St Mary & St John CE Primary School

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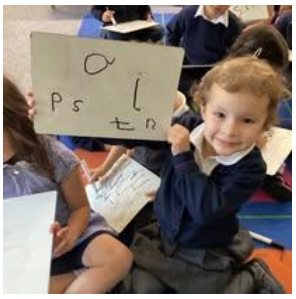
Friday 17th October 2025

Dear St Mary & St John Parents and Carers,

It's been a wonderfully busy and joy-filled couple of weeks here at SSMJ. Across the school, classrooms and playgrounds have been buzzing with creativity, curiosity, and togetherness. From our youngest learners in Reception to our confident Year 6s, every day has brought something new to celebrate — and plenty of reasons to be proud.

Reception Children – Proud of Their Learning

Our Reception children have been working so hard to write the new phonemes they're learning — and what incredible writers they're becoming. We couldn't be prouder of their enthusiasm and determination. Redwood and Cedar Classes also had a *brilliant* time creating their very own Potato and Vegetable Heads. Using fine motor skills, imagination, and rich vocabulary, the children designed unique and characterful creations - many even returned later in the day to make more. It was such a joy to see their creativity shine.



Bikeability for Years 5 and 6

Over the past two weeks, our Year 5 and 6 pupils have been developing their cycling confidence through *Bikeability* training. After practising their skills on the playground, they took to the local roads — learning how to ride safely and responsibly around Oxford.

A heartfelt thank you to our Bikeability volunteers for giving their time so generously, and for offering extra support to pupils who needed a confidence boost. We're so proud of all our young cyclists — keep pedalling safely.

2026 Calendar Underway

A huge thank you to all the wonderful parents and carers who joined us to help create the 2026 school calendar. It's been so lovely to see you working alongside the children, bringing each month's design to life. Here's a little sneak peek of some of the beautiful artwork — we can't wait to share the finished calendar with you.

Full Steam Ahead for Year 6

Year 6 enjoyed a fantastic trip to the STEAM Museum last week, stepping back in time to experience life as WWII evacuees. Dressed in period clothing, they explored rationing, wartime travel, and what it was like to be evacuated. The costumes, enthusiasm, and curiosity on display were outstanding — well done, Year 6.

Freedom Friday Fun

Last week, we launched our very first *Freedom Friday* as part of our OPAL (Outdoor Play And Learning) breaktimes — and what a huge success it was. Children from Years 1 to 6 roamed freely between the field and Key Stage 2 playground, soaking up the sunshine and enjoying the chance to mix and play together. From cross-year games of 'Duck, Duck, Goose', to dancing, Lego building, and plenty of K-Pop singalongs, the joy was contagious!

Oxford Schools' Challenge 2025

On Sunday morning, 50 children from SSMJ took part in the Oxford Schools' Challenge as part of the Oxford Half Marathon — our biggest group yet. Each year, more pupils join in, showing incredible determination, teamwork, and school spirit. Huge thanks to Mr Guy for organising, to Mrs Bradeanu, Mrs Khan, Mrs Rana, Mr Pound, Ms Elliott, and all the parents and carers who came along to cheer our runners on. Your support made the morning extra special- and the homemade signs of encouragement were excellent.

During Monday's Celebration Assembly, we also marked *Mental Health Awareness Week*, reflecting on how we can keep our hearts and minds healthy. It was wonderful to connect the two — celebrating both movement and wellbeing as key to a happy, balanced life.

Teacher Consultations

It's been lovely to see so many parents and carers at our teacher consultations this week. These meetings are such a valuable opportunity to catch up on how the children are settling into their new year groups, celebrate their wonderful work, and discuss their next learning targets. We always appreciate the time you take to come in and share in your children's progress.

PTA AGM Meeting

The PTA will be holding an in-person AGM in the SSMJ small hall on Monday, 20th October at 7:30-8:30pm. We encourage all parents and carers to come to hear about the goals and activities of the PTA (from last year and planned for next year), vote on elected positions (two chairs, two treasurers, and one secretary), and finally - to give us constructive feedback. All welcome. Free crisps and home-baked cakes will be available.

