

St Mary & St John CE Primary School

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Headteacher: Rebekah Stott



Thursday 16th July 2026

Dear St Mary & St John Parents and Carers,



How are we here already? It seems hard to believe that we have reached the final newsletter of the academic year — and what a wonderful year it has been!

From our Reception and KS1 Nativities, Winter Fair, Year 3/4 production and Year 5/6 play, to Dance Festival, Sports Days, One Picture Day, residentials, trips, visits and the Summer Fair...pew, haven't we packed a lot in! It has been a year full of learning, creativity, courage, teamwork and celebration.

Thank you, as always, for all your support — for attending celebrations and events, helping at PTA events in so many different ways, and, most importantly, engaging with and supporting your children's learning throughout the year.

Just to round off the year, here are a few of our highlights from the last couple of weeks. We can't wait to do it all again from September!

Summer Fair Thanks

What a fantastic Summer Fair! A huge thank you to the army of parents, carers and wider family members who gave up their time — including taking time off work — to help organise, set up, run stalls, support activities and generally make the afternoon such a success. We are also incredibly grateful to the team who stayed behind until 8:30pm on their Friday evening to clear everything away. What a Herculean effort by all — and very much appreciated!



There was so much for everyone to enjoy, from the brilliant stalls and games to the Eco Council stall, Soak a Friend, bouncy castle, plants, nail painting, and a truly astonishing amount of donated cake, food and drink — including 200 homemade samosas! And what a band! WOW! It was a joyful afternoon and a wonderful reminder that we certainly know how to model community spirit and fun to our children.



Finally, our immense thanks and gratitude go to Lucy and Johanna, our PTA Co-Chairs and the masterminds behind it all. Thank you, too, to the PTA committee and all the volunteers who have supported events throughout the year. A particularly special thank you to Johanna, who is stepping down from the PTA as her family prepare to move abroad. To have managed all this amazing planning while also packing up a house and getting ready to move is quite something!

We are so grateful for everything she has given to the PTA and to SSMJ — she and her family will be very much missed.



Camp Out Days

Last week, our Key Stage 2 children enjoyed their Camp Out Day on Monday, followed by Reception and Key Stage 1 on Tuesday. Across both days, there was a real buzz of excitement as the children watched the camp take shape — and, of course, explored the tents at every opportunity!



A huge thank you to everyone who literally pitched up in the morning to help get the tents up on both days. 🌟 Your help was very much appreciated and made such a difference in getting everything ready for the children.



The children worked their way around a carousel of activities, including storytelling, puppet making, art — with everyone designing their own leaf — sports, face painting and much more. There was so much fun, creativity and teamwork on show throughout the days, and the children threw themselves into every activity with great enthusiasm. We suspect, however, that the firm favourite was still Tent Time!



A HUGE thank you to Mrs Godby for organising the whole event — it is a gigantic task! Thank you also to all the staff who planned, prepared and manned activities throughout both days, helping to create such a memorable experience for the children.

Grimm: Once Upon a Musical

Every year, we say that the Year 5 and 6 production is the best yet — and that we really do not know how it could possibly be topped. This year was no exception! *Grimm: Once Upon a Musical* was a fantastic showcase of talent, teamwork and confidence, and we could not have been prouder of the children.



What made the show so special was that it was a true ensemble piece, with everyone having the opportunity to shine. From the performers on stage to those supporting behind the scenes with stage management, props and all the many jobs that help bring a production together, every child played an important part. Year 5 were an excellent choral team, adding real energy and depth to the performance as a whole, while Year 6 absolutely wowed us with their confidence, humour and talent. We may well have some future performers among you!



A huge thank you must go to the Year 5 and 6 team, especially Mr Furniss and Mrs Farnsworth for their musical directorship and for bringing the whole production together so brilliantly. Thank you also to Ms Moreton for yet another stunning backdrop, and to the countless staff and helpers who gave up their time to paint faces, sew costumes, organise props and generally enthuse the children to be the very best they could be. What a triumph!



