



27th February 2026

## This Week at St Mary's...

It has been such a busy week of fun here at St Mary's. The children celebrated World Book Day in style by coming to school dressed in an array of costumes and characters. It was also great to see children bringing their egg creations, creating characters from hard-boiled eggs for our in school competition. The sports leaders have also had a busy week starting their new playtime rota of activities and the sun was shining on our first Nature Club of the year.

Whole school attendance this week...

96.9%

## This week's awards go to...

Aiyana  
Luna  
Faith  
Harriet P

Louie  
Harriet B-J  
Harriet L  
David

Edith



## Dates and Events

### March

- wb 7<sup>th</sup> - Science Week
- 10th - Parents Evening
- 13th - Mothers Day event
- 17th - Spring Disco
- 17<sup>th</sup> - Y3/4 Football
- 20th - Comic relief
- 20th - Rocksteady concert 2.30pm

## House Leaderboard



Oak

336



Birch

262



Pine

291



Willow

292



## School Dojo Leaderboard

Class 1: Emmelina

Class 2: Evanna

Class 3: Elliott O

Class 4: Alayna

# Celebrating wider achievements

We have had MANY achievements this week. Some Y4/5 girls took part in a football tournament aimed at giving girls an opportunity to enjoy the sport. We have also had achievements at Pony Club this week. **Photos to follow...**



All 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](https://nationalcollege.com).

## 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

# CREATIVE WAYS TO ENCOURAGE READING

Reading regularly has a life-long impact, yet recent data from the National Literacy Trust shows a decline in reading for pleasure among 8- to 18-year-olds, with just 32.7% enjoying it in 2020. Despite growing distractions, there are practical ways adults can spark a love of reading. This guide offers strategies and resources to help inspire young readers.

### 1 VALUE ALL READING

When we think about reading, it's very easy to picture a young person reading a fictional novel. However, reading is so much more than this. To help them understand why we read them from the news to the history story? Put down all reading and then discuss this with them. By doing this, you demonstrate the many ways we learn to reading.

### 2 WIDEN THE SELECTION

Once we know reading can be varied, we need to think about the selection of reading material they encounter. Visit a shop selling magazines, the library and a bookshop, and consider the range of material that is available within them. These consider how you might become a reading champion, so we young people have access to a wide and varied selection.

### 3 GIFT A BOOK

One simple way to encourage reading is to make books that special. Gift a book when you and choose it's something to be treasured. Whether it's as a reward or for a celebration like a birthday, let the young person choose a title or pick one you know they will enjoy. You could also include a personal note inside.

### 4 CONNECT WITH AUTHORS

Meeting authors can certainly spark an interest in their reading material. This could be a live event in a school/bookshop or by using the wealth of online material that is now available. Encourage young people to look for ways to connect with authors using free resources such as Authorly and Just Imagine's Children's Authors Live.

### 5 BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Access training about reading for pleasure to widen your understanding of this topic and, more importantly, how to develop it. Explore a wide range of free resources that can be found online. That means you know the best places you can go to inspire a love of reading in others.

### 6 TALK BOOKS

There are times when we need silence to read and focus on our book. However, we know that reading is a social experience, so we must also factor in discussion time. Reading the same book gives the reader an opportunity to share their thoughts and questions about it. Why not buy two copies of a book and read it together? Start the conversation.

### 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

As well as talking about the content of books, we can share what we are reading or have read recently. This can often act as a trigger for someone else to explore it. They often have you watched a film or series because someone else has recommended it? It's the same with books. If you know the young person well, you can tailor your recommendations and share why you think they'll enjoy it.

### 8 GO DIGITAL

With the rise in online digital material, we can enjoy books on the internet. However, it may bring a wealth of opportunities. Resources can add and enhance the reading experience for young people. They can read along with audiobooks, translate, and track their reading levels with resources like Readly and apps like BookBuddies for older children. Augmented reality books also bring books to life and offer a great way for engagement.

### 9 RECONNECT

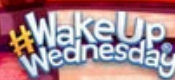
There can come a time when a love of reading seems to disappear. It does not mean it's gone forever. It generally means they have lost the connection. How do we get it back? Find the next piece of reading material that sparks their interest. The National Year of Reading books of the 20th century this year so it's a great theme. As children grow and change, so do their interests. A visit to the local library is a great way to inspire the reconnection.

