



NEWSLETTER



St Mary's R C Primary School
Haslingden
Tel: 01706 214747
Headteacher: Miss D McNicoll

4th September 2026

Dear Parents,

I hope everyone has had a wonderful summer holiday and a special 'Welcome' to our new reception parents, who are receiving this weekly newsletter for the first time today! The children seem to be really excited to be back and have quickly settled into their new classes.

As this is the first newsletter of the year, it is longer than usual as it contains some important reminders for everybody (and important info for our new parents).

Parking

Just to inform new parents, we have a one way system to ease congestion each morning and after school! Please drive into Lime Road from Hillside Road and turn right at Meadows Avenue and right again at the end of Meadows Avenue to get back onto Hillside Road.

Parents are reminded not to park on the yellow zig-zags outside the school gates or to block driveways of any houses on the roads local to the school. Please do not also park on pavements or directly opposite another car on Lime Road as it's difficult then for other cars to pass and for staff to drive into school.



Parents Information meetings

As always at the start of a new school year, we would like to invite you to a series of 'back to school parent meetings' where you can meet individually with your child's class teacher to discuss information regarding: class routines, curriculum targets, assessment procedures for your child, behaviour expectations, how you can support your child at home etc. These take place later on in this half term time but we are providing you with the dates in advance for work arrangements etc.

A Parent App message will be sent nearer the dates for you to choose an appointment time.

The meetings will take place week on the following dates :

Reception Class : Wednesday 14th October

Year 1 : Monday 12th October

Year 2 : Thursday 15th October

Class 3 : Thursday 15th October

Class 4: Tuesday 13th October

Class 5 : Wednesday 14th October

In addition to these meetings we also hold a general information meeting for parents of children in reception and Year 6 classes at the beginning of the school year. These will take place on the following dates :

Reception Class: Wednesday 23rd September 3.35pm - 4pm

Year 6: Tuesday 15th September 5.30-6.15pm

School uniform

This weekend, please check that your child's name is clearly written in school uniform, particularly sweatshirts. Last term, we had a lot of lost property in school, with no names written inside and therefore impossible to reunite with the owner!

Primary and Secondary school places

It seems like we have just returned to school but already Lancashire have sent out information for parents to apply online for school places for children starting school in September 2027 and we already have some online requests for places!

From 1st September, parents are able to apply for primary school places for September 2027. This year we will be having an open day on **Tuesday 13th October from 1.30pm until 5.00pm.** Please share this information with anyone who you think would be interested in visiting our lovely school. This year, we have various time slots for prospective parents to visit and these can be booked via the school office.

Parents of children in year 6 can also apply online for their secondary school place. To do this, visit: www.lancashire.gov.uk/schools (or telephone 01254 220718)

The closing dates for applications for September 2026 are-

Secondary: 31st October 2026

Primary: 15th January 2027

Packed lunches

We have always asked parents to provide packed lunches are of a similar healthy standard to school meals and after requests, we provided a guidelines sheet to help both themselves (and the children) prepare a healthy packed lunch.

A copy is also attached to this newsletter.

Items that are not allowed are:

- Chocolate/ chocolate spread
- Biscuits
- Cakes

(Replace these with fresh or dried fruit)

- Nuts (to safeguard those with allergies)
- Crisps
- Fizzy drinks / cordial (only water/ milk instead)

Please also limit high fat foods e.g. sausages/ pies /pasties to only once a week as a treat.

As you can see from the guidelines, we will have a 'Treat Friday' each week.

We recognise that it can sometimes be confusing to see what some children are allowed to eat if they buy a school lunch compared with packed lunches so I would like to clarify this further. School kitchens have to adhere to very strict nutritional guidelines about what can and cannot be included in school meals. This includes any salt, sugar and saturated fats. All menus compiled by Lancashire must meet these standards and all recipes are scrutinised for their nutritional content. This means that although the children will sometimes have puddings or pizza for example, these

are sourced and cooked in a healthier way and are presented as part of a balanced menu over the week.

Playtime Snacks

When the children are in the infants, they are provided with a piece of fruit or a vegetable for their snack which means that their choice is a healthy one. We want to continue this so we ask all the children to bring either a piece of fruit, vegetables, bread sticks etc.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND CRISPS, CHOCOLATE BARS OR SWEETS.

School lunches

A reminder that the price of school lunches has risen to £3.00 per day from September. Infant lunches are still at no cost due to the Universal free school meal offer.

PE

Please ensure the children have their PE kits (including trainers) in school EVERY day as the children will be participating in lots of outdoor PE activities throughout the year as well as their weekly 2 PE sessions (including the 'Daily Mile'). As the weather gets colder, they may also need a sweatshirt and some jogging pants.

If your child wears earrings, they need to not wear them on the days they have PE (or bring plasters from home to cover each ear during the session). Please also ensure the children are wearing no jewellery for school.

Forest School

We are really blessed to have such a wonderful Forest School area within our grounds and Mrs Maddock who is Level 3 trained and plans such wonderful activities and exploration for the children. To ensure that all children have an opportunity to attend Forest School across the academic year, we will rotate which classes have sessions. For all of Autumn and Spring term, children in Reception will have Forest School on a Tuesday (their first session will be Tuesday 15th September). Starting next week and up until October half-term, children in Year 1 will have Forest School on a Thursday. Starting next week and up until Christmas, children in class 4 will have Forest School on a Friday. After October half term and up until Christmas, the Y1 session on a Thursday will then become the session children in Y2 will attend. Y1 and Y2 will alternate in Spring term also. In Spring term, class 3 will attend Forest School on a Friday and across Spring/ Summer term, children in Y6 will access Forest School. Parentapps will be sent in advance to notify you of your child's Forest School Day and will include all necessary information.