End of Term 1 Information

Next week marks the final week of Term 1 — and what a busy and productive term it has been. Time has certainly flown, and we know that some of our youngest children are feeling ready for a well-earned rest after their very first term at 'big school'.

School will finish at the usual time of 3:20pm on Friday 24th October, and all after-school clubs will run as normal.

We return for Term 2 on Monday 3rd November, with doors opening at 8:35am.

We hope everyone enjoys a well-deserved half-term break and finds a moment to catch their breath — the run-up to Christmas promises to be even busier!

In the meantime, we wish you all a restful, happy weekend full of autumn sunshine.

With best wishes,

Rex Shott and the St Mary & St John Team

Headteacher

Wellbeing Award for Schools 2024-2027

Artsmark Gold Award Awarded by Arts Council England

Let all that you do be done in love... 1 Corinthians 16:14

Wake Up Wednesday

Support children through adversity: This week's #WakeUpWednesday guide offers compassionate advice to help young people navigate traumatic and challenging events. Download your FREE copy here: https://vist.ly/49nng

Optimistic October: Wellbeing Segment

Optimistic October – Today's suggestion is to take a small step towards a positive change you want to see in society. Why not ask your children what change they would like to see? Our children are amazing advocates for positive change. For more information, visit https://actionforhappiness.org/calendar.

Optimistic October 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1 Write down three things you can look forward to this month	2 Find something to be optimistic about (even if it's a difficult time)	3 Take a small step towards a goal that really matters to you	4 Start your day with the most important thing on your to-do list	5 Be a realistic optimist. See life as it is, but focus on what's good
6 Remind yourself that things can change for the better	7 Look for the good in people around you today	8 Make some progress on a project or task you have been avoiding	9 Share an important goal with someone you trust	10 Take time to reflect on what you have accomplished recently	11 Avoid blaming yourself or others. Find a helpful way forward	12 Look out for positive news and reasons to be cheerful today
13 Ask for help to overcome an obstacle you are facing	14 Do something constructive to improve a difficult situation	15 Thank yourself for achieving the things you often take for granted	16 Put down your to-do list and do something fun or uplifting	17 Take a small step towards a positive change you want to see in society	18 Set hopeful but realistic goals for the days ahead	19 Identify one of your positive qualities that will be helpful in the future
20 Find joy in tackling a task you've put off for some time	21 Let go of the expectations of others and focus on what matters to you	22 Share a hopeful quote, picture or video with a friend or colleague	23 Recognise that you have a choice about what to prioritise	24 Write down three specific things that have gone well recently	25 You can't do everything! What are your three priorities right now?	26 Find a new perspective on a problem you face
27 Be kind to yourself today. Remember, progress takes time	28 Ask yourself, will this still matter a year from now?	29 Plan a fun or exciting activity to look forward to	30 Identify three things that give you hope for the future	31 Set a goal that brings a sense of purpose for the coming month		

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS Happier · Kinder · Together

St Mary and St John
Church of England Primary School
'Let all that you do be done in love'
1 Corinthians 16:14

