St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School
A community of faith and learning following Jesus in all we think, do and say
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31st October 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

Autumn 2026 - Newsletter 2

We hope you have all enjoyed a restful autumn half-term break.

As we return to school next week, the days are becoming ever shorter, the clocks have changed and the weather is turning wintry. The falling leaves remind us that winter and the festive season are approaching – a time of excitement for many, but also one that can be difficult and poignant for others.

With this in mind, and as we begin preparations for our Nativity performances and Carol Service, we want to pause and reflect on the special significance of November in the Catholic calendar.

November – A Time for Remembrance and reflection, Holy Souls and All Saints

Remembrance is an important part of school life during November. We recognise the many losses experienced within our school community and warmly invite pupils and families to visit the school reception from Wednesday next week to add the name and photograph of a loved one to our November Book of Remembrance.

The Book will be displayed on a lectern in Reception and will be taken to Mass towards the end of November, where we will offer a special dedication to all those we love and miss, before beginning our journey into Advent.

On Friday 6th November, we welcome a special visitor from the armed forces – to remember and learn about the life of a WWI soldier in the trenches. All classes between Year 1 and Year 6 will take part in the workshops – which will in turn support the short unit of literacy for remembrance across the school. Of course, we will observe Remembrance Sunday and remember the tragedy and lessons of war through a Remembrance assembly on 11th November.

Anti-Bullying Week – commences Monday 16th November starting with the annual Odd Socks Day (on Monday 16th) and assembly. Anti-Bullying theme will run throughout the week in classes as part of our PSHE curriculum and collaboration with the Anti Bullying Alliance through lessons and workshops – through the theme – 'Break the Silence'. Challenge will focus on pupils scrutinising their own face to face behaviours and also focussing on online bullying and how to stay safe online.

Moving into Advent and Christmas Celebrations

November and December are particularly busy months as the children prepare for their annual Christmas Nativity performances and Carol Service. Please refer to the school calendar for performance dates and times.

We are also delighted to be taking part in the Tri-Borough Christmas Festival again this year. Our Music Teacher, Tara McCarthy, will be leading the preparations and will share further details including dates and times, with relevant parent groups shortly.

Looking Ahead – Parent Information Sessions

The first week of the new half-term will be a busy one. As indicated on the school calendar, teachers will be holding class presentations for parents and carers, providing further information about the curriculum and expectations of the year ahead.

These sessions are in addition to the usual **parent-teacher meetings being held on 4th and 18th November** (where the school is closed to pupils from 1.15pm). Do please speak to the team if you are experiencing childcare difficulties or you would incur loss of income or hardship having to take the half days on the 4th and 18th November.

Please see the dates and times below for your information:

Tuesday 3rd November 2026

- Tuesday 3rd November 2026 **- Early Years Stay and Play** – 9am -10.30am - All parents and carers of pupils in the Early Years are invited to Stay and Play from 9am - 10.30am

- Tuesday 3rd November - Welcome to **Year 1 - 9.15am - 10.15am** - Parents/Carers are invited to a meeting/presentation from Miss Hannah - as an addition to our Parent/Teacher Consultation meetings - you will learn about the expectations of Year 1 and how to help your child. Hope to see you there.

- Tuesday 3rd November - Welcome to **Year 2 - 2pm - 3pm** - Parents/Carers are invited to a meeting/presentation from Mr Drury - as an addition to our Parent/Teacher Consultation meetings - you will learn about the expectations of Year 2 and how to help your child. Hope to see you there.

Wednesday 4th November 2026

- Wednesday 4th November - Welcome to **Year 3 - 9.15am - 10.15am** - Parents/Carers are invited to a meeting/presentation from Mrs Cox - as an addition to our Parent/Teacher Consultation meetings - you will learn about the expectations of Year 3 and how to help your child. Hope to see you there.

WEDNESDAY 4TH NOVEMBER SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED TO PUPILS FROM 1.15PM IN ORDER TO HOLD OUR PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS – which run until 5pm – please book via online invitation

Friday 6th November 2026

- Friday 6th November - Welcome to **Year 4 - 9.15am-10.15am** - Parents/Carers are invited to a meeting/presentation from Miss Noori - as an addition to our Parent/Teacher Consultation meetings - you will learn about the expectations of Year 4 and how to help your child. Hope to see you there.

- Friday 6th November - Welcome to **Year 6 - 2pm-3pm** - Parents/Carers are invited to a meeting/presentation from Miss Turrell - as an addition to our Parent/Teacher Consultation meetings - you will learn about the expectations of Year 6 and how to help your child. Hope to see you there.