Sunday's Gospel Reading

This Sunday's Gospel Reading is from Matthew and the theme is 'What should we do when we fall out with people'? Is it right to try and get our own back? In the Gospel, Jesus explains to his disciples the best way to respond. Sr Thérèse then helps us to reflect upon Jesus' words and how choosing to forgive others is a strength. We know that forgiveness can be difficult, but with Jesus to help and guide us, we can choose forgiveness even when it's hard.

Stars of the week

We will start to celebrate our first REACH award celebration assembly next Friday at 2.30pm. A reminder that parents/grandparents are welcome to join us for it!

Prayers

Please keep both Mrs Rumsam and Mrs Parkinson in your prayers. Both sadly lost their fathers over the summer break.

Finally, this week marks 20 years since I was appointed Headteacher of St Mary's! What an incredible journey it's been and where has that time gone?

This academic year, I will only be on site Monday to Wednesday. On Thursday and Friday, please direct any queries or concerns to Miss Fearn, who continues as head of school on those days.

Yours sincerely

Miss D McNicoll

Healthy Lunchbox and Snack Guide

The Pick & Mix 1-6 poster provides a range of ideas and practical tips to inspire families to create healthy school lunchboxes based on the 'Eatwell Plate'

For a healthy lunchbox pick & mix something from each food group 1 - 6!



Pick and mix one tasty option from each of the five core food groups to create a healthy lunchbox every day:

1. **Fruit** (e.g. fresh, frozen, pureed and canned in natural juice)
2. **Vegetables, legumes and beans**
3. **Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives**
4. **Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans**
5. **Grain (cereal) foods**
6. **Plain water**

At St Mary's RC Primary School, we aim to educate our children with the skills, knowledge and understanding to enable them to make informed healthy lifestyle choices. To do that effectively we need to work in partnership with parents and carers in securing the best for every child.

Aims

- To ensure children have a suitable midday meal that sustains and prepares them for the afternoon learning.
- To provide a safe, healthy and appealing eating environment for pupils bringing in packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is available at all times.
- To help children develop an understanding of healthy eating.
- To promote the School Food Trust guidelines and National Standards for healthier eating.
- To support parents and carers in providing a healthy packed lunch that meets the same standards as food provided in school dinners and abide by the regulations of the British Nutrition Foundation. Guidelines

Guidelines

The following guidelines for lunchbox contents comes from the statutory guidelines for school provided meals. This ensures equality of entitlement for all children. The recommended contents of a healthy lunch box are:

- A good portion of starchy food e.g. bread, crackers, pasta or rice salad.
- Plenty of fruit and vegetables e.g. an apple, orange, banana, carrot sticks, small box of raisins or any other fruit or vegetable.
- A portion of milk or dairy food e.g. yoghurt.
- A drink e.g. a small carton of milk, juice, or a bottle of water.

Packed lunches should not include:

- Chocolate bars, chocolate spread, sweets or crisps
- Fizzy drinks, cordial or juice

Each Friday, we will be having '**Treat Friday**' where the children can bring in a treat such as one small biscuit or cake e.g. penguin, club, cake bar, small fairy cake etc.

Healthy Snacks

All children in Reception and KS1 receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable everyday as part of the Government's School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. As children move up into KS2, if they wish to have a break time snack, they may bring in something from home. Healthy snacks can include such items as: -

- Fruit

- Vegetables
- Cereal bars (without chocolate or nuts)
- Crackers/bread roll/breadsticks
- Rice Cakes etc

Some cereal bars and breakfast biscuits have very high sugar levels, so please try and choose healthier options where possible.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD WITH CRISPS, CHOCOLATE BARS OR SWEETS

Parents can continue to purchase toast from school (a piece of fruit will also be served with this from next week).

Communication of the Healthy Lunchbox and Snack Guide:

The guide will be available on the school's website. The guide will be shared regularly with children through PSHE and Science lessons as well as assemblies.

The school will use opportunities such as new parents' meetings and Healthy Lifestyle events to promote these guidelines as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating. All school staff, including, teaching, pastoral, midday and catering staff, will be informed of this guide and will support its implementation.

Please note St Mary's is a nut free school, so please ensure that children do not bring any nuts, nut products or spreads that may contain nuts, (eg Nutella, chocolate spread, peanut butter) into school.

Monitoring and evaluation of the Healthy Lunchbox and Snack Guide:

We fully respect individual parents' food choices for their children and understand that there are many different needs and tastes. However, if lunchbox contents and/or KS2 snacks regularly fall short of the expectations in this guide, we will communicate this to parents. We want to work with parents to educate our children about healthy dietary choices so that the children, through the understanding of a balanced diet, will develop a greater appreciation of a healthy lifestyle.

GOSPEL

Matthew 18: 15-20

At that time: Jesus said to his disciples, 'If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.'

WORD OF THE WEEK

ENCOUNTER

PRAYER

Write a short prayer asking Jesus to help you be a person of forgiveness.

FIND + MEMORISE

*Blessed are the _____,
for they will be called children of God.*

Matthew 5:9



Watch this
week's episodes



WONDER QUESTIONS

Why do you think Jesus wants us to let go of grudges and unforgiveness?

As you try to forgive, how can it change things if you realise that Jesus is with you?