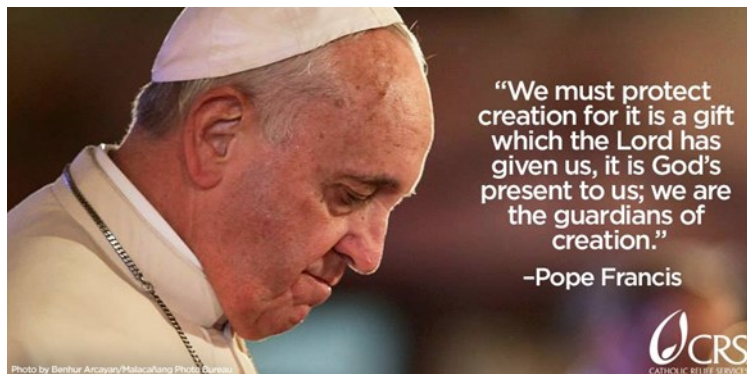


Dear parents/carers,

Welcome back to a new half term. The children have all come back to school with great enthusiasm and a great attitude to learning, which is as always great to see.

Today we welcomed God's Planet theatre for a whole day retreat, linked to the Catholic Social Teaching Principle, Stewardship of God's Creation. It has been a great day which has been thoroughly enjoyed by all. Please ask your children to tell you all about it!



On Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November we begin our anti-bullying week which begins very aptly on World Kindness Day. The national theme for the week this year is 'Make a Noise about Bullying'. You will be receiving further communication about how we are marking this week as a school. We have also included in the messenger a '14 ways you can share kindness online' poster to support discussion with your children.

On 21st November we will be holding our prospective parents' session for the foundation stage at 2pm and 6pm. If your child will be 3 years old on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024, the applications can be made online via this link [School admissions | Stoke-on-Trent](#). Similarly, the application process for the reception class is now open – this is for children who will be 4 on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024. Applications for the reception class need to be made directly through the authority and this closes on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

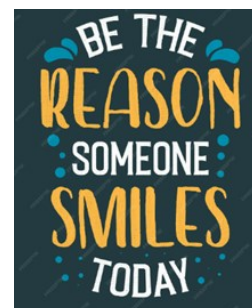
I do wish you all a lovely weekend!

Mrs Rathbone

In this week's Gospel Jesus tells the story of the 10 bridesmaids and how important it is to be wise. Wisdom is a gift from God which helps us to see things more clearly and make the right choices.

'Wisdom is kind and considerate; it is full of compassion and shows itself by doing good. '

St James



Archdiocese of Birmingham  
St Mary's Catholic Academy  
**Principal: Mrs S Rathbone**  
Ford Green Road, Norton, Stoke - on - Trent,  
Staffordshire, ST6 8EZ  
Tel: 01782 234820  
E-mail: [office@stmarysnewman.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarysnewman.co.uk)  
Website: <http://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk>





# ANNOUNCEMENTS



Well done to all of the children who received awards, we are very proud of you

	Head Teachers Award	Readers Award	Maths Award	Goldfinch Award
Nursery	Annabelle	Oscar	Elisa	Evalyn
Reception	James	Elijah	Sofia	Ralf
Year 1	Nela	Olivia	Rocco	Rosa
Year 2	Naeto	Elliot	Smith	Lydia
Year 3	Mikolaj	Jenson C-H	Dylan	Madaleine
Year 4	Teddy	Leah	Charlie M	Lola
Year 5	George	Lewis	Ava	Chimamanda
Year 6	George	Abby	Fraser	Eva

## Our Voice counts....



We would like to introduce our School Council for this academic year.....

Year 2 - Lydia & Aaron  
 Year 3 - Jenson & Ruby  
 Year 4 - Luca & Aubree  
 Year 5 - Luca & Esther  
 Year 6 - Dominic, Eve, Fraser, Sophia, Olivia  
 Sutton & Justice Jacobs

This term's curriculum is uploaded to your child's class page.

Please click on the link below which will take you through to our website.

<https://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk/page/?title=Class+Pages&pid=52>



To support anti-bullying week we are asking all children to come to school in odd socks on Monday 13th November



Last month our Year 5/6 represented St Mary's at the first Girls football tournament within the collegiate. What a great start to the year. Well done girls we are super proud!