Calendar 25-26

2025

August	September	October	November	December
1 Fr	1 Mo INSET 36	1 We	**1 Sa**	1 Mo 49
2 Sa	2 Tu INSET	2 Th	**2 Su**	2 Tu
3 Su	3 We Term 1 Starts	3 Fr	3 Mo Term 2 Starts 45	3 We
4 Mo 32	4 Th	**4 Sa**	4 Tu Harvest Festival	4 Th
5 Tu	5 Fr	**5 Su**	5 We Assessment week	5 Fr
6 We	**6 Sa**	6 Mo 41	6 Th	**6 Sa**
7 Th	**7 Su**	7 Tu	7 Fr	**7 Su**
8 Fr	8 Mo 37	8 We	**8 Sa**	8 Mo 50
9 Sa	9 Tu	9 Th	**9 Su**	9 Tu
10 Su	10 We	10 Fr	10 Mo 46	10 We Panto Reception
11 Mo 33	11 Th	**11 Sa**	11 Tu	11 Th Pantos Y5/6 3/4 1/2
12 Tu	12 Fr	**12 Su**	12 We	12 Fr KS1 Nativity @ SSMJ
13 We	**13 Sa**	13 Mo Parent Consultati 42	13 Th	**13 Sa**
14 Th	**14 Su**	14 Tu Y5 Bikeability week	14 Fr	**14 Su**
15 Fr	15 Mo 38	15 We Parent Consultation	**15 Sa**	15 Mo Reception Nativity 51
16 Sa	16 Tu	16 Th	**16 Su**	16 Tu
17 Su	17 We	17 Fr	17 Mo 47	17 We
18 Mo 34	18 Th	**18 Sa**	18 Tu	18 Th
19 Tu	19 Fr	**19 Su**	19 We	19 Fr Term 2 Ends
20 We	**20 Sa**	20 Mo Assess ment 43	20 Th	**20 Sa**
21 Th	**21 Su**	21 Tu Flu immunisation	21 Fr	**21 Su**
22 Fr	22 Mo 39	22 We Individual Photos	**22 Sa**	22 Mo 52
23 Sa	23 Tu	23 Th	**23 Su**	23 Tu
24 Su	24 We	24 Fr Term 1 Ends	24 Mo 48	24 We
25 Mo August Bk. Hol. 35	25 Th	**25 Sa**	25 Tu	25 Th Christmas Day
26 Tu	26 Fr	**26 Su**	26 We	26 Fr Boxing Day
27 We	**27 Sa**	27 Mo 44	27 Th	**27 Sa**
28 Th	**28 Su**	28 Tu	28 Fr	**28 Su**
29 Fr	29 Mo 40	29 We	**29 Sa** WINTER FAIR	29 Mo 1
30 Sa	30 Tu	30 Th	**30 Su**	30 Tu
31 Su		31 Fr		31 We

2026

January	February	March	April	May	June	July
1 Th New Year's Day	**1 Su**	**1 Su**	1 We	1 Fr	1 Mo INSET 23	1 We
2 Fr	2 Mo 6	2 Mo 10	2 Th	**2 Sa**	2 Tu Term 6 Starts	2 Th
3 Sa	3 Tu	3 Tu	3 Fr Good Friday	**3 Su**	3 We	3 Fr SUMMER FAIR
4 Su	4 We	4 We	**4 Sa**	4 Mo Early May Bk. Hol. 19	4 Th	**4 Sa**
5 Mo INSET 2	5 Th	5 Th World Book Day	**5 Su**	5 Tu	5 Fr	**5 Su**
6 Tu Term 3 Starts	6 Fr	6 Fr	6 Mo Easter Monday 15	6 We	**6 Sa**	6 Mo 28
7 We	**7 Sa**	**7 Sa**	7 Tu	7 Th	**7 Su**	7 Tu
8 Th	**8 Su**	**8 Su**	8 We	8 Fr	8 Mo Sports Day 24	8 We
9 Fr	9 Mo 7	9 Mo 11	9 Th	**9 Sa**	9 Tu	9 Th
10 Sa	10 Tu	10 Tu	10 Fr	**10 Su**	10 We	10 Fr
11 Su	11 We	11 We	**11 Sa**	11 Mo 20	11 Th	**11 Sa**
12 Mo 3	12 Th	12 Th	**12 Su**	12 Tu	12 Fr	**12 Su**
13 Tu	13 Fr Term 3 Ends	13 Fr	13 Mo Term 5 Starts 16	13 We	**13 Sa**	13 Mo 29
14 We	**14 Sa**	**14 Sa**	14 Tu	14 Th	**14 Su**	14 Tu
15 Th	**15 Su**	**15 Su**	15 We	15 Fr	15 Mo 25	15 We
16 Fr	16 Mo 8	16 Mo Parent Consults 12	16 Th	**16 Sa**	16 Tu	16 Th
17 Sa	17 Tu	17 Tu	17 Fr	**17 Su**	17 We	17 Fr Term 6 Ends
18 Su	18 We	18 We Parent Consults	**18 Sa**	18 Mo 21	18 Th	**18 Sa**
19 Mo 4	19 Th	19 Th	**19 Su**	19 Tu	19 Fr	**19 Su**
20 Tu	20 Fr	20 Fr	20 Mo 17	20 We	**20 Sa**	20 Mo INSET 30
21 We	**21 Sa**	**21 Sa**	21 Tu	21 Th	**21 Su**	21 Tu
22 Th	**22 Su**	**22 Su**	22 We	22 Fr Term 5 Ends	22 Mo 26	22 We
23 Fr	23 Mo Term 4 Starts 9	23 Mo 13	23 Th	**23 Sa**	23 Tu	23 Th
24 Sa	24 Tu Assessment week	24 Tu	24 Fr	**24 Su**	24 We	24 Fr
25 Su	25 We	25 We	**25 Sa**	25 Mo Spring Bk. Hol. 22	25 Th	**25 Sa**
26 Mo 5	26 Th	26 Th	**26 Su**	26 Tu	26 Fr	**26 Su**
27 Tu	27 Fr	27 Fr Term 4 Ends	27 Mo 18	27 We	**27 Sa**	27 Mo 31
28 We	**28 Sa**	**28 Sa**	28 Tu	28 Th	**28 Su**	28 Tu
29 Th		**29 Su**	29 We	29 Fr	29 Mo 27	29 We
30 Fr SCHOOL DISCO		30 Mo 14	30 Th	**30 Sa**	30 Tu	30 Th
31 Sa		31 Tu		**31 Su**		31 Fr