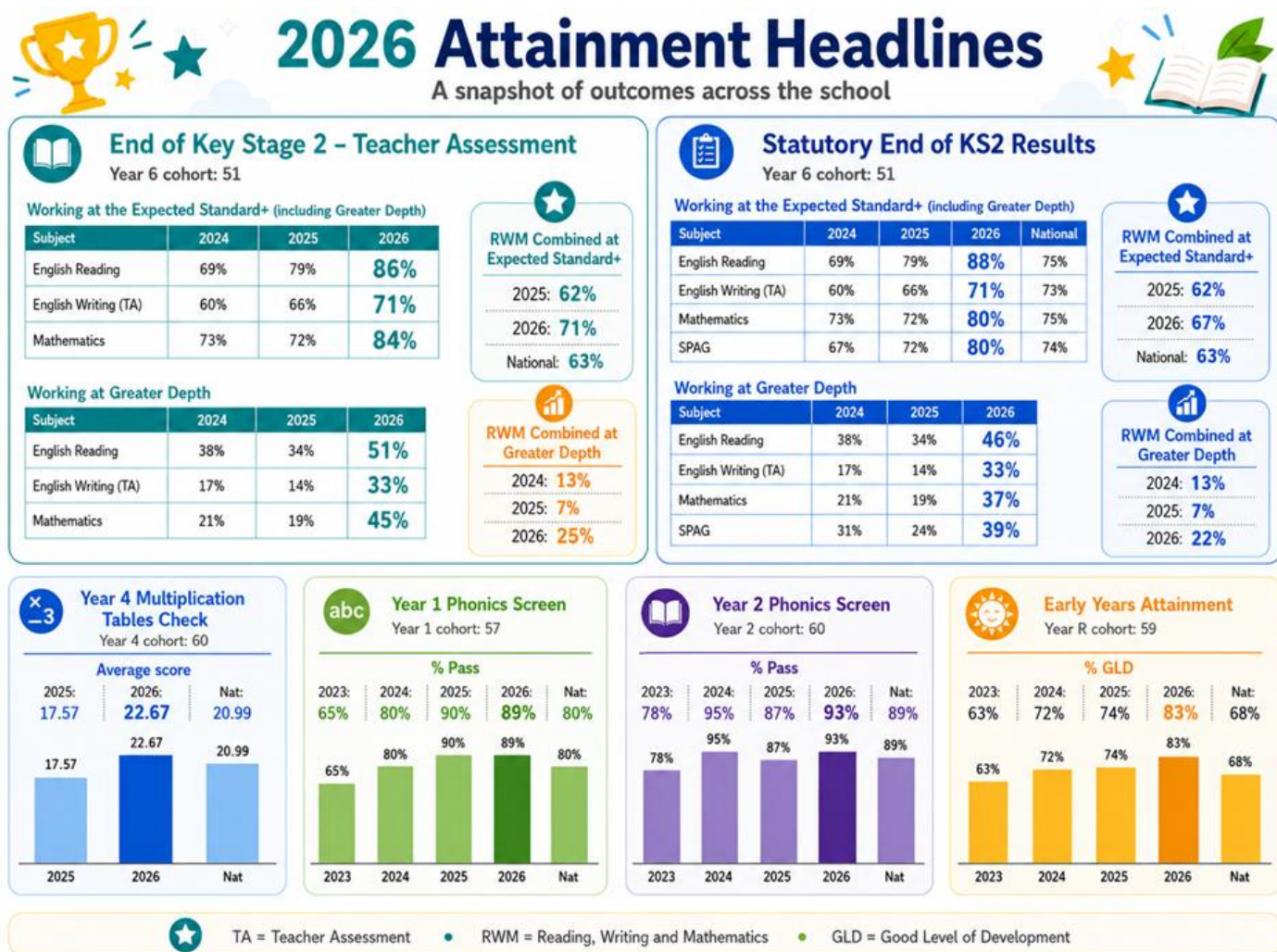
iRock Concert

What an amazing iRock concert we enjoyed last week! Our young musicians performed with confidence, energy and enthusiasm, showing just how many talented rockers we have among our SSMJ pupils. It has also been wonderful to see how much their skills are developing over time. With each concert, the quality of the performances continues to grow, reflecting the children's hard work, commitment and increasing confidence on stage. A big thank you to everyone who came along to support the children, especially in the heat. It was a fantastic celebration of their musical talent and all they have achieved. Rock on!



Celebrating This Year's Results

Last week, children brought home their end-of-year reports, summarising their progress and attainment across the academic year. Thank you for all the support you have given your child throughout the year — there is so much to celebrate.



We are incredibly proud of the children and all they have achieved. Across the school, outcomes are strong, with our Early Years Good Level of Development rising to 83%, Year 1 phonics at 89%, Year 2 cumulative phonics at 93%, and the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check average increasing to 22.67. Our Year 6 Teacher Assessments also show a very positive picture, with 86% working at the expected standard in reading, 71% in writing, 84% in maths, and 71% achieving the combined expected standard in reading, writing and maths. We were also delighted to see significant increases in the proportion of children working at greater depth.