### 10 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let them see you reading. If you make time to read, you send a strong message to children reading material. Show why you enjoy it. It is to relax, escape the world, learn something new or to be entertained. When children see reading as a normal and valued part of your daily life, they are more likely to adopt it themselves.

### Meet Our Expert

Carl Pattison is a literacy advisor and early reading expert at The National College. Through his programmes, he supports schools to enhance reading and writing. In addition to his independent work, he also works for a large secondary trust in the East Midlands as the strategic lead for their English and Literacy Excellence Centre.



# Online Safety

[To read the full version click here](#)

Some reminders...

WRAP-AROUND PROVISION:

Please ensure your child is booked into any breakfast or after-school club and that payments are made in advance.

A reminder that after-school club closes at the end of a full term. Therefore, there will be no after-school club at the end of the Spring term on 27th March.

SCHOOL CAR PARK:

A reminder that the school car park is strictly for staff and visitors. Parents/carers should not use the car park unless there is a clear and necessary reason, such as having a disability.

Our new playground equipment should be with us before the end of this half term. We are very excited to share the updates with you.

THANK YOU - We would also like to share a big thank you to parents who have donated some additional resources to the sports leaders this week as they have begun their new 'themed' timetable. We now have a circus box and a Friday fun box full of exciting games to play!

Thank you to the parent helpers who have brought the pallets onto school site this week, we are looking forward to using them in a variety of projects!



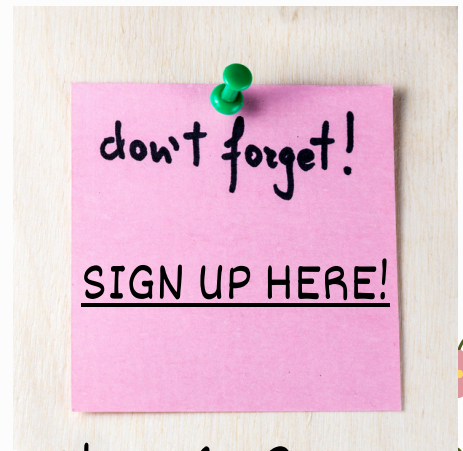


## Mothers Day event 13<sup>th</sup> March

You are invited to our mother's day event where the children will share a little song/poem/prayer with you before enjoying some activities together.

Please use the following form to book a place for this event. You are welcome to join one or more of the sessions or alternatively siblings can join each other on one time slot. Please let a member of staff know when you arrive.

[CLICK HERE](#)

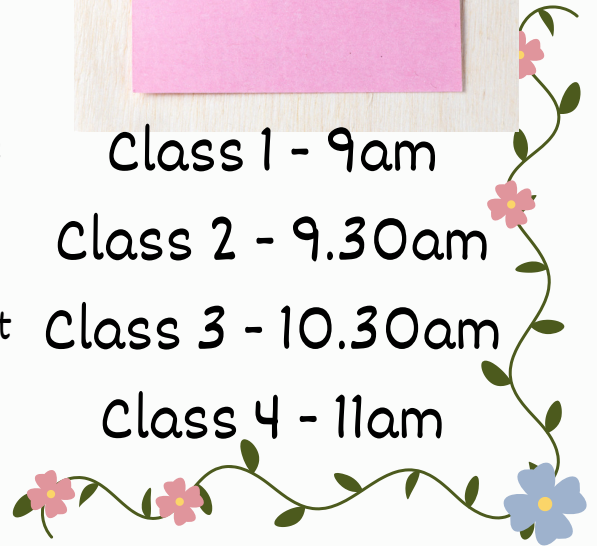


Class 1 - 9am

Class 2 - 9.30am

Class 3 - 10.30am

Class 4 - 11am





# Picture News

## TAKEHOME

2nd - 8th March



### Should school uniforms be the same for everyone?



## In the news this week

Brynteg School in Wales has said that from September, skirts will no longer be part of the school uniform. Instead, all children will wear trousers or shorts. The school says this will make the uniform more practical and fairer for everyone, but some parents and pupils have different opinions about the change. This announcement has added to discussions about school rules, fairness, and whether uniforms should be the same for all children.

### Things to talk about at home ...

- > Talk to someone older at home about your and their experiences of school uniform. Have they changed over time?
- > Share your thoughts on the changes Brynteg School is making. Do you feel they are positive changes?
- > If you could create your own uniform, what would it look like?