St Mary and St John CE Primary School: Big Dates for Autumn Term*

Date	What's on
Monday 20th October	*Reception Stay and Play 8.35am – 9.10am* An opportunity for parents and carers to visit classrooms and for children to share what they have been doing
Monday 20th October	*PTA AGM – 7.30-8.30pm* SSMJ small hall
Tuesday 21st October	*Flu Vaccinations* More information will be sent to parents and carers from the Oxford School Nurses nearer the time
Wednesday 22nd October	*School Photograph* Individual and sibling group photos
Friday 24th October	*Last day of Term 1* School finishes at usual time of 3.20pm
Monday 27th – 31st October	*Break* School closed for the break
Monday 3rd November	*First day of Term 2*
Tuesday 4th November	*Harvest Festival* In school, sadly no audience as we can't fit you all in the hall! However, donations of dried food, tins and toiletries welcome (donations to Oxford Mutual Aid)
Wednesday 12th November	*Oxfordshire Book Awards at Magdalen College School* 10 children from Year 3 are invited to attend
Friday 14th November	*Year 1 Sharing Assembly 8.50am* Families are invited to come to see their children take part in their assembly in the hall.
Monday 17th – Friday 21st November	*Road Safety Awareness Week*
Friday 21st November	*Year 3 Learning Exhibition 8.50am* Families are invited to come and see an exhibition of the work the children have completed in the small hall.
Friday 28th November	*Year 4 Learning Exhibition 8.50am* Families are invited to come and see an exhibition of the work the children have completed in the small hall.
Saturday 29th November	*PTA Winter Fair*
Wednesday 10th December	*Pantomime at Pegasus Theatre for Reception*
Wednesday 10th December	*Christmas KS1 Nativity and Christmas service at school* Parents/carers/families all welcome – time to be confirmed.
Thursday 11th December	*Pantomime at Pegasus Theatre for Years 1 and 2* *Pantomime at the Oxford Playhouse for Years 3 and 4* *Creation Theatre Performance at the North Wall Theatre for Years 5 and 6*
Friday 12th December	*Christmas KS1 Nativity and Christmas service in the church-10.00am* Parents/carers/families all welcome at the church.
Monday 15th December	*Reception Nativity and Christmas service in school – 2:30pm* Parents/carers/families all welcome at the church.
Friday 19th December	*Last day of Term 2* School closes at 1.30pm

*All dates are subject to change – we will update as soon as possible if dates have to be altered.