 11.30 am
Creative Heart Community Hub (upstairs)
14th Jan / 11th Feb / 11th Mar

Worthing Umbrellas

Tuesdays, 10 am - 11.30 am
Durrington Community Centre
20th Jan / 10th Feb / 17th Mar

Umbrellas Online

Thursdays via Zoom
7.30 - 9pm
15th Jan / 12th Feb / 5th Mar

Horsham Umbrellas

Wednesdays, 10 am - 11.30 am
Horsham Family Hub
21st Jan / 25th Feb / 18th Mar

Shoreham Umbrellas

Tuesdays, 10 am - 11.30 am
Adur East Family Hub
27th Jan / 24th Feb / 24th Mar

Bognor Regis Umbrellas

Thursdays, 10 am - 11.30 am
Arun West Family Hub
29th Jan / 26th Feb / 26th Mar

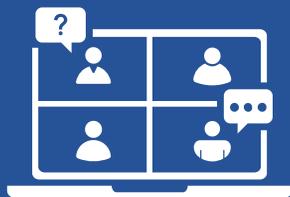
If you would like more information about Umbrellas or the link to join Umbrellas online, please contact our outreach team.

outreach-training@reachingfamilies.org.uk



TRAINING

SPRING TERM 2026



WORKSHOPS

Understanding Autism

Tuesday 24th February

7.30 - 9.30 pm

Understanding Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)

Friday 27th February

**10.30 am -
12.30 pm**

Making Sense of Wellbeing - Resilience skills for parents and carers

Tuesday 3rd March

10.30 am - 12 pm

Making Sense of Universal Credit

Tuesday 10th March

7.30 - 9.30 pm

Making Sense of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Thursday 12th March

**10.30 am -
12.30 pm**

Making Sense of Education Health & Care Needs Assessments and Plans (EHCPs)

Tuesday 17th March

7.30 - 9.30 pm

Making Sense of Behaviours that Challenge (age 2-11 years)

Wednesday 25th March

**10.30 am -
12.30 pm**

Making Sense of Transition to Secondary School

Wednesday 25th March

7.30 - 9.30 pm

THE SEND FOUNDATION COURSE

An introduction to SEND and the key issues parent-carers will encounter as their children grow and develop.

**Wednesday, 4th, 11th & 18th
March**

7.30 - 9.30 pm

All of the above training will be delivered on Zoom

For further information visit our website or email: outreach-training@reachingfamilies.org.uk



SCAN ME

All our workshops are free of charge. For more information or to book a place, please visit our Eventbrite page or scan the QR code.

reachingfamilies.eventbrite.com



**Reaching
Families**

www.reachingfamilies.org.uk

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