## Important Information

**School Hours:** Monday - Friday Gates Open at 08:30am

**NEW Start Times:**

8.40-8.50am Nursery & Reception

8.40 KS1

8.50 KS2

**NEW Finish Times:**

3.20pm

3.10pm

3.20pm



**PLEASE UPDATE YOUR  
CONTACT DETAILS**

If you have recently moved house or changed phone numbers please ensure the school office are updated for our records.

Thank you.

### If your child is absence from school

Please telephone the school on 01782 234820,  
or email [office@stmarysnewman.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarysnewman.co.uk) no later than 9.30am

Please download the free app for Studybugs. You can inform the school whenever your child/ren are unwell and unable to attend school.

**Studybugs**

## DAILY LATENESS EQUATES TO...



# THINK BEFORE YOU PARK

**BE CONSIDERATE TO OUR NEIGHBOURS  
YOU COULD ENDANGER A CHILD'S LIFE**





We raised £337.68 from ticket sales and snack purchased on the night.  
Thank you to everyone for their support.



This half term Year 4 and Year 6 will take part.

Please ensure appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear for wet/cold weather is brought into school every Wednesday.

### Reminder to Nursery parents

You can now apply for your child's Reception place for September 2024.



We are asking for your support to donate filled boxes, Please use a medium size shoebox, which should be wrapped in Christmas paper, or actual Operation Christmas Child boxes are available for you to collect from the school office, from today.

The appeal asks for the following small items, which will fit into the boxes to support this appeal:

- Hats
- Hair bobbles and clips
- Toothbrushes
- Crayons
- Small colouring books
- Gloves
- Small toiletries

*\*It would be lovely to add a letter or a Christmas card too!*

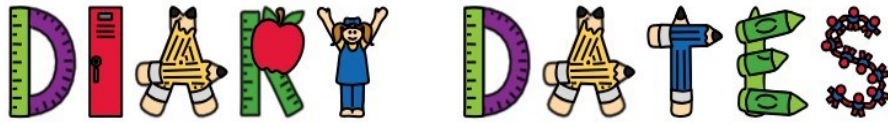
Please bring in your boxes no later than Wednesday 15th November. Thank you for your continued support



Tickets go on sale on Monday 13th November for this years EYFS and KS1 nativity performance.

Times of the performances are being sent home today.

**We raised £221.45 on our non uniform day last month.**  
**All funds raised will go to CAFOD for the Israeli-Palestinian Crisis appeal.**  
**Thank you for your prayers, continued support and generosity.**



## Autumn Term 2023

Date	Event
Tuesday 7th November	Y5 Swimming (x5 weeks)
Thursday 9th November	Academy Photographers - Individual, family, siblings
Thursday 16th November	Maths Afternoon and evening 9-10am & 6-7pm
Friday 17th November	Rec - Year 6 Watch me learn 9am (Maths)
Tuesday 21st November	Foundation Stage prospective parents session 2pm & 5.30pm
Friday 24th November	Nursery Watch me learn 10.15am (Maths)
Tuesday 28th November	City Songbirds concert
Tuesday 12th December	Christmas Concerts Foundation stage 2pm and KS1 6pm
<b>Wednesday 13th December</b>	<b>Christmas Concerts KS1 2pm and Foundation stage 5.30pm</b>
Tuesday 19th December	Christmas Dinner day
Friday 22nd December	Carol Concert KS2 Nativity in church
Friday 22nd December	School Closes

Celebration Assemblies can be found on our website on our calendar tab:

<https://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk/calendar/?calid=1&pid=8&viewid=1>



### Term Dates

(See above for Autumn term dates)

### SPRING TERM

School closed to pupils—Inset day Monday 8th January

School opens to pupils on Tuesday 9th January

**Half Term Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February**

School opens to pupils Monday 19th February

School Closes Friday 22nd March



We have pre-loved uniform available .  
All items are priced at £1; please click on the link below

<https://www.uniformd.co.uk/stmarys-academy>

If you would like to donate any pre-loved uniform we are only accepting School Logo items;

Sweatshirt, cardigan, jumper, tie  
We kindly ask that the items are clean and in good condition.

