

St Mary and St Margaret's C of E Voluntary Aided Primary School



Parents' Guide

2026 - 2027

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Metropolitan Borough of Solihull (Diocese of Birmingham)
St. Mary & St. Margaret's C.E (Voluntary Aided)
Primary School and Nursery

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Headteacher: Mr. Mark Street B.A (Hons), M.A., N.P.Q.H.

Dear Parent / Carer

Welcome to St Mary & St Margaret's School! This guide has been produced to provide you with useful information about our school, its aims, curriculum and organisation. I hope that it illustrates the atmosphere and ethos of the school. We aim to provide a happy, caring and secure Christian environment in which children can grow in confidence, develop their individual abilities and realise their full potential.

We are looking forward to welcoming you and your child into the community of this school. I am sure your child will soon settle down in our friendly and happy atmosphere and find that learning is fun!

Our school is a Church of England voluntary aided school within the Anglican Diocese of Birmingham, in the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull. As a Church of England voluntary aided school, we place great importance on our daily act of collective worship. Our children receive teaching in the Christian faith as taught by the Church of England and attend school services in church. Parents are invited to join us in worship at church and for special occasions at school.

We are keen to see that your child makes good progress and enjoys his or her time at school. Should any problems or difficulties ever arise, please do not hesitate to come in and see us. Home and school both play vital roles in the education of a child and I hope we have the opportunity of meeting you regularly throughout your child's life in this school to ensure smooth progress.

With mutual support from home and school there is no doubt that your child will soon be a happy, successful and valued member of our school community.

Mark Street
Headteacher



What Is Special About Our School?

We are a Church school.

As a church school, St Mary and St Margaret's Primary School has strong community links with the parish church.

Through daily worship, services in church, Rector-led assemblies and visits from the church community into school, the distinctive character of the school is seen in its pastoral role, its role in Christian nurture and its role in placing all learning within a framework of the Christian faith.

Staff employed at the school are committed to the aims of a church school and seek to develop the unique contribution which a church school can make to the education of its children.

The strength of our community depends on the caring relationships that exist between all those involved: governors, staff, pupils, parents, the Diocese, the Local Authority and the local community. Our cohesive, caring community is something we value very much and we constantly strive to build upon and strengthen this.

As a church school, we aim to nurture the 'whole child', promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as well as encouraging and supporting each child to achieve his or her full academic potential. This can be clearly seen in our statement of School Values.

Our school values underpin our curriculum and are each linked to the Bible. Our values underpin all that we strive to be, do and achieve. Our mission is summed up in this statement based on John 10:10 – "Helping each of us to be the best we can be by living 'life in all its fullness'".



Helping each of us to be the best we can be by living 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

Our vision is for all members of our school family to continually develop spiritually, morally, academically, emotionally and culturally so that they can be the best version of themselves possible: we want each child and adult to experience the 'life in all its fullness' that Jesus talks about in the book of John.

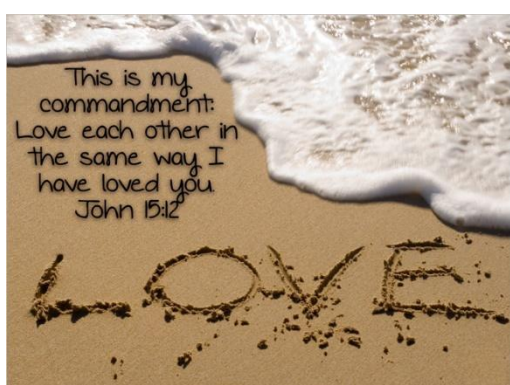
What do we mean by 'life in all its fullness'?

We see the life of Jesus as the ultimate example of living life in all its fullness. Jesus' life was a life of purpose – a life lived to make a positive difference in our world. It was a life motivated by love, by acceptance of all and by a belief in the value of everyone – no matter what their background, no matter what mistakes had been made and no matter what strengths or weaknesses people showed.

We believe that we can help every member of our school family discover 'life in all its fullness' through:

- Giving opportunity to explore and identify what we're good at, what we value, where our passions lie, what we believe in and what we stand for
- Allowing everyone to flourish and to grow in confidence, in self-belief and in self-worth, whilst developing knowledge and empathy for the people around us and those in the wider world – regardless of background or circumstances
- Helping everyone to achieve in all areas of life and learning, and to develop into the best possible version of ourselves
- Helping all of us believe we can make a positive difference in the world around us
- Seeking the good in and showing love to everyone, even those who may not like us or those we may find it difficult to like.

In particular, we believe that living life in all its fullness can be summed up by the following things that Jesus said:



"Love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12

"Let your light shine before others." Matthew 5:16

In other words, living life in all its fullness is all about following Jesus's example, sharing God's love with everyone and making a positive difference in the world around us.

Our school values are listed on the following pages. They are based on five key purposes. They are all important to us, but we believe that the life and teaching of Jesus show us that the most important of our values is **LOVE**. Christian love for all is central to everything we do.

