

St Mary & St John CE Primary School

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Headteacher: Rebekah Stott



Friday 17th April 2026

Dear St Mary & St John Parents and Carers,

It has been another busy and inspiring fortnight in school, with lots of opportunities for our children to learn, reflect and grow. From showing courage in challenging moments to engaging with important real-world issues, we are proud of the maturity and enthusiasm our pupils continue to demonstrate.

Our value for Term 5: ASPIRATION

As we begin Term 5, our focus turns to our next school value: Aspiration. Building on the courage shown by the children last term, we now look ahead to what we can achieve, guided by our vision, "Let all that you do be done in love."

We introduced this new value in Celebration Assembly by asking the children a simple but powerful question: What do you want to be when you grow up? We explored how aspiration is about believing in ourselves, dreaming big and working hard to achieve our goals. Some of the adults in school also shared their own childhood ambitions, showing that aspirations can change, grow and sometimes even come true in unexpected ways.



Over the coming weeks, the children will reflect on how aspiration is not only about big future dreams, but also the small, everyday steps they take — putting in effort, taking pride in their work and striving to improve. Through stories, reflection and discussion, we will encourage everyone to aim high, support one another and be the very best they can be, with kindness, determination and love at the heart of all they do.

Term 5 Curriculum Maps & Knowledge Organisers

As we begin Term 5, we are excited to share the new Curriculum Maps and Knowledge Organisers with families. This term, pupils across the school will once again be engaging with a range of ambitious and thought-provoking enquiry questions, designed to spark curiosity, deepen understanding and encourage meaningful discussion:

- **Reception:** What do living things need to grow?
- **Year 1:** Can one person make a difference?
- **Year 2:** Can one person make a difference? / How important is it that we look after our rivers?
- **Year 3:** Why do 7 million tourists visit Oxford each year?
- **Year 4:** Should diversity of culture and tradition be celebrated?
- **Year 5:** What is it like to spend time in another part of the world?
- **Year 6:** How does where you live shape who you are?

These big questions sit at the heart of the children's learning, encouraging them to think critically, make connections and explore the world around them. We look forward to hearing about the ideas, reflections and discoveries they share with you at home.

The Curriculum Maps and Knowledge Organisers outline the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary for each enquiry. They are designed to support conversations beyond the classroom and provide a clear overview of how learning will develop throughout the term.

What are we learning about in Term 5?

Each enquiry is explored through a carefully selected rich text, chosen from a diverse range of authors and experiences. These texts play an important role in bringing learning to life, sparking curiosity and supporting children to make meaningful connections across different subjects.

Below is a snapshot of some of the core texts being used across the school this term, although children will engage with a variety of texts as their learning develops over the course of the term.



Year 3 Outdoor Learning Begins

This term, it is Year 3's turn to take part in Outdoor Learning—and what a fantastic start they have made! The children thoroughly enjoyed their first session, making the most of the sunshine as they explored The Kidneys, climbed trees and immersed themselves in the natural environment.



During the session, the children investigated different habitats and thought carefully about where animals live. They also explored which animals hibernate in the UK, before bringing their learning to life by acting out different animals for their friends to guess—a fun and creative way to deepen their understanding. It was a brilliant session filled with fresh air, curiosity and creativity. We look forward to seeing Year 3 continue to thrive in their Outdoor Learning this term!

Welcome Back to Our Former Pupils

It has been wonderful to hear so many positive comments about the improvements to our front garden over the Easter break. We were especially delighted to welcome two of our former pupils back into school, Ailsa and Gregor, who generously volunteered their time as part of their Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award. It is always fantastic to see past pupils returning to support our school community and give something back.



We have also loved welcoming another former pupil, Poppy, back into school this week. As part of her Year 8 business enterprise challenge, Poppy will be hosting a bake sale after school today, with all proceeds going to charity and to support SSMJ. She will be selling bags of homemade popcorn for 50p, alongside a selection of homemade cakes priced between 50p and £1.

A huge thank you to all of our past pupils who continue to support the school in such positive and inspiring ways—we are very proud of you. ❤️

One Picture Day – A Celebration of Creativity

Our SSMJ One Picture Day got off to a fantastic start yesterday, with a real buzz of creativity felt across the whole school. The children took inspiration from our local surroundings, focusing on 'The Big House' and Bedford Street as the stimulus for their artwork.



