# Weekly Newsletter
# Friday 11th September 2026

## St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Glenure Road, Eltham. SE9 1UF
020 8850 7835

governors@stmaryseltham.org
office@stmaryseltham.org

**Twitter:** @stmaryseltham
**Visit us online at** www.stmaryrc.org.uk

### MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

What a wonderful first full week back at St Mary's! I have been so happy to see our school once again filled with enthusiasm, joy and the most beautiful smiles as we have kick-started another exciting year together.

One of my highlights this week was leading our whole-school assembly on inclusion and belonging. We reflected together on what it means to make sure everyone feels that they belong at St Mary's and that every member of our community is valued and celebrated for who they are. I was incredibly proud of the children, who demonstrated the values of our school through their thoughtful and meaningful answers. They showed such a wonderful understanding of how our words, actions and choices can help others to feel welcomed, included and loved.

It has also been a particularly special week for our youngest children. On Friday, our Nursery children enjoyed their first full day with us, and they have settled in so wonderfully. I am so excited to have them as part of our St Mary's family and cannot wait to watch them grow, learn and flourish throughout the year.

It was also lovely to see so many of our parents and children on Thursday, meeting teachers, visiting classrooms and sharing in the excitement of the new school year. Building those strong relationships between home and school is such an important part of what makes the St Mary's community a wonderful place to belong.

Thank you to our children, families and staff for such a positive start to the year. I hope you all have a fabulous weekend filled with plenty of rest, fun and special time with your families.

Kind regards,

Miss Brophy
Deputy Headteacher

### WEEK BEGINNING 14th SEPTEMBER

**Tuesday 15th September**
Y6 Mass. 10am. Christchurch

Transition meeting for Y6 parents and carers. 6pm. Gym hall.

### FIRST HOLY COMMUNION PROGRAMME AT CHRISTCHURCH

Please note that the application portal for the children receiving First Holy Communion, in Christchurch, in 2027 is now open. Please click on the link below to access the information.

Fr John has asked that parents and carers ensure that they have registered their child as the lessons will be starting soon.

If you have a child in Y4, Y5 or Y6 that has not received the sacrament of Holy Communion, please contact Christchurch as the children would be welcome to take part in the course.

Please phone the parish office for more information (020 8850 1666)

https://www.christchurcheltham.org.uk/First-Holy-Communion-Courses/

**SCHOOL VALUES: FAITH, MERCY, TRUTH, RESPECT, RESILIENCE, LOVE**

## HARVEST FESTIVAL

Our annual Harvest Festival is taking place on Tuesday 22nd September.

As part of Harvest Festival every year, St Mary's collects food/toiletry items for a charity. We will support a food charity that the Sisters of Mercy work closely with.

Please try to donate, even just one item. Food must be non-perishable, sealed and in date e.g., tinned foods, rice, pasta tea, coffee, herbs and spices.

These items can be dropped to the main office from Monday 14th September or brought straight to class.

Many thanks for your support.

## Y6 SECONDARY TRANSITION MEETING

We would like parents of children in Y6 to attend a meeting on Tuesday 15th September at 6pm in the gym hall, to discuss the transition to secondary school and the PGL residential trip. Children are invited to attend with their parents.

Mr Sharp, Headteacher from St Thomas More Comprehensive, will be in attendance to explain the secondary application process for St Thomas More.

**Signing School Forms:**

Fr John will be signing school supplementary forms on the following dates:

Fridays 3.00pm – 5.00pm
(25th Sep, 3rd Oct, 9th Oct, 16th Oct)

Saturdays 3.00pm - 5.00pm
(10th Oct, 17th Oct, 23rd Oct)

## BLACKHEATH RUGBY

The school have partnered with Blackheath Rugby Club again this year to provide coaching sessions in school with our Y3-Y6 children.

This will culminate in a rugby festival where children will get the opportunity to compete against other schools, allowing our children to play competitive sport and engage with our local community.

## PUPIL PREMIUM

**IMPORTANT REMINDER**

Please refer to the email sent this week regarding the changes to Pupil Premium.