“And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

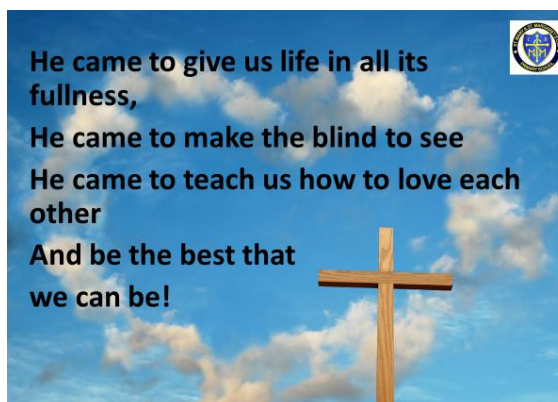
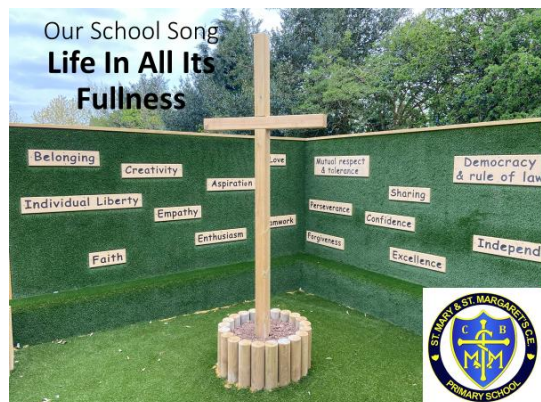
1 Corinthians 13:13

BUT THE

Greatest
OF THESE
is LOVE

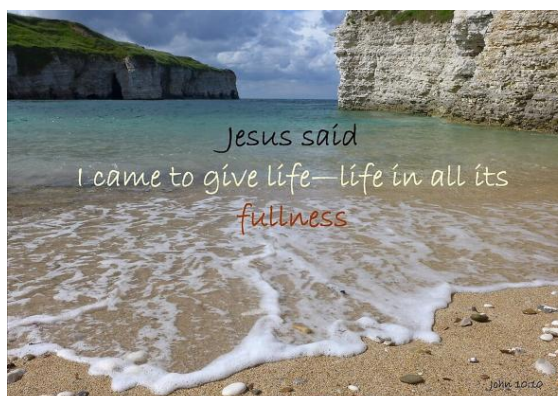
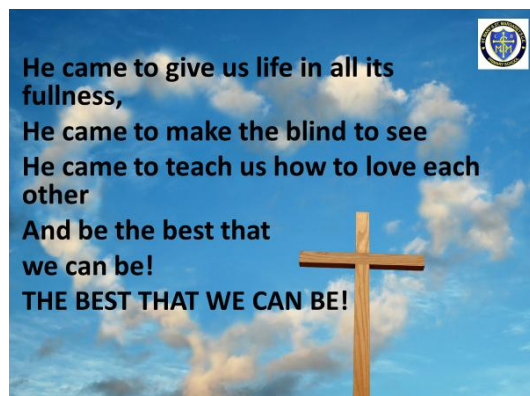
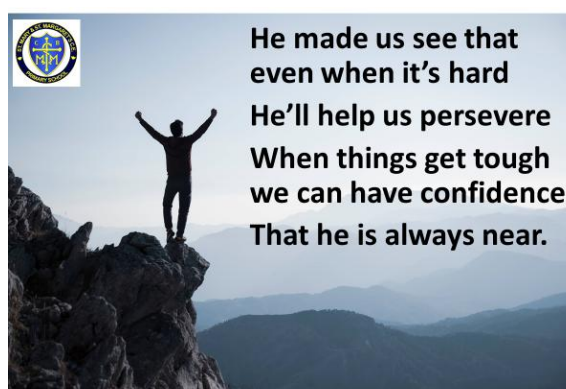
Our School Song

We have a special school song which reminds us of our values and what it means to live life in all its fullness:



He taught us everyone is special
And that we all can now belong
He taught us how to show forgiveness
And start again when things go wrong.

He taught us to be humble and to serve,
To think how others feel,
He taught us how to love and share and care
And show respect that's real.