### Please note any interesting thoughts or comments

Share your thoughts and read the opinions of others

[www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss](http://www.picture-news.co.uk/discuss)



## Moonwalking On Ice!

At the 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy, one man became famous – without winning a medal! Mark Callan, a 61-year-old from Glasgow, in Scotland, is the Chief Ice Technician for the Winter Olympic Games. He was filmed sliding backwards across the rink in Cortina d'Ampezzo. People online said it looked like moonwalking – but he wasn't dancing! Mark was pebbling the ice, spraying tiny drops of water so the curling stones glide smoothly. Moving backwards helps him keep his balance on the slippery surface. Clips of his careful movements spread quickly online, and many people enjoyed watching his skill in action! Mark said, 'All I'm doing is my job. If it puts a smile on



**Pictured:** Mark pebbling the ice!  
**Source:** Anil Mungal/TCG.

people's faces, then I'm fine with that.' It's a reminder that every big sporting event needs a great team, on and off the ice! The 2026 Winter Paralympics begin this week from 6<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> March in Milan, Cortina d'Ampezzo and nearby mountain areas. Athletes with disabilities from all over the world will compete in sports such as para skiing, para ice hockey, and wheelchair curling.  
**What have you done that made others smile?**

## Pikachu Sets a Record

A famous YouTuber and wrestler, called Logan Paul, has sold one of the world's rarest Pokémon cards. The rare Pikachu card was made in 1998. Only about 40 are known to exist, and this one is in almost perfect condition. It sold for around £12 million (enough to buy 20 million loaves of bread!) and set a Guinness World Record for the most expensive trading card ever sold. Collectors say the card is important for another reason. Many people collect and trade



**Pictured:** The rare Pikachu card!  
**Source:** Trophy Case Cards.

Pokémon cards today, sharing them with friends and learning how to look after them. For fans, these cards are not just paper – they hold memories, stories, and friendships. Whether it is Pokémon cards, football stickers, or favourite books, collections can bring people together and remind us that small things can mean a lot!

**What do you think – is value always about money?**

### Do gladiators make good role models?



Yes, they show us that you can be strong, powerful, respectful and kind at the same time.  
**Charlie**

Let us know what you think about this week's news



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## School Champions for Red Nose Day

Comic Relief has announced its first ever Red Nose Day school champions! Do you recognise them? They are teacher and social media sensation, Kit Brown, and children's TV star, Maddie Moate. The presenters have been tasked with creating content to support schools 'to turn silly moments into serious goodness' on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March. Kit said, 'I'm a huge advocate for engaging the younger generation



by making learning fun and relatable. When you bring what pupils already love into the classroom, like their favourite pop songs, it instantly lifts the energy, and you see a big shift in the room.' Maddie added, 'Growing up, Red Nose Day felt like the biggest event at school, from finding out what the new Red Nose design would be, to having a whole day of non-uniform, silly fun. I can't wait to see all the seriously silly and creative things schools come up with this Red Nose Day!' **Is your school getting involved in Red Nose Day?**



**Pictured:** School Champions for Red Nose Day Kit Brown and Maddie Moate.  
**Source:** Maddie Moate on Facebook.

## Wool-come to the World!

Once hailed as the world's loneliest sheep, Fiona, the Scotch Mule-Charollais cross, has given birth to two healthy little lambs at a farm in Dumfries. The sheep lived on her own for years, stranded at the foot of cliffs on the Cromarty Firth, in the Scottish Highlands. Rescued and sheared by local farmers in 2023, she went to live at a farm park. Here, she was able to rest and recover until this year, when she became healthy enough to start her own family. Dalscone Farm, a visitor attraction, announced the news on social media, saying, 'The World's Loneliest Sheep is lonely no more! 🐏❤️ We are beyond thrilled to introduce Fiona's two newest arrivals, born just last night! Fiona has officially traded her title for "World's Best



**Pictured:** Fiona and her twin lambs.  
**Source:** Dalscone Farm on Facebook.

Mum," and she is taking to her new role amazingly well. We couldn't be prouder of her and these two healthy little lambs. Welcome to the world, little ones! The farm is considering names for the lambs who will stay with Fiona; there is a boy and a girl. As their mum is named after the princess from the Shrek film series, the names of the ogre's children – named Fergus, Farkle, and Felicia – are in the running!  
**What do you think Fiona's lambs could be called?**  
**Do you know any facts about sheep and lambs?**

### Do gladiators make good role models?



I don't think that just because someone is physically fit, it means they are good role models – mental and emotional strength are just as important.  
**Caitlin**

Let us know what you think about this week's news



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