While results are only one part of each child's story, they reflect the children's determination, the commitment of staff, and the support of families. There is much to celebrate and, as always, much to build on as we continue to help every child achieve their potential.

GOLD!

We are delighted to share that SSMJ has achieved the Gold School Games Mark this year! This award recognises our commitment to providing high-quality PE, sport and physical activity, as well as creating opportunities for children to participate, compete, develop their skills and enjoy being active.

A huge congratulations and thank you to Mr Guy, whose hard work, determination and dedication have driven this achievement. After working towards the award across two schools for ten years, this Gold award is especially well deserved! We are incredibly proud of the wide range of sporting opportunities available to our children and of everything they have achieved this year. Well done, Team SSMJ!



Thank You to Our Families

As we reach the end of another busy school year, we would like to thank all the families who took the time to share their feedback with us. Your kind words about our staff, our school community and the experiences we provide for the children have meant a great deal to us.

Earlier this year, governors invited parents, carers and children to share their views about the school. We were incredibly touched by the many positive comments received, including:



We are incredibly proud of Team SSMJ, and it is lovely to know that the care, hard work and commitment of our staff are recognised and appreciated by our families too.

Schools are strongest when families, children and staff work together. Thank you, as always, for your continued encouragement and support, and for being such an important part of our school community.



Charity Bake Sale Superstars

A huge well done to a wonderful group of Year 6 children who have been running a charity bake sale after school every Wednesday throughout the year. Thanks to their commitment, organisation and plenty of delicious treats, they have raised an incredible £390.67 so far this year for a range of charities, including WWF, Sobell House, the RSPCA and the Jane Goodall Institute.

Even more impressively, when combined with last year's fundraising, their total has now reached over £1,000 — a fantastic achievement! We are very proud of their kindness, determination and entrepreneurial spirit, and we would also like to say a big thank you to all their highly valued customers for supporting them so generously.

And Finally...

The following pages are a tribute to our wonderful Year 6 children — and include a very special tribute from Year 6 themselves. We are going to miss you enormously, but we cannot wait to welcome you back at the Winter Fair!

To all our families, thank you for your phenomenal support throughout this year. Together, we have achieved so much, and there is a great deal for us all to be proud of. There are also areas we are excited to continue developing as we look ahead to the new academic year.

We hope you all have a happy, restful and well-deserved summer break. Thank you for being such an important part of Team SSMJ. We are looking forward to welcoming families back on Thursday 3 September!

With best wishes,

Rex Spitt

and the St Mary & St John Team

Headteacher



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

1 Corinthians 16:14



Goodbye and Good Luck Year 6!

For their leavers service, some of our Year 6 children rewrote a song from their Year 4 play to reflect on their time at SSMJ. We were incredibly touched by their thoughtful words and the memories they chose to include. What a lovely tribute to our school, their teachers and friends, and all the experiences they have shared during their primary years.





Farewell, Year 6 – You Have Been Amazing!

What a year it has been, Year 6. As I think back over your final year at St Mary & St John, I can't help but smile at just how much you have grown, how much you have achieved, and how many brilliant memories you have given us along the way. You have brought so much energy, kindness, humour and personality to school life, and I hope you leave us knowing just how proud we are of you.

I wanted to share just a few of my favourite memories of you:

- The kindness you show to each other – your year group has changed and grown over time, but you have always made space for new people, helping them feel part of the class and part of our school family.
- Walking into a quiet classroom to find you all diligently working... only to discover the adult had popped to the photocopier! Honestly, that was a highlight of my career: seeing a whole group of children freely choosing to do the right thing, without being seen doing it. My work here is done.
- Being your singing alarm clock during Woodlands. I will sing until you are all fully awake... and I make no apology for it.
- Seeing you challenge yourselves and encourage one another during canoeing, caving and high ropes. You were brave, supportive and determined, and it was a privilege to watch you push yourselves further than you thought you could go.
- Capture the Flag...or is it bag?! – there is something brilliant about watching you take over a huge open space with plans, strategies, teamwork and just the right amount of competitive spirit!
- Bananagrams, Dobble, chess and draughts... for the record, I didn't ever LET you win, but you definitely outplayed me several times.
- Seeing you give up your break times to be Play Leaders and support our younger children. You have set such a wonderful example, and the younger children have looked up to you so much. They will really miss having you around.
- SATs week – a week that could have felt stressful, but somehow became full of determination, laughter, shouted encouragement at test papers, ice-cream, a bouncy castle and memories we definitely won't forget.
- Trying to convince you I'm 95... or is it 96? My memory's not what it used to be!