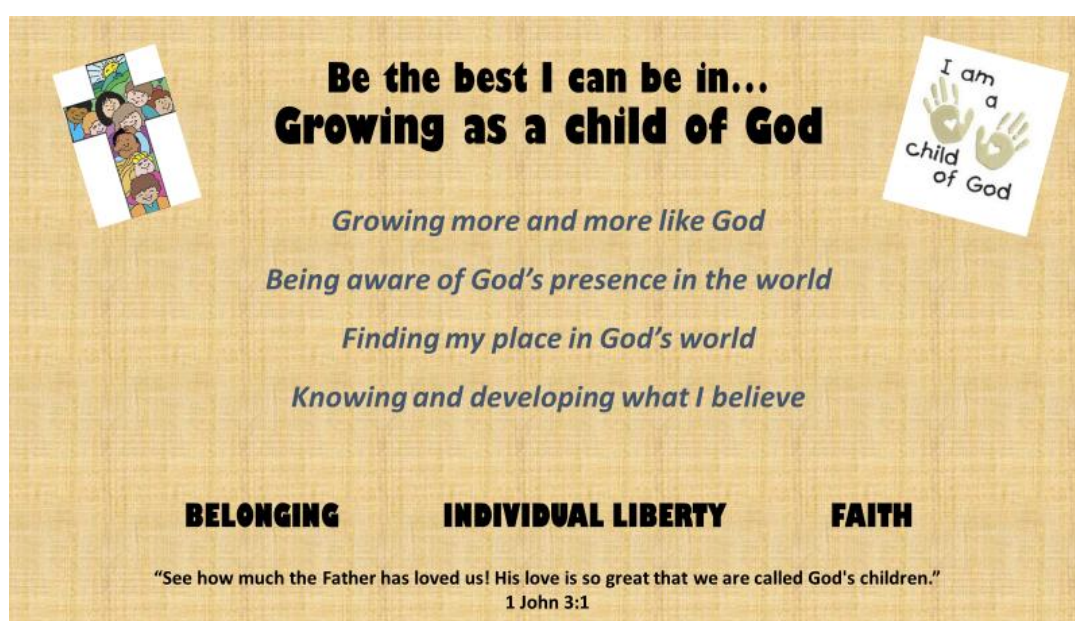


OUR VALUES

At St Mary and St Margaret's, we believe it is important that we all know what we want to achieve as a school. For this reason, staff, governors, parents and children have contributed to deciding our school values. Our curriculum is built around our school values and we use them as a tool for school improvement, aiming to ensure that they are central to any new initiatives the school takes on. All members of the school community are encouraged to model and help build these values.

We believe that St Mary and St Margaret's CE Primary School exists to enable every child to realise his or her potential to the fullest possible extent, whatever his or her particular needs and abilities.

To this end we promote our agreed Values. For each area, the impact we hope these values will have is shown below:



Impact – Growing as a Child of God:

Children have an ever-developing sense of their spirituality and place in God's world and of their beliefs and values.

"You are a child of God. You are wonderfully made, dearly loved and precious in his sight." Psalm 139:13-14



**Be the best I can be by...
Loving Learning**

Enjoying learning new things
Showing enthusiasm
Learning how to learn
Setting goals
Asking and attempting to find answers to questions
Learning in and out of school

CREATIVITY ENTHUSIASM TEAMWORK

"My child, learn what I teach you and never forget what I tell you to do. Listen to what is wise and try to understand it."
 Proverbs 2:1-2

Impact – Loving Learning:

Children demonstrate a love of and enthusiasm for learning. They develop the skills to become lifelong learners.

"Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future."
 Proverbs 19:20



**Be the best I can be through...
Caring**

Caring about ourselves
Caring about each other
Caring about the school
Caring about the community
Caring about the nation
Caring about the wider world
Caring about God's creation
Respecting differences

LOVE EMPATHY MUTUAL RESPECT & TOLERANCE SHARING

"Meanwhile these three remain: faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these is love."
 1 Corinthians 13:13



Impact – Caring:

Children become responsible, compassionate citizens with a sense of the positive impact they can have in their world.

"This is my commandment: that you love one another as I have loved you."
 John 15:12




**Be the best I can be in...
Achieving**

*Becoming the best readers, writers
and mathematicians we can be*

Finding and developing our talents

Building on our strengths and persevering when we struggle

Celebrating our successes

PERSEVERANCE ASPIRATION EXCELLENCE

"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13

Impact – Achieving:

Children develop detailed knowledge & skills across the curriculum and, as a result, achieve well.

"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."
Philippians 4:13




**Be the best I can be through...
Personal Development**

Learning how to solve tricky problems together

Working with each other, even when we disagree

Developing resilience and perseverance

Knowing and believing in ourselves

Learning to control our emotions

FORGIVENESS DEMOCRACY & THE RULE OF LAW INDEPENDENCE CONFIDENCE

"So then, encourage one another and build each other up"
1 Thessalonians 5:11

Impact – Personal Development:

Children develop their character, naturally displaying the values of the school in all that they do. They know how to keep physically & mentally healthy. By the time they leave, they are prepared for the challenges they will face in secondary school and beyond in modern Britain.

"I urge you, then — live a life that measures up to the standard God set when he called you."
Ephesians 4:1

Collective Worship

Collective worship is central to the life of our school. It provides an opportunity to celebrate and develop our Christian faith and school values. It also provides a daily opportunity to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils meet each day to celebrate Christian beliefs, teachings and festivals through stories, illustrations, role play, quiet contemplation and discussion. Festivals and events from other cultures are recognised on these occasions when appropriate. The Rector, the Headteacher, teaching staff, visitors and pupils lead acts of collective worship.

Guidance and themes for collective worship take account of the Church of England faith, national and local festivals, celebrations and other aspects that support our faith, values and ethos.

The pattern of collective worship varies weekly, although a typical week is as follows:

Monday 11.10am	Whole School Rector-led or Headteacher-led Worship , based on the current Value of the Half Term, our weekly theme or our Jigsaw PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education) theme. This will often be in the form of a Bible story or illustration with a message.
Tuesday 11.10am	Key Stage Worship – based on our weekly theme. Led by members of the key stage.
Wednesday (flexible)	iSing Church of England Worship (online) – usually on a Bible theme or linked to our Value of the Half Term, worship in the intimate setting of the classroom.
Thursday 11.10am	Whole School Head/Deputy-led Worship , based on the current Value of the Half Term or Jigsaw PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education) theme. This will often be in the form of a Bible story or illustration with a message. Once per half term, our Worship Leaders (a group of Y5/6 pupils) take responsibility for planning and leading worship on the Value of the Half Term.
Friday 11.10am	Musical Praise – an opportunity to learn new songs, practise those we know well and worship God through music making. This includes a time for prayerful reflection and children will often spend time thinking about how songs link to their Christian lives and to passages from the Bible.

