



# The Federation of St Mary's Catholic Schools

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"*

*Philippians 4: 13*

30th June 2023

Respect

Compassion

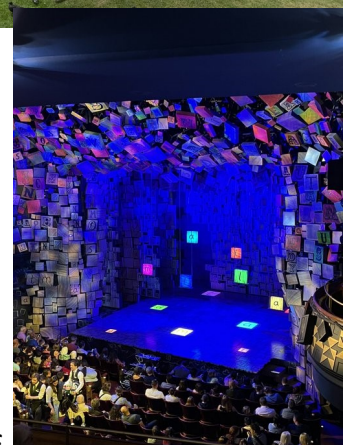
Resilience

## Sports Day

Both Upper and Lower school sports days went ahead this week. The children participated in track and field events and it was wonderful to see and hear the field full of laughter, clapping, cheering and achievement. Wellies were wanged, javelins were thrown and there was even a new twist on the 'potato' race (if anyone has ever seen an actual potato in this race, we would really like to hear about it!) All our school values were clearly evident in both events and we are extremely proud of all the children and their sportspersonship. Thank you also to our Y6 children who helped out at the Infant sports morning on Thursday. The infant staff were very complimentary about how helpful they were. Thank you to the PTFA for helping out and selling water at all the events too.

## Y5 London Trip

Y5 set off very early on Thursday morning to London, where they visited the sites on foot, went in the London Dungeon (as part of their history topic of 'Crime and Punishment'), walked some more and attended the West End theatre to see Matilda. A visit to Westminster Cathedral was also in order, the Mother Church of Catholics in England and Wales. Thanks to the staff who accompanied the children on this really special trip.






## Transition

Next week is transition week all across St Helens and St Mary's is no different. Tuesday morning is 'moving up morning', where all children will spend the morning with their new class teacher in their new classroom. Children and parents have been informed of their new classes and teachers today. On this day, the children will all come into school and into their new classrooms first thing, before going back to their normal classes just before lunch.

# Award Winners

	Star of the Week	Bee Award
3Ri	Betsy	Mila
3Ro	Safia	Logan G
4W	Grace J	Morgan H
4M	Conor J	Sofia
5R		
5HQ		
6W	Isaac	Matthew M
6D	Evie M	Amelia G

	School Values Award	Olivia W
	Millionaire Reader	Lydia N Harriet E
	Rock Hero	

# Dates for your diary

Dates for your diary – Summer 3 – St Mary's Catholic Junior School	
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Millionaire reader's tea party – Parents / carers invited. 5.30—Y2 transition evening at the Junior school
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Moving up morning
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> July	KS2 Poetry buzz event at Queens Park 6pm
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> July	Spanish Day
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	St Mary's Got Talent—performances from our after school club
Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> July	Y6 Production 2pm/6pm
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> July	Y6 Leavers Mass 10am (provisional) Y6 Leavers Party 5.30—7.00pm
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	Y6 Leavers assembly 2.00pm - Parents/carers welcome Finish for Summer

PE days	
Y3	Monday
Y4	Tuesday
Y5	Wednesday
Y6	Thursday

## Attendance Matters



Every Day Counts....



### Hope Academy Transition

Transition days will now take place on **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup>, Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July**. Letters confirming new arrangements will be emailed to parents/carers. Letter can also be found on Hope Academy website. Click [HERE](#) to access. Any queries please email [parent@hopeacademy.org.uk](mailto:parent@hopeacademy.org.uk)

## Attendance Ladder

How close is your child to 100%?

0 Days off school	100%	perfection!
Equates to 2 days off school each year	99%	Excellent!
Equates to 5 days off school each year	97%	Good
Equates to 10 days off school each year	95%	Slight Concern
Equates to 20 days off school each year	90%	Concerned





@MarysPTFA

The Federation of  
St Mary's PTFA

## 6 REASONS TO JOIN THE PTFA

### FOR THE CHILDREN

BECOME A ROLE MODEL TO  
SHOW YOUR CHILD YOU  
VALUE THEIR EDUCATION.

THE EVENTS WE PLAN WILL  
IMPROVE YOUR CHILD'S  
SCHOOL EXPERIENCE.