If you think your child may be eligible, we ask that you reapply, even if you have applied in the past. This will help to make sure we have the most up-to-date information and that your child receives any support they are entitled to.

If you have any questions or need any help with the application, please contact the school office.

## NUT-FREE LUNCHES

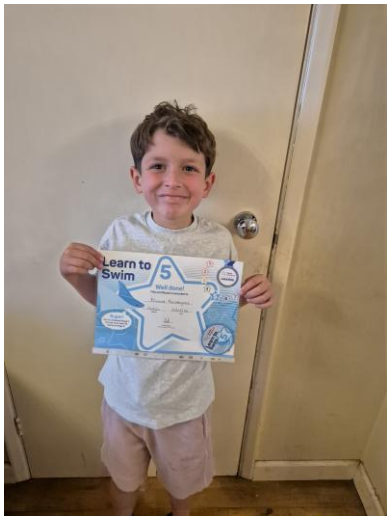
Please be reminded that nuts must not be included in children's lunch bags or snacks.

We have children in school with serious nut allergies, so please help us to keep everyone safe by checking lunch boxes carefully before sending them into school.

Thank you for your support and understanding.

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

Elwood Prendergast, 2E, recently completed his stage 5 in swimming and is currently working towards stage 6! This is a great achievement Elwood…well done!




Sisters Aoife (3H) and Fiona Hannon (Reception) braved the cold Irish Sea during the Summer holidays and completed the Water Safety Ireland swim week in Kilmore Quay, Co Wexford, Ireland.

Very well done girls! Look at that beautiful blue sky!

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are looking for some parent volunteers to help run our school Bookshop on Wednesday afternoons.

Our Bookshop is open every Wednesday afternoon for the Infant children. Each week, the children bring in a little money, which they save up until they have enough to choose a book of their own. The children enjoy being able to look at the books and make their own choice, and it is a lovely way of encouraging a love of reading.

We would like to have a few parents/carers who are able to help us with the Bookshop each week. This would involve helping the children choose their books, taking payments and keeping the Bookshop organised.

If we have a small team of volunteers, we can set up a rota, meaning you would only need to help every few weeks rather than every Wednesday.

Please note that volunteers will need to have the appropriate DBS check completed before they can volunteer in school. The office team will be able to provide you with more information about this and explain what you need to do.

If you think this is something you would enjoy helping with, please speak to the main office.

## LITERACY COMPETITIONS

Eltham Library is running a Story Writing Competition as part of this year's Elthamread.

The competition is open to children aged 8–11, who are invited to write or type their own 400–500 word story on the theme 'Where I Live'.

Children can make their story as factual or creative as they like, as long as it is written in a story format. This is a lovely opportunity for children to get creative and share their ideas about the place they live.

To enter, children must have a library card. Entries can be handed in at the Eltham Library desk by Wednesday 30 September.

Please see the attached poster for further details.

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BBC 500 Words is the UK's largest story-writing competition for 5-11 year-olds. This year, entries open from Tuesday 29th September and will close at 9pm, Friday 6th November.

The competition celebrates children's creativity and imagination, encouraging children from across the UK to create an original story in 500 words or fewer.

There are two age categories: 5 - 7 and 8 - 11 year-olds.

Spelling, punctuation and grammar are not marked - as has always been the case for 500 Words. This year it is all about our writers' brilliant creativity!

The bronze, silver and gold winners in each age category will be revealed by in early March 2027. Not only are there brilliant prizes to be won, but winning stories will also be read by celebrities on the BBC.

Please encourage your child to enter. These are great competitions and will give your child great confidence knowing that they have created something.

## PA NEWS

The PA are looking forward to the following upcoming events this Autumn term. Please make a note of the following dates:

**PA AGM -** Wednesday 30th September at 7:30pm at St Mary's. All parents and carers are welcome to come along to the meeting to find out more about what the Parents Association does and to share any ideas or suggestions. All parents and carers are invited to attend.

**Fireworks Night** - Friday 6th November. 6.30pm on site at St Mary's

**Wreath Making -** Friday 27th November. Gym Hall

More details to follow about these events**.**

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