Parents and governors are invited to worship at church on alternate Wednesdays and when rector-led worship takes place on a Monday. At the end of each half term, we celebrate children's achievements in our special Achievement Assembly.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from collective worship. Should they wish to do so, they should make an appointment with the Headteacher.

Attitudes to Learning and Behaviour

At St Mary and St Margaret's, we encourage everyone to work together in an effective and considerate way. We aim to help children grow in a happy, safe and secure environment, and to become positive, responsible and increasingly independent members of the school community. We reward positive behaviour, as we believe that this will develop an ethos of kindness and cooperation.

We aim to help our children be orderly, polite and considerate and to contribute to a Christian ethos and atmosphere that supports all aspects of learning. Through a commitment to and proactive involvement in learning, the children will work towards independence, self-reliance and confidence. We want all pupils to take a pride in the school and to play their part in providing the best possible education and we strongly encourage parents to support us in achieving this.

We note all serious incidents and you will be contacted for your support should difficulties arise.

Our full Behaviour and Attendance Policy and our Anti-Bullying Policy are available on the school website www.stmaryandstmargarets.com.

Pastoral Care

Your child's class teacher is the key person responsible for his/her care and welfare. Other staff will work alongside pupils throughout the day. Lunchtime supervisors and our Lunchtime Activities Lead and Mentor are responsible for the welfare of pupils during the midday break.

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, SENDCO and one of our Child and Family Mentors are Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) with responsibility for Child Protection, and parents need to be aware that we have a duty with regard to pupil welfare and to report any causes for concern to the relevant agencies for support and/or further investigation. Our Child Protection Policy is available on the school website.

The Headteacher is available to see parents, by appointment, on matters concerning the pastoral care of all pupils.

In the first instance parents are referred to their child's class teacher. In addition, the Key Stage Leader for your child's class will be available for advice and support.

Headteacher:	Mr Mark Street (DSL)
Deputy Headteacher:	Mr Lee Cockburn (DSL)
Early Years & Key Stage 1 Leader:	Mrs Crawley (DSL & SENDCO)
Key Stage 2 Leader:	Mrs Miles
Child & Family Mentors:	Mrs Byrne (DSL) Mrs Hughes

School Uniform

At St Mary and St Margaret's we take pride in all we do. This is reflected in our school uniform which helps give our children a sense of identity and promotes a spirit of belonging and unity. We want our children to take pride in the way they look and to be proud of the fact that they belong to our school. All children are expected to wear full school uniform every day.

All clothing and personal property must be clearly marked with the child's name. In the interest of developing independence, every child is expected to be responsible for his or her own property and to learn how to take care of it.

Uniform List

Nursery	Royal blue joggers or royal blue school shorts, blue round neck t-shirt, blue round neck school sweatshirt or royal blue hoodie, Velcro, not laced , trainers or shoes and not open-toed sandals . All children should have a school book bag to take their reading books to and from school.
Infant Boys	White polo shirt, school round neck sweatshirt, grey trousers or shorts, grey socks, black shoes not trainers , fleece jacket (optional). Reception should wear Velcro, not laced , shoes. All children should have a school book bag to take their reading books to and from school.
Infant Girls	Grey pinafore type dress or skirt/trousers, white polo shirt, school round neck sweatshirt or cardigan, grey or white socks or tights, black shoes, not trainers or open-toed sandals , fleece jacket (optional). Blue and white checked/striped summer dresses or playsuits may be worn from Easter to 1 st October. Reception should wear Velcro or buckled, not laced , shoes.
Junior Boys	White shirt, grey trousers or shorts, grey socks, black shoes, not trainers , school tie, school v-neck sweatshirt, fleece jacket (optional)
Junior Girls	Grey pinafore type dress or skirt/trousers, white blouse, grey or white socks or tights, black shoes, not trainers or open-toed sandals , school tie, school V-neck sweatshirt or cardigan. Blue and white checked/striped summer dresses or playsuits may be worn from Easter to 1 st October.
PE	Royal blue shorts, royal blue t-shirt and black pumps. Royal blue PE hooded sweatshirt and navy blue PE jogging bottoms. Junior children also require trainers for outdoor PE. Earrings should be removed or taped over for PE. All children in KS1 and KS2 will be required to wear their PE uniform for two days each week. Children in Reception will wear PE uniform one day per week – you will be notified of the days in September.
Swimming (juniors only)	One-piece swimsuit for girls and swimming trunks (not loose Bermuda type shorts) for boys. No jewellery (including earrings).

All hair accessories to be either black or grey or in the school colours of blue and gold and of a reasonable size.

The children are asked not to wear any jewellery. If they have had their ears pierced they may wear **plain gold/silver stud earrings only**.