### FOR YOU

VOLUNTEERING IS A  
REWARDING EXPERIENCE

WE PLAN TO HOST MANY  
SOCIAL EVENTS TO RAISE  
MONEY AND ALSO TO ENJOY  
EACH OTHERS COMPANY.



### FOR THE SCHOOL

HELP THE SCHOOL TO RAISE  
FUNDS.

HAVE A VOICE IN THE  
PURCHASES THAT ARE MADE  
TO SUPPORT THE CHILDREN.



### BE CONNECTED

THERE IS NO BETTER WAY OF  
KNOWING WHAT'S  
HAPPENING IN SCHOOL.

MEET OTHERS THAT SHARE  
THE SAME COMMON GOALS  
TO HELP IMPROVE THE  
SCHOOL.



### IT IS FUN!

WE AIM TO ENJOY  
OURSELVES IN ALL OUR  
ROLES.

FROM PLANNING EVENTS  
TO RUNNING A STALL IS  
EXCITING!



### KEEP THE PTFA GOING!

AS PARENTS LEAVE SCHOOL  
WE NEED TO KEEP THE  
COMMITTEE GOING.

COME JOIN OUR FRIENDLY  
TEAM AS MANY HANDS  
MAKE LIGHT WORK!



*"I work full time and  
help when I am able"*

*"I really enjoy seeing my  
grown up help out at events"*

*"I didn't realise how rewarding  
it would be"*

*"I've made life long friends"*

ST MARY'S PTFA

## GRAND SUMMER RAFFLE

Tickets coming home in book bags soon.  
Limited extras will be available at the school  
office.

See Facebook & Twitter for prizes.

£1 PER TICKET

TESCO  
Community Grants

St Mary's PTFA

## Thank you

Thank you to everyone who used their blue  
tokens to vote for St Mary's in the Tesco  
Community Grant.

Great news - we came top & have been  
awarded £1,500 towards projects at the Junior  
School!!

## WIN A NINTENDO SWITCH BUNDLE

- Tickets cost just £1 a week
- Please help give our fundraising a boost
- Win up to £25,000 every week
- Support our school, and win!

PLAY NOW:  
Scan the QR code or visit  
[www.yourschoollottery.co.uk](http://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk)  
And search for: Federation St Mary's



Supporters must be 16 years of age or older. See website for Terms & conditions. Enter by 24th June 2023.



## PARENT CARERS

Listen 4 Change would like to invite you to their parent carer coffee mornings!

These are an opportunity to meet other parent Carers in a relaxed setting for a Cuppa, Cake and a Chat. You Can also enjoy a game of Bingo!

No need to book, just Come along for the whole morning or drop in anytime between 10am – 12pm

@ The Carers Clubhouse, 18 Cotham Street,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA10 1SJ (opposite Town Hall)

On  
Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023  
Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2023  
Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023

For further information please Contact Sara Dolan on 01744 675615  
or [Saradolan@sthelenscarers.org.uk](mailto:Saradolan@sthelenscarers.org.uk)



Listen 4 Change would like to invite you to their **evening** get-togethers!

For parents and carers of children and young people with SEND.

Why not come along? No need to book.

From 18.30-20.00

Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023

@ The Carer Clubhouse, 18 Cotham Street,  
St Helens, Merseyside, WA10 1SJ (opposite Town Hall).

This will be an opportunity to meet other parent Carers in a relaxed setting for a cuppa, a Chat and a game of bingo.

For further information please contact Sara Dolan on 01744 675615 or [Saradolan@sthelenscarers.org.uk](mailto:Saradolan@sthelenscarers.org.uk)

**CARERS TRUST**  
St Helens Carers Centre

**Coffee Mornings** -Our regular Coffee Morning is a great opportunity to meet other Parent Carers in a relaxed setting. Come along for a chat over a cuppa and a pastry.



**Parent Representatives** - Be a parent carer who represents the views of families at meetings, workshops and events, working with practitioners to ensure that services meet the needs of those families.



Members of  
**NNPCF**  
National Network of Parent Carer Forums  
'Our Strength is our Shared Experience'  
[www.nnpkf.org.uk](http://www.nnpkf.org.uk)



**carerstrust**  
St Helens Carers Centre  
action · help · advice

### How To Contact Us

St Helens Carers Centre  
31-35 Baldwin Street  
St Helens  
WA10 2RS

Tel: 01744 675615

[saradolan@sthelenscarers.org.uk](mailto:saradolan@sthelenscarers.org.uk)

[www.listen4change.org](http://www.listen4change.org)



**carerstrust**  
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### St Helens Parent Carer Forum

Are you the Parent Carer of a child or young person with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) in St. Helens?