Armed with sketchbooks, clipboards and a wide range of artistic materials, pupils explored different viewpoints—sketching outdoors, working along the grass verge and carefully selecting the best angles to capture their ideas. It was wonderful to see such high levels of engagement, with collaboration, problem-solving and imagination on display in every year group.



We are incredibly proud of the creativity and effort shown by all of the children, and we would love to invite parents and carers to come and see the finished pieces. You are warmly welcome to join us on Friday afternoon to view the artwork and celebrate the children's achievements.

Today, the children used *Bath Road, London* as inspiration for their creative writing, from Reception through to Year 6. Using the idea of a secret being discovered in the garden, pupils created a range of narrative and poetic pieces. It has been a fantastic opportunity to see how writing develops across the year groups, all from the same starting point.



One Picture Day has proved to be a great success—and one we hope to repeat in future years. It has been wonderful to see both the artwork and writing produced across the school, with every child inspired by the same shared stimulus. If you were unable to attend, please do take a look at our social media channels for a flavour of the two creative days across the school.



SUPPORTING YEAR 6/7 TRANSITION

Supporting the Transition to Secondary School

We will be holding a parent and carer workshop to support children as they prepare for the transition from primary to secondary school. The session will take place in the small hall on **Tuesday 21st April, from 9:00–10:00am**. While the workshop is particularly relevant for families with children in **Years 5 and 6**, all parents and carers are very welcome to attend.

The session will be delivered by the **Mental Health Support Team** and will explore a range of helpful topics, including understanding life transitions, adolescent brain development, and recognising signs of stress or worry in children. It will offer practical strategies to support communication, build resilience, and encourage independence, alongside a simple problem-solving approach to help children manage challenges.

There will also be guidance on supporting wellbeing at home, including establishing healthy routines, spending quality time together, and accessing further resources such as recommended reading, websites and CAMHS information. If you have any questions about the workshop, please feel free to get in touch. We hope to see you there.

Reception Places – September 2026

From one end of the school to the other! Thursday marked National Offer Day for Reception places, and we are delighted to share that we have an unprecedented number of applications this year. In particular, we are thrilled to be welcoming a high number of siblings into our school community, alongside many new families joining us for the very first time.

Due to this exceptional demand, the school is currently oversubscribed. If you have been offered a place, please ensure you accept it by **30th April** in order to secure your child's place.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming our new Reception children and their families to St Mary & St John—an exciting new chapter ahead!



PARENT GOVERNOR VACANCY



Parent Governor Opportunity

As we focus on our value of *aspiration* this term, we invite you to consider whether you might like to play a role in shaping the future of our school community. We are currently seeking a new parent governor—a rewarding opportunity to contribute to the strategic direction and ongoing development of the school.

If you are interested in finding out more, we encourage you to speak with our current parent governors, who would be very happy to share their experiences of the role:

- David Luff – one child in Year 2
- Tony Pound – children in Year 2 and Year 5
- Charlotte Ryland – one child in Year 5

Their email addresses are included in the message recently sent to parents and carers, along with a fact sheet containing further information about the role. You can also contact the governing body directly at ssmjpgovernors@gmail.com for further details. We would warmly encourage anyone interested to get in touch and explore how you could help shape the future of our school.

Reminder to Cyclists

Thank you for all you are doing to support School Streets and help make the roads around school safer for our children at drop-off and collection times.

A member of the local community has recently raised concerns about the speed of some cargo bikes travelling along Meadow Lane. We kindly ask all cyclists to be mindful of pedestrians, particularly during busy times, and to ride at a safe and considerate pace.



Your support in keeping our school community safe and respectful is very much appreciated.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter and seeing just some of the wonderful experiences taking place across our school community.

With best wishes,

 and the St Mary & St John Team

Headteacher



Let all that you do be done in love...

1 Cor. 13:4-7



Internet Safety

Image-altering filters are now embedded across social media platforms, shaping how young people present themselves and interpret the world around them. While these tools can appear harmless, they can also contribute to unrealistic expectations, social pressure and a blurred sense of reality.