Order and collect most of your school uniform online from PB Sports at www.pbsportonline.co.uk . Brigade (www.brigadeuniformdirect.uk.com) and My Clothing (www.myclothing.com) can also provide items if they are not available from PB Sports.

Please note that it is not essential to purchase items with the school logo on them. If preferred, parents may purchase uniform (in the correct style and colour) from other retailers without the logo.



Our School Day

Getting to School

It is important that your child arrives at school on time every morning. The build-up of traffic around school can often cause problems so we encourage children to begin and end each day healthily by walking to school. For some, this is not practical due to the distance travelled; therefore, you are encouraged to use the car parks either at Hickory's Smokehouse or the Castle Bromwich Remembrance Club where we have permission to park. This will still allow your child a healthy walk twice a day whilst also helping to ensure the road does not become dangerously busy. If you do need to park along Southfield Avenue please be mindful of and considerate towards our neighbours.

Morning Drop-Off System

We operate a 'Drop-Off System' in the mornings between 8.35 and 8.45am. At these times parents are asked **not to park in the designated drop-off area between the yellow zig-zags**. This space is used to 'stop and drop' your children and helps ensure a smooth flow of traffic in Southfield Avenue. Cars should not be parked for more than a minute or so in this zone (long enough to get your children safely out of the car and to the school gate). If you need to park for longer in order to visit the office or see a member of staff, please use one of the designated car parks. Our school is situated in a residential area and we are keen to build good relationships with our neighbours and to ensure that children are able to enter school safely. **Please note: the drop-off area is not generally suitable for use by parents of children in Nursery or Reception** due to the longer time needed to drop children into school.

Please...

- move off as quickly as possible from any spaces that you occupy so that the next parent/carer can drop their children without causing significant congestion
- do not obstruct residents' access to their property by parking across private driveways

- avoid parking on the pavement as this can restrict safe access for parents walking with buggies etc.
- refrain from driving on to school premises except in an emergency or by prior arrangement
- avoid dropping children in the middle of the road to let them out
- in the interests of health and safety dogs are not permitted onto the school site
- smoking and vaping are not permitted on the school site

One-Way System

At both morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times a voluntary one-way system is used around Southfield Avenue. Please help keep traffic flowing smoothly by taking the slightly longer route around the block. Thank you.

The times of our school day are as follows:

	Nursery	Reception	Year 1 & Year 2	Year 3 to Year 6
School opens	8.35 am	8.35 am	8.35 am	8.35 am
Registration	8.45am	8.45 am	8.45 am	8.45 am
Morning break	NA		Either 9.50-10.05am Or 10.05 – 10.20am	
Lunchtime	11.40am – 12.15pm	11.50 am – 1pm	11.55 am – 1.00 pm	12.00 noon - 1.00 pm
Afternoon session	12.15 – 3.15pm	1 - 3.15pm	1 – 3.15pm	1 – 3.15pm
Afternoon break	NA	NA	Flexible	NA
End of school day	3.15pm	3.15 pm	3.15 pm	3.15 pm

Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception)

Children in Nursery and Reception should enter school using the Early Years Gate (off the path to the main School Office). Parents will be asked to leave their children at the door to enable children to develop their independence.

Years 1 to 6

A member of staff will be on duty to greet all children from Years 1 to 6 at the main front gate in Southfield Avenue from 8.35am each day. Parents are asked not to accompany their children into the school grounds. If there is a particular need to give an urgent message to the class teacher before the start of the school day, please contact the school office.

Extreme Weather

On rainy days, children should still be dropped at the gate where they will enter school via their usual entrance. In cases of extreme weather (snow/ice) children may be asked to enter school via the main entrance only.

Timekeeping

All gates will be locked at 8.45am. Children arriving after that time are to report to the school office where their arrival will be recorded as late. The document we use for this supports our registration procedures and may be called for audit by the Local Authority or the DfE (Department for Education).

A late start to the school day is not a good start for your child.

It is also very important that you collect your child on time at the end of the day.

Attendance

Regular attendance is important if your child is to benefit from all the learning opportunities we offer at St Mary and St Margaret's Primary School. We aim for attendance of at least 96%. This allows for illness during the school year. Research has shown that an attendance level of less than 90% adversely affects learning.

Absences

A note, telephone call or email to the school office on the first day of absence must explain **all** absences from school.

If a child has an un-notified absence and we are unable to ascertain the reason why from any of the listed contacts a call will be made to the school's Education Welfare Officer, Central School and Attendance Welfare Service (CSAWS). In the event that we are still unable to make contact the police may be called to make a 'safe and well' check.

1. **If your child has a forthcoming known absence**, e.g. hospital or doctor's appointment, please let us know in advance. You are asked to provide evidence of the appointment so that the absence can be authorised. To minimise the effect on your child's education please make every effort to make these appointments before or after the school day.
2. Pupils from Reception to Year 6 are not permitted to leave the school premises before 3.15 pm except when supervised by a teacher or with the permission of the Headteacher. Parents are asked to telephone or write to school when permission for leaving school early is required. A previously identified adult will be required to collect any child leaving school prior to 3.15pm. Written evidence of appointments will need to be seen by office staff.