If yes, this is your Parent Carer Forum. It is run by Parent Carers for Parent Carers.





Dear Parent/Carers

### **Sponsored colour run**

The PTFA would like to thank everyone who has shown an interest in participating in the colour run or offering to volunteer on the day.

Unfortunately, we haven't achieved the numbers of runners and volunteers needed to hold such a big event, and so have made the difficult decision not to go ahead this time. We know some of you will be disappointed, but it's a busy time of year, and we understand everyone has lots of commitments, so this feels like the right thing to do in the circumstances. We may decide to revisit the colour run idea at a later date, in a different format.

We will, of course, ensure that anyone who has paid to enter the 12+/adult race has their donation returned.

### **Grand Summer Raffle**

In the meantime, the grand summer raffle will go ahead planned. Tickets have been sent out in book bags, and there are spares in the school offices. We have so many amazing prizes this year – check out our social media pages for more information. Winners will be announced on Monday 10th July!

### **Welcome BBQ**

Our next event will be the Welcome BBQ in early September, where we welcome new joiners to St Mary's and everyone else back after the summer holidays. It is one of our favourite family events; really relaxed and lots of fun. Why not join us then – we'll send further information about nearer the time.

Thank you for your support

# OUT OF SCHOOL CLUBS




**This is our game.**

[dynamocricket.co.uk](http://dynamocricket.co.uk)

Join us at:  
Newton - le - Willows Cricket Club, WA12 9XE

Session dates:  
Friday evenings, 19th May - 7th July 2023, for all children aged 8-11

Session timings:  
6:00 - 7:00 pm

Contact:  
[ianwalky112@gmail.com](mailto:ianwalky112@gmail.com)



**This is our game.**

Dynamo Cricket provides a fantastic next step for all those graduating from All Stars Cricket and the perfect introduction for all 8-11 year-olds new to the sport!

Sessions are all about playing together and developing new skills, teamwork and friendship.

Every child that registers will receive their very own Dynamo Cricket New Balance t-shirt, personalised with their name and number on the back and have access to a brand new digital app, packed with exclusive cricket content, unlockable skills challenges, quizzes and activities.

Sign up today to your nearest Dynamo Cricket centre.

[dynamocricket.co.uk](http://dynamocricket.co.uk)



**Newton-le-Willows FOOTBALL CLUB**  
[nlwfc.co.uk](http://nlwfc.co.uk)  
#FORZA NEWTON

**U9 GIRLS**

**JOIN US FOR THE 23/24 SEASON!**

WE ARE LOOKING TO RECRUIT A COUPLE OF PLAYERS FOR THE NEW SEASON!

GIRLS IN YEAR 3 OR 4 FROM SEPTEMBER



**Contact Us**

07707157233

[enquiries@nlwfc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nlwfc.co.uk)

[www.nlwfc.co.uk](http://www.nlwfc.co.uk)



**JOIN THE STORM!**

Newton Storm, your local community Rugby League club, are currently on the look out for new players and volunteers.

With age groups from Reception to Open Age, and continued success both on and off the field, it's a great time to get involved.

If you'd like to know more find us on Facebook or Twitter.

@NewtonStormARL  
NewtonStormARLFC  
[www.newtonstorm.co.uk](http://www.newtonstorm.co.uk)



**U8S**

**COME ALONG & JOIN THE STORM!**

Calling Y3 boys & girls to join our U8s team.