As you take your next steps beyond Mary & John, I hope you carry with you all the wonderful things you have shown us during your time here: kindness, courage, respect, curiosity and love. Keep choosing what is right, even when no one is watching. Keep looking out for others. Keep asking questions, taking on new challenges and believing that you are capable of far more than you realise.

It has been such a privilege to watch you grow into the young people you are becoming. Each of you has brought something special to our school, and we are so proud of the way you have learned, laughed, led, encouraged one another and shone in your own unique ways.

It feels only right to end with a quote from Harry Potter:

"It is our choices... that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities."

— Albus Dumbledore

Year 6, keep making choices that show the very best of who you are. You have been brilliant, and we will miss you so much.

With love,

Miss Stott and everyone at St Mary & St John School

x

Internet Safety

Gaming is a huge part of many young people's lives, but some online features can blur the line between gaming and gambling in ways that aren't always obvious.

The latest [#WakeUpWednesday](#) guide explains what skin betting is, why it's becoming more common, and how parents, carers and educators can help children stay safe online. By understanding how skin betting works, trusted adults can spot potential risks early and help young people make safer choices online. Read 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 SKIN BETTING

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

'Skin betting' is the term used when players gamble using virtual in-game items, such as weapon 'skins' or character cosmetics. Although these items appear purely decorative, some can hold significant real-world value. Research suggests that children as young as 13 have engaged in this type of betting, often on sites with limited age checks or safeguards, blurring the line between gaming and gambling.

UNREGULATED PLATFORMS

Skin gambling typically takes place on third-party websites that are not licensed or regulated. These platforms often lack age verification, making them easily accessible to children. By linking their gaming accounts, users can deposit skins, place bets, and withdraw winnings as cash or higher-value items – often without adults being aware these activities are happening.

SOCIAL STATUS PRESSURE

In games such as Counter Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) and Fortnite, rare skins can act as status symbols. Young players may feel the pressure to own high-value items to fit in with peers. This can lead them to take risks – such as using gambling sites – to obtain desirable skins, similar to how branded goods can influence behaviour offline.

REAL-WORLD VALUE

Skins may look like simple cosmetic upgrades to in-game items and characters, but some are worth hundreds or even thousands of pounds. They can be traded or sold on online marketplaces, meaning they function much like real money. When young people bet with skins, they are risking items of genuine financial value, even if no physical cash is exchanged directly.

LIMITED OVERSIGHT

Skin betting can take place both in-game and on external websites that parents and educators may not be familiar with. Because skin betting does not always resemble traditional gambling, it can go unnoticed until significant losses have occurred, in both items or money.

INFLUENCER PROMOTION

Some gaming influencers and streamers have promoted skin betting sites in their content. This can make the behaviour appear normal or even desirable, potentially encouraging younger audiences to engage in these activities without fully understanding the risks involved.

GATEWAY BEHAVIOURS

Skin betting mirrors many aspects of traditional gambling, including chance-based outcomes, reward systems and excitement. Early exposure to these mechanics can normalise betting behaviours before children and young people even reach legal gambling age. Research indicates that this may increase the likelihood of developing unhealthy habits later, particularly if early wins create a false sense of control or skill.

Advice for Parents & Educators

UNDERSTAND IN-GAME ITEMS

Familiarise yourself with the games young people are playing and learn whether they include tradable or sellable items. Titles like CS:GO and Rust are known for skin marketplaces, but similar systems are increasingly common across games.

LOOK FOR WARNING SIGNS

Be alert to changes in behaviour, such as secrecy around gaming, a strong focus on acquiring specific skins, or a sudden loss of in-game items. These could indicate involvement in skin gambling and provide an opportunity to start a conversation about it.

DISCUSS VALUE AND RISK

Help children and young people understand that cosmetic items like skins can carry real-world value. Explain that losing them through betting is comparable to losing money, therefore reinforcing the connection between in-game actions and real financial consequences.

USE CONTROLS AND SAFEGUARDS

Make use of parental controls and platform settings to restrict trading, purchases, and access to external websites. Where possible, disable marketplace features on games and monitor young people's account activity to reduce the risk of unauthorised transactions.