Please note: There is no supervision of children prior to 8.35am so we do urge you to time your arrival to match the start of our sessions.

3. **If your child is ill**, please telephone the school office prior to 8.35am giving the reason for absence. The school is obliged to follow up all unexplained absences.

The Education Welfare Officer may visit parents at home when our monitoring system for absence raises concerns. All absence (whether authorised or unauthorised) will appear in our published data and pupil reports and will be forwarded to the Local Authority and Department for Education.

Accidents or Illness

In the case of accident or illness it is vital that we have information on file which will enable us to contact you directly or via an agreed contact during the school day. In order to comply with safeguarding procedures all children **must** have 4 separate contacts listed.

Any change of address, telephone number, home circumstances or contact arrangements must be reported to the school office immediately. It is parents' responsibility to inform school of any changes to contact details.



Medicine at School

A member of staff will administer medicines only if a consent form has been completed by the parent beforehand. Children should not be sent with medication in their bags. Any medication should be brought to and collected from the School Office by an adult.

Prescribed medicines should be in their original packaging with the pharmacist sticker clearly displayed showing your child's name and the required dosage, otherwise they cannot be administered. Please ask your GP to prescribe medication that can be given three times per day if possible i.e. out of school hours.

In order to prevent the spread of infections we recommend that routine immunisations are up to date and that high standards of personal hygiene are established as early as possible, particularly with regard to handwashing. The Public Health Agency policy for schools states that 'Children with rashes should be considered infectious and assessed by their doctor'.

St Mary & St Margaret's has a Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy that is available to view via www.stmaryandstmargarets.com

Exclusion Periods for Common Childhood Infections

(Advice from the Health Protection Agency)

Children need to be kept at home for these periods when illness is diagnosed

- **German measles (Rubella)** 5 days after onset of rash
- **measles** 4 days after onset of rash
- **whooping cough** 48 hours from start of antibiotic treatment OR 21 days if no antibiotic treatment
- **mumps** 5 days after onset of symptoms
- **chickenpox** 5 days from onset of rash and all the lesions have crusted over
- **sickness/diarrhoea** Children can return to school 48 hours after the last bout
- **impetigo** until lesions are crusted/healed or 48 hours after starting antibiotics
- **scarlet fever** 24 hours after starting antibiotics

Parents and Our Community

Education is a partnership between home and school. We very much value your support and partnership in providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding which will help them make sense of the world around them and equip them for all its complexities.

We value this partnership and will do all we can to develop your trust, commitment and loyalty as you uphold our values, aims and activities.

Parents' Evenings

During the school year, there are two Parents' Evenings for discussions about your child's progress; these are usually held in October and February/March. Please do not leave issues of concern to these meetings – your child's class teacher can be contacted at any time via email.

Parents and Collective Worship

We welcome all parents to clergy-led collective worship, which usually takes place every other Monday at 11.10am. We are also pleased to welcome parents into other special assemblies during the year.

Parents in the Classroom

We welcome parents' support in the classroom either as trainees or volunteers. If you have special skills to share or time to spare, please enquire at the school office. Before working in classrooms, all volunteer helpers must undertake an enhanced DBS disclosure and complete a volunteer application form. The school office can supply you with the necessary information.

Home reading

All children have a reading book to read at home. Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children also take home a library book to share and enjoy. Please do take the time to share the books with your child. Daily reading practice at home makes a significant difference to how children progress. Your child's teacher will be able to tell you more about how you can help support the teaching of reading. Because of its central importance to learning, reading forms the main bulk of homework throughout a child's time at St Mary and St Margaret's.

Parents Visiting School

When visiting school during the school day please report to the school office in the first instance and **switch off any mobile phones** (see Mobile Technology Policy available on the school website for full details). For the safety of all children, visitors need to sign in on arrival, acquaint themselves with school fire procedures and wear a Visitor Badge. They should advise a member of staff in the school office when they are leaving so that they can be signed out.

Food and Drink

Children are encouraged to drink water throughout the school day. Please do not send flavoured drinks as water is the best and healthier option for learning. Infant children are given a piece of fruit daily and a carton of milk is available via the Cool Milk program. Junior children are encouraged to bring fruit to eat during the morning playtime.

Milk

Cartons containing 189ml of semi-skimmed milk are available daily for all primary children if required. This is free to all children under 5 but you can choose to pay thereafter, please contact the school office for further details.

Sweets are not permitted in school as part of our healthy eating policies.

School Lunches

We are proud of our excellent school meals! School meals are cooked on the premises. A delicious choice of menu is offered each day with a strong emphasis on healthy eating, supported by a 'help

yourself' salad bar. Each morning children choose their choice of meal from two hot and one cold option. Jacket potatoes are also available daily. Alternatively, a sandwich or wrap can be ordered each day (except Fridays).

Please alert us to any food/additive allergy that your child may have.

A free school meal is available for all infant (Reception – Year 2) children. In order for a child to receive their free school meal parents need to register their child on the Solihull MBC website (www.solihull.gov.uk) under 'Schools' and then 'Grants and Funding' and then 'Free School Meals'. If there is a particular reason why you wish your child not to receive their free school meal, please contact us to let us know the reasons so that we can make arrangements.