Training:  
Mon 6-7pm  
Wed 6-7pm  
Newton Sports Club



For more details, contact:  
Matt 07827 921707  
Jacob 07780 435526



**Big Moments of summer fun!**

Sign up today at [allstarscricket.co.uk](http://allstarscricket.co.uk) or at the centre

Join us at: Earlestown Cricket Club, Earle Street, Earlestown WA12 9NU

Session dates: Monday evenings, starting 8 May 2023 for all children aged 5-8

Session timings: 6:00 - 7:00 pm

Contact: [earlestowncc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:earlestowncc@hotmail.co.uk)





# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about AI VIRTUAL FRIENDS

Artificial intelligence – particularly in terms of how it generates natural language – has seen significant development over the last six months, with companies releasing new AI-based software or adding an AI element to existing apps (such as Snapchat, for example). One form of AI to become especially popular has been the ‘AI friend’ or chatbot, as children eagerly experiment with these new-found computer-generated companions. There are now numerous apps available with this ‘virtual friend’ functionality, with the likelihood of it being added to other successful platforms soon.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### CONTENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

AI chatbots may not always be able to recognise when content is age inappropriate or harmful and should be filtered out. So there’s a possibility that children could be exposed to offensive language or explicit material while conversing with their virtual friend. The companies producing such AI solutions are also unlikely to take responsibility for any content that their algorithms generate.

### REDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

An excessive reliance on chatbots for social interaction could potentially cause a child to begin reducing the amount of face-to-face communication they have, leading to social isolation. If young people become dependent on chatbots to provide companionship, it could very likely hinder the development of their real-life social skills.

### LACK OF SENSITIVITY

Chatbot software isn’t always sophisticated enough to pick up on subtle emotional cues or recognise signs of distress in children, as most humans would. It might therefore fail to respond appropriately. AI misinterpreting what it’s being told or replying insensitively to a young user who’s already struggling could potentially impact a child’s emotional wellbeing or exacerbate any existing emotional issues.

### UNINTENTIONAL BIAS

AI companions are only as reliable as the information they’ve been programmed with. The algorithms they use, therefore, may unintentionally promote bias, stereotypes or discriminatory behaviour (as many originate from the USA or the UK, for instance, they can display a distinctly western-centric worldview). This could lead to children developing skewed attitudes and behaviours.

### COGNITIVE LIMITATIONS

Although many are now undeniably advanced, AI-powered chatbots still have limitations in terms of understanding complex concepts, context and nuance. Depending heavily on chatbots to help with learning or solving problems may stunt the development of a child’s own powers of critical thinking, creativity and ability to engage in open-ended discussions with other people.

### PRIVACY CONCERNS

Chatbots typically collect data about users, including personal information and conversations. This is ostensibly to improve their performance as they gradually learn about our behaviour – but many experts are warning that there may be significant risks associated with how this information is stored and used (the possibility of potential breaches or misuse by third parties, for instance).

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### CHAT ABOUT CHATBOTS

If your child is already expressing an interest in AI apps, a relaxed, natural chat should help you to discover which ones they’re aware of and how they’re using them (or are planning to). Discuss these options with your child and perhaps do your own research to ensure you think they’re suitable. Once you’re totally happy, you could sit with your young one and begin exploring AI chatbots together.

### CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

If your child is keen to engage with AI chatbots, encourage them to do so in a safe environment: ideally in a shared space at home, so you can easily keep an eye and ear on their progress. Set up appropriate content filtering measures in advance – and gently remind them that you’ll be close by and ready to help with any questions or concerns that may arise.

### FIND A BALANCE

Work alongside your child to establish the right balance in terms of how they might use AI-powered chatbots – and when it’s appropriate. It’s important to make sure that children are still getting plenty of opportunities to learn to solve problems for themselves, as well as building their interpersonal skills through face-to-face conversations with friends, family members and teachers.

### TAKE CONTROL

As with any form of app or game, when it comes to AI chatbots we’d strongly recommend that you consider employing parental controls (either on the device being used or within the software itself) to manage which apps your child can download and use. This is particularly important for younger children, who may be more at risk of being upset or frightened by inappropriate content.

### RECOGNISE THE RISKS

It’s unlikely that most children will have even considered the potential risks attached to having a virtual companion. So it’s probably wise to explain some of the possible hazards and challenges of AI chatbots to your child. In particular, emphasise that AI isn’t a real person (however much it might sound like one) and may occasionally tell them something that isn’t entirely impartial or accurate.

## Meet Our Expert

A Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), Gary Henderson is the Director of IT at a large boarding school in the UK, having previously taught in schools and colleges in Britain and the Middle East. With a particular interest in digital citizenship and cyber security, he believes it is essential that we become more aware of the risks around technology, as well as the benefits.



**NOS**  
National  
Online  
Safety®  
#WakeUpWednesday



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