Our latest #WakeUpWednesday guide supports us in understanding these challenges, responding effectively, exploring:

- The impact of altered beauty standards and comparison culture
- Risks linked to hidden advertising and sexualised edits
- The influence of filtered content on confidence and identity

It also provides clear, practical strategies to promote media literacy, build resilience and support healthier online behaviours. Find the guide here.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IMAGE-ALTERING FILTERS

From playful puppy ears on Snapchat to 'beauty mode' on TikTok, image-altering filters are now a routine part of how young people communicate online. While many are harmless, others subtly reshape people's faces and bodies. This can blur the line between reality and edited content, potentially influencing how children and young people see themselves and others.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

- ALTERED BEAUTY STANDARDS**
Many 'beauty' filters smooth skin, reshape facial features, or adjust body proportions. Over time, repeated exposure to these filters can shift a child's idea of what is 'normal' or attractive, creating unrealistic expectations about their own and others' appearances.
- HIDDEN ADVERTISING**
Some filters are linked to beauty products or trends, subtly promoting third-party brands. Children and young people may not recognise this as advertising, while also sharing personal data – such as facial images and usage habits – with apps and third parties.
- PRESSURE TO LOOK PERFECT**
Filtered images can often attract more 'likes' and positive comments. This can encourage children and young people to rely on editing tools to gain others' approval, rather than feeling confident in their natural appearance.
- BLURRED REALITY**
As filters become more advanced and natural-looking, it can be difficult for children and young people to distinguish edited content from real life, especially when filters are used in everyday photos and videos.
- LOW SELF-ESTEEM**
Regularly viewing heavily filtered content can lead to comparisons with unrealistic images. This is linked to body dissatisfaction and reduced self-esteem, particularly among children and teenagers.
- SEXUALISED EDITS**
Certain tools can make users appear older or more sexualised. This may attract unwanted attention, increase the risk of images being shared without consent, and expose young people to unsafe interactions.

Advice for Parents & Educators

- START OPEN CONVERSATIONS**
Talk regularly about filters, such as how they work and why people use them. Ask the children and young people in your care how filtered images make them feel and encourage honest discussion without judgement.
- CHALLENGE 'PERFECT' POSTS**
When viewing content together, gently point out the signs of editing, filters, or posing techniques. This builds critical thinking and helps children and young people question unrealistic images.
- REINFORCE WHAT'S REAL**
Help children and young people understand that filtered images are digitally altered and are not an accurate reflection of real life. Emphasise that they don't need to meet these artificial standards.
- PROMOTE OFFLINE CONFIDENCE**
Encourage activities that build self-worth beyond appearance, such as sports, hobbies, friendships, and creative interests, so that confidence isn't tied solely to online validation.

Meet Our Expert

Parveen Kaur is a digital parenting expert and founder of Kids N Clicks, a platform dedicated to helping parents navigate the online world alongside their children. She is an expert contributor for Internet Matters, offering practical guidance on emerging online safety issues. Her insights have been featured by the BBC, The Telegraph, Talk TV, and other major media outlets, supporting families across the UK.

#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

See full reference list on our website

[@wake_up_weds](https://www.wake_up_weds) [/www.thenationalcollege](https://www.thenationalcollege) [@wake.up.wednesday](https://www.wake.up.wednesday) [@wake.up.weds](https://www.wake.up.weds)

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Active April Wellbeing Segment

Today's active suggestion is to have be active outside. Is this something you and your family could try over the weekend? If you'd like to explore the calendar further, visit actionforhappiness.org/calendar and see how you can build small, positive habits into your daily routine.