If you have a junior child who you think may be eligible for Free School Meals, information can be found on the Solihull MBC website (www.solihull.gov.uk). Once you are on the website please click on 'Schools' and then 'Grants and Funding', where you will find the free school meal information and a link to the online application. Please ask at the school office if you are unsure.

Solihull MBC use a secure e-payment system for nursery and junior school meals and other payments, e.g. trips & swimming, using a secure website called ParentPay. You will be issued with your unique user name and password to access this service once your child is enrolled on the school register. Please ensure that you register with this system as we also use this for sending letters and other communications.

St Mary & St Margaret's School has a zero debt policy therefore please ensure there are sufficient funds on your child's Parent Pay account before ordering a school meal.

Packed Lunches – Junior children only

Junior children who wish to bring a packed lunch may do so. Please do not send carbonated drinks (other than pure sparkling water) or drinks high in additives. Please also avoid glass containers. Again, water is the healthier option and all children have access to drinking water with their meal. Children should place their lunchbox and drink in the designated area on arrival at school each day.



Healthy Schools

We also ask that parents follow healthy eating guidelines and do not provide foods of a high fat or high salt content in their child's lunchbox. For more information and suggested packed lunch menus please visit www.nhs.uk/Change4Life/Pages/healthy-lunchbox-picnic.aspx

Swimming

Swimming is part of the National Curriculum and every child is expected to be able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave primary school. Our children currently learn to swim in Key Stage Two and have a series of lessons at a local leisure centre with qualified swimming instructors.

Parents are asked to ensure that children bring the correct swimming kit to school on the day of their lesson. All children, both boys and girls, must wear a swimming hat each time they go into the pool. Please provide two towels (one small one to stand on and one big one to dry with).

Children are not permitted to wear any jewellery when swimming, including earrings.

Any child suffering from skin or feet complaints will be excluded and a doctor's note is required to say that the child is cleared for swimming. Under current STA guidelines children with verrucae **are** permitted to swim.

Parents are asked for a contribution for the terms when their children swim.

Lost Property

All items brought into school should be clearly labelled with each child's name and class. As a result, any 'lost' or misplaced items can easily be returned to the child concerned. However, items not dealt with in this way will be placed in the Lost Property Bin that is kept in the Entrance Hall. The bin is emptied each term and the contents destroyed or donated to charity.

No precious, expensive or electrical items are to be brought into school under any circumstances by any pupil unless by prior arrangement with the class teacher.

Mobile phones and smart phones: We recognise that mobile phones can play an important role in helping pupils to feel safe and secure. However, we also recognise that smart phones can prove a distraction in school and can provide a means of bullying or intimidating others. Therefore, pupils are not permitted to have mobile phones at school or on trips. In Year 6, children are allowed to bring their phones to school (e.g. so that they can contact parents after school if walking home alone).

In the event of a parent of a younger child wishing for his/her child to bring a mobile phone to school to contact the parent after school the parent must discuss the issue first with their child's teacher.

Any phones brought into school by children **must** be handed in, switched off, to the teacher first thing in the morning and collected from him/her by the child at home time (the phone is left at the owner's own risk).

Mobile phones brought to school without permission will be confiscated and must be collected by the parent.

Along with the vast majority of schools in Solihull, we are encouraging parents not to give primary-age children smart phones – this is due to the increasing amount of research showing the damage that smart phones can cause, particularly to children. We therefore want to encourage everyone to **PAUSE** and think about the impact of giving smart phones to young people, because:

- **P: Prevents Real Play** – Smartphone use can stop children from socialising and engaging in imaginative or active play
- **A: Attention Span** – Smartphones reduce focus and attention, hindering learning
- **U: Undermines Mental Health** – Overexposure to social media and screens can negatively affect children's emotional and mental well-being.

- **S: Safety Risks** – Smartphones expose children to safeguarding issues, including cyberbullying and inappropriate content.
- **E: Emotional Impact** – The addictive nature of smartphones can lead to mood swings, sleep disruption, and over-reliance on digital validation.

We believe that only through collective action can the negative impact of smart phone use by children be addressed locally and nationally. We want to remove the pressure that children face to own and use a smart phone, and the pressure that parents/carers feel to buy them for their children.

School Clubs and Voluntary Activities

These mostly take place outside normal school hours, at the end of the school day or during lunchtimes, throughout the year. The activities vary according to the time of year. There will often be a charge for these activities to help cover costs.

Educational Visits

All trips and visits are planned as part of the school's curriculum to broaden each child's experiences with activities that develop their enthusiasm and enjoyment for learning. Educational visits bring to life a subject that is being taught in the classroom.

These visits take place mostly within school hours and to help with the cost of visits we ask you to make a voluntary contribution via Parent Pay. Without these contributions, trips and visits would cease to exist.

Currently, residential visits are offered to pupils in Years 3, 5 and 6.

Home/School Communication

At St Mary & St Margaret's, we value strong partnerships between home and school. Clear, respectful and constructive communication helps us work together in the best interests of children and supports both learning and wellbeing.

The following guidance is intended to help communication remain effective, manageable and professional for both families and staff.