Be Bright Be Seen - At this time of year, it's important to Be Bright and Be Seen when you are out and about near roads.

**BE BRIGHT** – wear fluorescent or brightly coloured clothing when walking to and from school – it shows up well in daylight and at dusk.

**REFLECTIVE** – When it's dark outside, wear reflective clothing to be seen in car headlights. Reflective vests, sashes or wristbands work well.

**IMPROVE** – improve your visibility with accessories, clip on reflectors, armbands and stickers added to your coat or bag are a great way to improve your visibility.

**GREEN CROSS CODE** – always choose routes and crossing places that are well lit and remember to use the Green Cross Code.

**HEADLIGHTS** – if you like to cycle, it's the law to have clean and working headlights on your bike at night (white at the front, red at the back) as well as a rear reflector. It's good to fit spoke reflectors too.



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

# ROBLOX

AGE RATING  
PEGI  
7

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Roblox is one of the most popular video games on the market. By 2020, the game's makers were claiming that more than half of children in the USA play it. As a 'sandbox' title, Roblox offers a huge amount of creative freedom: it lets players create their own gaming experiences with the Roblox Studio to build custom levels and games, which can then be shared with other players online. Roblox fosters creative thinking and enjoys a robust online community of fans.

## CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

Roblox encourages players to communicate online (including a group chat facility). This could expose children to risks such as scammers, online predators, harassment, griefers and more. The in-game chat has some filters, but isn't perfect: players can still send harmful messages to others – such as general hostility – while predators can reach out to children directly.

## PUBLIC SERVERS

Roblox has private or VIP servers which allow people to play exclusively with their friends, but this costs money. Most Roblox players will instead be on public servers that anyone can join. Servers can host games which focus on all kinds of aspects, including direct player interaction. Some games and servers, therefore, will put children more at risk of contact from strangers than others.

## ONLINE DATERS

These are also called 'ODers' and are quite common in Roblox. An ODER is an individual who joins a game with the intention of finding someone to date online – and eventually meet in person. Such online dating is against the Roblox community guidelines, but this usually doesn't deter ODERs. Some player-built Roblox game worlds have even been designed with online dating specifically in mind.

## IN-APP PURCHASES

Roblox is actually free to download and play, but bear in mind that there are some hidden costs. Players are encouraged to make purchases in the game, for example, using real money. People can also buy extra Robux (the in-game currency) to spend on cosmetic items in the game, and some private or VIP servers also have a cost.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### SET PARENTAL CONTROLS

Roblox comes with several parental control options, which are explained well on the game's official website. It's essential to enter the correct date of birth for your child, as that allows Roblox to automatically apply the appropriate chat filters. The game also allows parents and carers to set monthly spending restrictions and monitor their child's account.

### DISABLE PRIVATE MESSAGING

Roblox's private messaging function raises the risk of children being contacted by people they may not want to speak with – potentially leading to bullying, harassment, toxicity and scam attempts. The game allows you to disable messages from anyone who hasn't been added as a friend on your child's account.

### PRIVATE SERVERS

If your child has genuine friends who they play Roblox online with, paying for a private or VIP server decreases the risk of contact from strangers. Even then, however, some players could invite other people – who might not necessarily be child friendly – into the private server. If your child is a Roblox fan, it's important to talk with them regularly about who they are playing the game with.

### MONITOR SPENDING

If they don't understand they're using real money, it's easy for children to accidentally spend a sizeable amount in the game. Using parental controls to place limits on their spending will help avoid any nasty financial surprises. Ensuring that you have two-factor authentication on your payment accounts also makes it harder for your child to spend money inadvertently.

### DEALING WITH STRANGERS

At some point in their development, your child will need to learn how to deal with strangers online. Show them how to block and report any users who are upsetting them or asking uncomfortable questions. Talking to them about what's OK to discuss – and what they should never tell a stranger online – will help them understand how to communicate with others safely in the digital world.

## Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. LunaWolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of LunaWolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



National  
Online  
Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-56222222> / <https://www.roblox.com/games> / <https://www.roblox.com/games>

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