Meet Our Expert

Nathan David is Head of Foundation and Programme Lead for Esports Coaching at the University Campus of Esports.

Bubba Gaeddert is a Senior Lecturer and Head of Events at the University Campus of Esports, as well as President and Co-Founder of the Videogames and Esports Foundation.

[#WakeUpWednesday](#)

The National College

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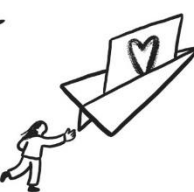
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Altruistic August Wellbeing Segment

As we head into the summer holidays, we are sharing the **Altruistic August Wellbeing Calendar** from Action for Happiness. This is last year's calendar, so the days are slightly out of sync, but it still offers some lovely ideas to use over the summer. This year's version should be available once August begins [here](#).

It is a great way to model to our children how we can put others first, thinking of others and showing kindness, generosity and care — something that can feel quite alien in today's society! We hope the calendar gives families some simple, positive ideas to try together.

Altruistic August 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				1 Set an intention to be kind to others (and yourself) this month	2 Send an uplifting message to someone you can't be with	3 Be kind and supportive to everyone you interact with
4 Ask someone how they feel and really listen to their reply	5 Spend time wishing for other people to be happy and well	6 Smile and be friendly to the people you see today	7 Give time to help a project or cause you care about	8 Make some tasty food for someone who will appreciate it	9 Thank someone you're grateful to and tell them why	10 Check in with someone who may be lonely or feeling anxious
11 Share an encouraging news story to inspire others	12 Contact a friend to let them know you're thinking of them	13 No plans day! Be kind to yourself so you can be kind to others too	14 Take an action to be kind to nature and care for our planet	15 If someone annoys you, be kind. Imagine how they may be feeling	16 Make a thoughtful gift as a surprise for someone	17 Be kind online. Share positive and supportive comments
18 Today do something to make life easier for someone else	19 Be thankful for your food and the people who made it possible	20 Look for the good in everyone you meet today	21 Donate unused items, clothes or food to help a local charity	22 Give people the gift of your full attention	23 Share an article, book or podcast you found helpful	24 Forgive someone who hurt you in the past
25 Give your time, energy or attention to help someone in need	26 Find a way to 'pay it forward' or support a good cause	27 Notice when someone is down and try to brighten their day	28 Have a friendly chat with someone you don't know very well	29 Do something kind to help in your local community	30 Give away something to help those who don't have as much as you	31 Share Action for Happiness with other people 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 26-27