Communication Routes

Class Dojo is the school's main platform for routine home-school communication, including:

- whole-class updates and reminders;
- celebration of learning;
- practical classroom queries.

Email should generally be used for:

- more formal communication;
- administrative matters;
- sharing documents or longer information;
- or communication directed through the school office or leadership team.

Urgent or same-day matters (for example changes to collection arrangements) should be communicated via the school office by telephone rather than through Dojo or email, as teaching staff may not see messages during the school day.

If you need to let us know your child will be absent or has a medical appointment, please give this message to the office (preferably before school starts) rather than the class teacher as it is the office who will chase up any unexplained absences. We will ask for evidence of medical appointments i.e. sight of a letter or text.

Staff Availability and Response Times

Teaching staff spend the majority of the school day teaching, supporting and supervising children and are therefore not able to monitor messages continuously throughout the day.

As a general guide:

- messages will normally be responded to within three working days;
- many messages will be responded to more quickly than this;
- some matters may require additional time where information needs to be gathered or discussions held with other staff.

Staff are not expected to read or respond to messages during evenings, weekends or school holidays.

Some staff may occasionally send messages outside working hours for convenience. This should not be interpreted as an expectation of immediate response or ongoing availability.

Resolving Concerns

Most concerns can be resolved quickly and positively through an initial conversation with the class teacher and we encourage parents to raise concerns in this way wherever appropriate.

Where concerns are more complex or difficult to resolve through messaging, staff may suggest moving communication to a telephone call or meeting.

If concerns remain unresolved following discussion with the class teacher, parents may contact a member of the leadership team in line with the school's communication and complaints procedures.

Respectful Communication

We ask all members of the school community to communicate respectfully and professionally at all times.

This includes:

- using polite and appropriate language;
- recognising that staff may need time to investigate concerns fully before responding;
- avoiding prolonged or confrontational message exchanges;
- and following the appropriate communication pathways before escalating concerns further.

We also ask parents to avoid discussing ongoing school concerns through social media or parent WhatsApp groups, as this can easily lead to misunderstandings and unnecessary anxiety for families and children.

Use of Class Dojo

Class Dojo is intended to support positive communication between home and school. It should not be viewed as an instant messaging service.

Communication styles may vary slightly between classes and staff members. While all classes will share important information and updates, the frequency of posts, photographs and messages may differ between year groups and teachers.

Supporting Children's Learning

Responding to concerns thoroughly and appropriately takes significant staff time. By keeping communication clear, respectful and proportionate, we can maximise the time staff are able to spend teaching, supporting children and providing high-quality learning experiences.

Home/School Diaries

Children in Infants are issued with a Home/School Diary at the start of each year. This can be used to record any messages, reading progress, etc.

Transfer to Secondary School

Parents of pupils completing their primary education should apply for a secondary school place via www.solihull.gov.uk/enrol before October when their child is in Year 6.

For further information visit www.solihull.gov.uk/admissions or call Solihull Admissions on 0121 704 6693.

Concerns, Compliments and Complaints

Tell us. We are here for your child. We will listen to what you have to say.

Issues can be discussed through the following channels:

- contacting a member of staff by e-mail, Class Dojo, letter or through the School Office
- meeting with a member of staff
- meeting with the Key Stage Leader

If this does not resolve the situation, then parents may request an appointment to see the Headteacher.

Should the concern persist then please consult our Complaints Policy (available on the school website).

To support our school self-evaluation, letters and emails from parents may be kept as evidence of compliments as well as concerns.

General Data Protection Regulations

The General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) became UK and EU law on 25th May 2018. These regulations help to protect you and your child in relation to the personal information that the School holds about you. Please refer to the GDPR section on our school website and also our Agreements and Permissions Booklet for more information and our Privacy Notice.

Alternatively, you may contact Mrs Coldwell in the school office who is our Data Protection Officer.

Governing Body

We have a very supportive Governing Body consisting of parents, teachers and representatives from the Church, local community and local authority. The Governors are the immediate lay support for the professional staff of the school. The Diocese and PCC appoint the Foundation Governors who represent the Founding Trust of the school. They have a special role to play in serving both school and Church.

Each member of the Governing Body serves for four years and shares, with the Headteacher, the responsibility for the running of the school. They and their committees meet regularly each term to make decisions which affect the general policy of the school, the appointment of staff and the management of finances. All Governors may be contacted via the school office.

The minutes of each full Governors' meeting are available from the School Office.

The Parent Teacher Association

“Welcome to the Parent Teacher Association!”

You automatically become a member of the PTA when your child attends St Mary & St Margaret's school. PTA committee members are elected at the Annual General Meeting held early in the Autumn Term.

Throughout the year, social and fund-raising events are held, and we hope that you will support them. These are always very enjoyable occasions and many of the activities are for parents and children. Help for any of the PTA events is warmly welcomed.

The PTA also organises and provides refreshments for parents after the Achievement Assemblies.

And finally, if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact us via the school office.

Thank you for your support!

Our School Prayer

*This is our school.
Let peace dwell here.
Let the rooms be full of contentment.
Let love abide here.
Love of one another,
Love of mankind,
Love of life itself
And love of God.
Let us remember that
As many hands build a house,
So many hearts make a school.
Amen.*