Thursday 12th November 2026 (meeting being held after Year 5 pupils have returned from Sayers Croft)

- Welcome to **Year 5 – 2pm-3pm** - Parents/Carers are invited to a meeting/presentation from our Year 5 teachers Miss O'Rourke and Miss Cant - as an addition to our Parent/Teacher Consultation meetings - you will learn about the expectations of Year 5 and how to help your child. Hope to see you there.

- **WEDNESDAY 18th NOVEMBER SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED TO PUPILS FROM 1.15PM IN ORDER TO HOLD OUR PARENT/TEACHER MEETINGS – which run until 5pm – please book via online invitation**

Sayers Croft (9th – 11th November) – Year 5 Residential: Pupils in Year 5 will have been sent information, consent and medical information forms that MUST be sent back to school. If you are yet to return this information please do asap, or your child will not be able to attend the residential. We will be making final preparations for our visit to Sayers Croft early this coming week.

Second round of Flu Vaccinations – Wednesday 2nd December. If you wish for your child to receive the vaccination and you have not already signed up for it – please do so asap. If you need any support, please speak to the school office.

Fundraising during Autumn Term:

We would like to thank everyone for supporting our charities over the last half term – Jeans for Genes, McMillan Coffee Morning (Cancer Research UK), CAFOD Fast Day and our Harvest Festival food bank collection.

Over the coming half term, we would like to undertake some school fundraising to help us to fund some additional curriculum topic workshops e.g. Education Group and Big Foot workshops which are fun and engaging for the children. We will be looking to hold own clothes days for **bring a bottle, bring a tin, bring a box** (over three Fridays – dates to follow) so we can hold a fantastic Christmas Tombola Festival – which we wish to hold on Wednesday 16th December after school. We will also be selling tickets for our Christmas raffle too which will be drawn at the Tombola Festival between 3.15pm and 4.30pm.

We would like to congratulate our Betsy (Year 3) and her family and friends for taking part in the Great South Run recently – raising money for Cancer Research UK. As you will know, Betsy's Go Fund Me page was posted onto the school website and was also emailed out to all our families. Betsy has managed to raise £4,230.00 so far and is currently £270 short of her 100% target! We are asking for last minute donations from our community to help Betsy reach her full target, therefore, if you can, please donate even the smallest amount (and tick the Gift Aid Box if you work) – so that Betsy can achieve her goal! Finally, thank you to those who may have donated already😊.

Attendance Policy: Please see our school Attendance Policy for your information, please note that lateness does count towards overall attendance – in particular after 9.30am – which means that your child is marked as absent for the AM session of the day.

The target attendance for the year is 96% - and as we know, attendance directly impacts a child's attainment and progress. Please make sure your child comes to school as much as possible – of course sickness is unavoidable, please see the information and advice on managing winter illness below.

Winter Illnesses – Please see the UK Health Security Agency guidelines on managing winter illnesses – AND guidance on pupils staying home when unwell, hand hygiene, catching coughs and sneezes and getting vaccinated. Please go to the NHS website to support parents and carers on managing their family's health.

Applications for Reception Class 2027 (current Nursery age children**). The application deadline is 15th January 2027**. We will be holding a parent/carer Reception Class 2027 meeting and presentation for parents and carers on **Tuesday 24th November at 10am** (one of our school tour dates). We hope you will be able to join us for the meeting where we can support you in making your applications.

School Tours - for families looking to register their child at SMoA school tours will take place on Tuesday **10th November 2026, Tuesday 17th November 2026 and Tuesday 24th November**. Please note that a Reception Class 2027 meeting and presentation will take place on Tuesday 24th November – as well as the usual school tour. Please call the school office to book your place, we look forward to seeing you there.

Important Free School Meal Eligibility Changes

From September 2026, all children in households receiving Universal Credit will qualify for free school meals, regardless of household income.

Although all pupils at St Mary of the Angels already receive free school meals, it is still important to check your eligibility and register if you qualify.

Why? Pupil Premium funding will remain linked to the existing income threshold of £7,400. For every eligible primary pupil, our school receives £1,550 per year to provide additional support, resources and opportunities.

Thank you to those who have already submitted a check. If you haven't already done so please check your eligibility using the quick and confidential London Grid for Learning checker by searching St. Mary Angels Catholic Primary School at: https://www.lgfl.net/online-services/free-school-meals

If you would like further information please see previous comms here: Free School Meals.

New Lunch Menu

Our new Autumn/Winter lunch menu will start on Monday 2nd November. Parents of children with medical dietary requirements have been emailed their child's new menu directly. Please take some time to look through the new menu with your child so they are familiar with the changes. You can view the menu here: A/W Menu If you have any questions, please speak to the school office.

Year 6 Secondary Transfer reminder: We hope that all Year 6 parents and carers submitted their final secondary choices by 31st October – if you experienced problems in any way – please let us know straight away.

Finally, please do visit the school's online calendar to keep up to date on events in school.

With very kindest regards to you all,

SMoA Team