2026					2027						
August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
1 Sa	1 Tu INSET	1 Th	1 Su	1 Tu	1 Fr New Year's Day	1 Mo 5	1 Mo 9	1 Th	1 Sa	1 Tu	1 Th
2 Su	2 We INSET	2 Fr	2 Mo Term 2 starts 45	2 We	2 Sa	2 Tu	2 Tu	2 Fr	2 Su	2 We	2 Fr
3 Mo 32	3 Th Term 1 starts	3 Sa	3 Tu	3 Th	3 Su	3 We	3 We	3 Sa	3 Mo Early May Bk. Hol.	3 Th	3 Sa
4 Tu	4 Fr	4 Su	4 We	4 Fr	4 Mo INSET 1	4 Th	4 Th	4 Su	4 Tu	4 Fr	4 Su
5 We	5 Sa	5 Mo	5 Th	5 Sa	5 Tu Term 3 starts	5 Fr	5 Fr	5 Mo 14	5 We	5 Sa	5 Mo 27
6 Th	6 Su	6 Tu	6 Fr	6 Su	6 We	6 Sa	6 Sa	6 Tu	6 Th	6 Su	6 Tu
7 Fr	7 Mo 37	7 We	7 Sa	7 Mo 50	7 Th	7 Su	7 Su	7 We	7 Fr	7 Mo INSET 23	7 We
8 Sa	8 Tu	8 Th	8 Su	8 Tu	8 Fr	8 Mo 6	8 Mo 10	8 Th	8 Sa	8 Tu Term 6 starts	8 Th
9 Su	9 We	9 Fr INSET	9 Mo 46	9 We	9 Sa	9 Tu	9 Tu	9 Fr	9 Su	9 We	9 Fr
10 Mo 33	10 Th	10 Sa	10 Tu	10 Th	10 Su	10 We	10 We	10 Sa	10 Mo KS2 SATS Week	10 Th	10 Sa
11 Tu	11 Fr	11 Su	11 We	11 Fr	11 Mo 2	11 Th	11 Th	11 Su	11 Tu	11 Fr	11 Su
12 We	12 Sa	12 Mo Parent Consultation 4	12 Th	12 Sa	12 Tu	12 Fr Term 3 ends	12 Fr	12 Mo Term 5 starts 15	12 We	12 Sa	12 Mo 28
13 Th	13 Su	13 Tu	13 Fr	13 Su	13 We	13 Sa	13 Sa	13 Tu	13 Th	13 Su	13 Tu
14 Fr	14 Mo 38	14 We Parent Consultation	14 Sa	14 Mo 51	14 Th	14 Su	14 Su	14 We	14 Fr	14 Mo SPORTS DAY 24	14 We
15 Sa	15 Tu	15 Th	15 Su	15 Tu	15 Fr	15 Mo 7	15 Mo Parent Consultation 11	15 Th	15 Sa	15 Tu	15 Th
16 Su	16 We	16 Fr	16 Mo 47	16 We	16 Sa	16 Tu	16 Tu	16 Fr	16 Su	16 We	16 Fr
17 Mo 34	17 Th	17 Sa	17 Tu	17 Th	17 Su	17 We	17 We Parent Consultation	17 Sa	17 Mo WOODLANDS	17 Th	17 Sa
18 Tu	18 Fr	18 Su	18 We	18 Fr Term 2 ends	18 Mo 3	18 Th	18 Th	18 Su	18 Tu	18 Fr	18 Su
19 We	19 Sa	19 Mo	19 Th	19 Sa	19 Tu	19 Fr	19 Fr	19 Mo 16	19 We	19 Sa	19 Mo 29
20 Th	20 Su	20 Tu	20 Fr	20 Su	20 We	20 Sa	20 Sa	20 Tu	20 Th	20 Su	20 Tu
21 Fr	21 Mo 39	21 We	21 Sa	21 Mo 52	21 Th	21 Su	21 Su	21 We	21 Fr	21 Mo 25	21 We Terms 6 ends
22 Sa	22 Tu	22 Th	22 Su	22 Tu	22 Fr	22 Mo Term 4 starts 8	22 Mo 12	22 Th	22 Sa	22 Tu	22 Th
23 Su	23 We	23 Fr Term 1 ends	23 Mo 48	23 We	23 Sa	23 Tu	23 Tu	23 Fr	23 Su	23 We	23 Fr
24 Mo 35	24 Th	24 Sa	24 Tu	24 Th	24 Su	24 We	24 We	24 Sa	24 Mo	24 Th	24 Sa
25 Tu	25 Fr	25 Su	25 We	25 Fr Christmas Day	25 Mo 4	25 Th	25 Th Term 4 ends	25 Su	25 Tu	25 Fr	25 Su
26 We	26 Sa	26 Mo	26 Th	26 Sa Boxing Day	26 Tu	26 Fr	26 Fr Good Friday	26 Mo 17	26 We	26 Sa	26 Mo 30
27 Th	27 Su	27 Tu	27 Fr	27 Su	27 We	27 Sa	27 Sa	27 Tu	27 Th	27 Su	27 Tu
28 Fr	28 Mo 40	28 We	28 Sa	28 Mo Substitute day 53	28 Th	28 Su	28 Su	28 We	28 Fr Term 5 ends	28 Mo 26	28 We
29 Sa	29 Tu	29 Th	29 Su	29 Tu	29 Fr		29 Mo Easter Monday 13	29 Th	29 Sa	29 Tu	29 Th
30 Su	30 We	30 Fr	30 Mo 49	30 We	30 Sa		30 Tu	30 Fr	30 Su	30 We	30 Fr
31 Mo August Bk. Hol. 36		31 Sa		31 Th	31 Su		31 We		31 Mo Spring Bk. Hol.		31 Sa

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

Term 1 2026-2027

Date	What's on
Tuesday 1 st and Wednesday 2 nd September	INSET for school staff Training days for school staff – school is not open to children
Thursday 3 rd September	WELCOME BACK! The 2026-2027 Academic Year begins for the children
Wednesday 16 th September	Meet the Teacher 3:30pm and 4:15pm (one presentation, repeated for families who have more than 1 child in school)
Monday 12 th and Wednesday 14 th October	Teacher Consultations Booking information will be shared in October
Friday 23 rd October	Term 1 ends for October half term: 3:20pm

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