Active April 2026

MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

1 Commit to being more active this month, starting today

2 Spend as much time as possible outdoors today

3 Listen to your body and be grateful for what it can do

4 Eat healthy and natural food today and drink lots of water

5 Turn a regular activity into a playful game today

6 Do a body-scan meditation and really notice how your body feels

7 Get natural light early in the day. Dim the lights in the evening

8 Give your body a boost by laughing or making someone laugh

9 Turn your housework or chores into a fun form of exercise

10 Have a day with less screen time and more movement

11 Set yourself an exercise goal or sign up to an activity challenge

12 Move as much as possible, even if you're stuck inside

13 Make sleep a priority and go to bed in good time

14 Relax your body & mind with yoga, tai chi or meditation

15 Get active by singing today (even if you think you can't sing!)

16 Go exploring around your local area and notice new things

17 Be active outside. Plant some seeds and encourage growth

18 Try out a new exercise, activity or dance class

19 Spend less time sitting today. Get up and move more often

20 Focus on 'eating a rainbow' of multi-coloured vegetables today

21 Regularly pause to stretch and breathe during the day

22 Enjoy moving to your favourite music. Really go for it

23 Go out and do an errand for a loved one or neighbour

24 Get active in nature. Feed the birds or go wildlife-spotting

25 Have a 'no screens' night and take time to recharge yourself

26 Take an extra break in your day and walk outside for 15 minutes

27 Find a fun exercise to do while waiting for the kettle to boil

28 Meet a friend outside for a walk and a chat

29 Become an activist for a cause you really believe in

30 Make time to run, swim, dance, cycle or stretch today



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					2026						
August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
1 Fr	1 Mo INSET 36	1 We	1 Sa	1 Mo 49	1 Th New Year's Day	1 Su	1 Su	1 We	1 Fr	1 Mo INSET 23	1 We
2 Sa	2 Tu INSET	2 Th	2 Su	2 Tu	2 Fr	2 Mo 6	2 Mo 10	2 Th	2 Sa	2 Tu Term 6 Starts	2 Th
3 Su	3 We Term 1 Starts	3 Fr	3 Mo Term 2 Starts 45	3 We	3 Sa	3 Tu	3 Tu	3 Fr Good Friday	3 Su	3 We	3 Fr SUMMER FAIR
4 Mo 32	4 Th	4 Sa	4 Tu Harvest Festival	4 Th	4 Su	4 We	4 We	4 Sa	4 Mo Early May Bk. Hol. 19	4 Th	4 Sa
5 Tu	5 Fr	5 Su	5 We Assessment week	5 Fr	5 Mo INSET 2	5 Th	5 Th World Book Day	5 Su	5 Tu	5 Fr PTA EID EVENT	5 Su
6 We	6 Sa	6 Mo 41	6 Th	6 Sa	6 Tu Term 3 Starts	6 Fr	6 Fr	6 Mo Easter Monday 15	6 We	6 Sa	6 Mo 28
7 Th	7 Su	7 Tu	7 Fr	7 Su	7 We	7 Sa	7 Sa	7 Tu	7 Th	7 Su	7 Tu Y5/6 PLAY
8 Fr	8 Mo 37	8 We	8 Sa	8 Mo 50	8 Th	8 Su	8 Su	8 We	8 Fr PTA CEILIDH	8 Mo Sports Day 24	8 We Y5/6 PLAY
9 Sa	9 Tu	9 Th	9 Su	9 Tu	9 Fr	9 Mo 7	9 Mo 11	9 Th	9 Sa	9 Tu	9 Th
10 Su	10 We	10 Fr	10 Mo 46	10 We Panto Reception	10 Sa	10 Tu	10 Tu	10 Fr	10 Su	10 We	10 Fr
11 Mo 33	11 Th	11 Sa	11 Tu	11 Th Pantos Y5/6 3/4 1/2	11 Su	11 We	11 We	11 Sa	11 Mo Y6 SATs 20	11 Th	11 Sa
12 Tu	12 Fr	12 Su	12 We	12 Fr KS1 Nativity @ SSMJ Church	12 Mo 3	12 Th	12 Th	12 Su	12 Tu	12 Fr	12 Su
13 We	13 Sa	13 Mo Parent Consultation 42	13 Th	13 Sa	13 Tu	13 Fr Term 3 Ends	13 Fr	13 Mo Term 5 Starts 16	13 We	13 Sa	13 Mo 29
14 Th	14 Su	14 Tu Y5 Bikeability week	14 Fr	14 Su	14 We	14 Sa	14 Sa	14 Tu	14 Th Y5 HILL END	14 Su	14 Tu
15 Fr	15 Mo 38	15 We Parent Consultation	15 Sa	15 Mo Reception Nativity 51	15 Th	15 Su	15 Su	15 We	15 Fr	15 Mo 25	15 We Y6 Leavers
16 Sa	16 Tu	16 Th	16 Su	16 Tu	16 Fr	16 Mo 8	16 Mo Parent Consults 12	16 Th	16 Sa	16 Tu	16 Th
17 Su	17 We	17 Fr	17 Mo 47	17 We	17 Sa	17 Tu	17 Tu	17 Fr	17 Su	17 We	17 Fr Term 6 Ends
18 Mo 34	18 Th	18 Sa	18 Tu	18 Th	18 Su	18 We	18 We Parent Consults	18 Sa	18 Mo Y6 WOODLAN 21	18 Th	18 Sa
19 Tu	19 Fr	19 Su	19 We	19 Fr Term 2 Ends	19 Mo 4	19 Th	19 Th	19 Su	19 Tu	19 Fr	19 Su
20 We	20 Sa	20 Mo Assessment 43	20 Th	20 Sa	20 Tu	20 Fr	20 Fr	20 Mo 17	20 We	20 Sa	20 Mo INSET 30
21 Th	21 Su	21 Tu Flu immunisations	21 Fr	21 Su	21 We	21 Sa	21 Sa	21 Tu	21 Th	21 Su	21 Tu
22 Fr	22 Mo 39	22 We Individual Photos	22 Sa	22 Mo 52	22 Th	22 Su	22 Su	22 We	22 Fr Term 5 Ends	22 Mo 26	22 We
23 Sa	23 Tu	23 Th	23 Su	23 Tu	23 Fr	23 Mo Term 4 Starts 9	23 Mo 13	23 Th	23 Sa	23 Tu	23 Th
24 Su	24 We	24 Fr Term 1 Ends	24 Mo 48	24 We	24 Sa	24 Tu Assessment week	24 Tu	24 Fr	24 Su	24 We	24 Fr
25 Mo August Bk. Hol. 35	25 Th	25 Sa	25 Tu	25 Th Christmas Day	25 Su	25 We	25 We	25 Sa	25 Mo Spring Bk. Hol. 22	25 Th	25 Sa
26 Tu	26 Fr	26 Su	26 We	26 Fr Boxing Day	26 Mo 5	26 Th	26 Th	26 Su	26 Tu	26 Fr	26 Su
27 We	27 Sa	27 Mo 44	27 Th	27 Sa	27 Tu	27 Fr	27 Fr Term 4 Ends	27 Mo 18	27 We	27 Sa	27 Mo 31
28 Th	28 Su	28 Tu	28 Fr	28 Su	28 We	28 Sa	28 Sa	28 Tu	28 Th	28 Su	28 Tu
29 Fr	29 Mo 40	29 We	29 Sa WINTER FAIR	29 Mo 1	29 Th	SCHOOL DISCO	29 Su	29 We	29 Fr	29 Mo 27	29 We
30 Sa	30 Tu	30 Th	30 Su	30 Tu	30 Fr SCHOOL DISCO		30 Mo 14	30 Th	30 Sa	30 Tu	30 Th
31 Su		31 Fr		31 We	31 Sa		31 Tu		31 Su		31 Fr

St Mary and St John CE Primary School: Big Dates*

Term 5

Date	What's on
Monday 13 th April	Term 5 begins
Friday 17 th April	Take One Picture – Art Exhibition (3.20 pm) Grown-ups welcome!
Monday 4 th May	Bank Holiday School Closed
Friday 8 th May	PTA May Dance Event
Monday 11 th – Thursday 14 th May	Year 6 SATs
Thursday 14 th – Friday 15 th May	Year 5 Residential Hill End
Monday 18 th – Friday 22 nd May	Year 6 Residential Woodlands
Friday 22 nd May	Year 3 Learning Exhibition Grown-ups welcome!
Friday 22 nd May	Last day of Term 5 School closes at 3.20pm.

Term 6

Date	What's on
Monday 1 st June	INSET DAY School closed to pupils
Tuesday 2 nd June	Term 6 begins
Friday 5 th June	PTA Eid Celebration
Monday 8 th June	SPORTS DAY Key Stage 1: 9.30-11.30am Key Stage 2: 12.45-2.45pm
Friday 12 th June	Y2 Sharing Assembly Grown-ups welcome!
Wednesday 17 th June	Festival of Voices (more information to follow)
Friday 19 th June	Whole School Dance Festival 2.30pm Families invited to attend
Friday 26 th June	Y1 Sharing Assembly Grown-ups welcome!
Friday 3 rd July	Y5 Learning Exhibition Grown-ups welcome!
Tuesday 7 th July	Y6 and Y5 Performance 4pm All children are expected to attend.
Wednesday 8 th July	Y6 and Y5 Performance 5pm All children are expected to attend.
Wednesday 15 th July	Y6 Leavers' Assembly
Friday 17 th July	Last day of school year School closes at 1.30pm.

The **2026-2027 Academic Year** begins for the children on **Thursday 3rd September**

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