



ST PHILIP'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hello!

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this newsletter finds you all well and a very happy new year to all our children, parents & families.

Please read this newsletter with key dates and information to share for this term.

Heartfelt thank you!

I wish to send my sincere thanks to all the parents who gave a gift at Christmas to the staff or myself. We were sincerely touched by your kindness, wishes and generosity. Thank you!

Catholic School pupil profile

Curious and **Active** Pupils are growing to be **curious** about everything; and **active** in their engagement with the world, changing what they can for the better.

What does this mean? Catholic schools help their pupils grow by leading pupils to be **curious** about the universe and all human activity, and to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

Pope's Prayer Intentions

January - For prayer with the Word of God. Let us pray that praying with the Word of God be nourishment for our lives and a source of hope in our communities, helping us to build a more fraternal and missionary Church.

February - For children with incurable diseases. Let us pray that children suffering from incurable diseases and their families receive the necessary medical care and support, never losing strength and hope

Contact Details

It is very important that school has the most up to date contact details of your telephone numbers. **If you have changed your contact details**, please pop into the office and let the school know. We want to ensure that we can contact you directly in the case of an emergency or if your child falls ill or has an injury at school during the school day.

Communications

To communicate and share key information with you, we use ARBOR, DOJOS & email/X and our school website. Please ensure that you have signed up and are receiving the most up to date information about school and your children. If you are concerned you are not receiving any information, please call our school office - 0121 558 1643.

St Philip's
Catholic Primary School
Messenger Road,
Smethwick, B66 3DU

Tel: 0121 558 1643
www.st-philips.sandwell.sch.uk
Principal: Mrs Carmel Hinton

School Uniform

Thank you Parents for your support with our school uniform policy at St Philip's Catholic Primary School. A gentle reminder! please **WRITE YOUR CHILD'S NAME** on their items of clothing e.g. coats, jumpers or cardigans.



Birthdays

Through our Catholic Social Teaching we reflect on the unique human person, one way we would like to celebrate every child is to invite them to come into school in their own clothes. Your child is welcome to have the company of our 'birthday bear' for the day & can come and visit me for a birthday gift!

Polite reminder — Hairstyles

Thank you for continuing to support our policy on appropriate hairstyles for school. Just a reminder that during term time there should be no hair sculptures or tram lines, shaving, highlights or hair colouring of any description. Extreme hairstyles should only be considered at the beginning of the summer holiday. Please continue to support us this term. Thank you.

Jewellery

Please take care not to send your children into school with looped earrings, necklaces or expensive pieces of jewellery. It is important to note that jewellery can be broken or lost in school and not suitable for play or PE activities.

Medical Needs

Please let us know if your child's medical needs have changed. It is very important that you contact school and let us know or pop in so we can support your child's medical needs to ensure your child is safe.

We would like to remind all families that our school is a **nut-free environment**. This means that **no nuts or nut products** should be brought into school in any form, including in packed lunches, snacks, or baked goods, for example- **Nut spreads - peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, Nutella or Cereal bars** - many contain nuts or are processed in facilities with nuts.


Please note! that in our school we have staff and children who have nut allergies or other allergies that can be a threat to life. Please support us with keeping our school environment safe. Thank you.



Healthy Playtime Snacks and healthy lunchboxes

We ask you to only send healthy snacks for playtimes and lunchtimes. For playtime a piece of fruit is ideal and school provides this! A biscuit, very small chocolate bar or small bag of low fat content crisps is also acceptable. **Big bags of crisps, high sugar snacks or big chocolate bars are not healthy snacks and are not suitable for playtimes. We don't want to 'ban' any foods in moderation but we do need to ask you to keep a close eye on playtime snacks and help us to make sure all snacks are as healthy as possible.**

Similarly at lunchtimes, please can we ask you to ensure lunchboxes don't contain big bags of crisps, big chocolate bars or any other high fat or high sugar products. A small bag of lower



fat crisps, a biscuit or a very small chocolate are acceptable - but please try to keep high fat or high sugar foods to healthy levels.

We want the children to be able to enjoy a balanced diet and we feel that 'banning' any foods is at odds with making healthy choices. We would much rather help the children understand how to enjoy 'everything in moderation' and encourage them to make healthy choices wherever possible, enjoying treats in moderation. Thank you for supporting us

Water bottles

We would request that your child brings a filled water bottle into school daily. We want to ensure that your child is hydrated in school throughout the day. However, we do ask and request that children choose water instead of cordial. We also request that children do not wonder around school drinking their water bottles and would wish for the water bottles to be stored in their class box.

Please be assured that your child has access to a drink at any point in the day on their request. But, to avoid accidents, unnecessary spillages, or damaged/lost water bottles, we are reminding our children to place their water bottles to the allocated area for their class. Thank you for your support with this matter.

AIP Catering

Free School Meals and KS1 Universal Free School Meals children - If your child is a Free School Meal child or is in **EYFS or KS1** they are entitled to a free school lunch which would be a hot meal from the school canteen. If you would rather send your child in with their own packed lunch you are welcome to do so (please remember no nuts (including Nutella), tomatoes or oranges as we have children with severe allergies in school). Please book online on **SCHOOL FOOD UNITED TO BOOK YOUR CHILD'S PREFERRED LUNCH OPTION**. If you are having trouble logging in or creating your School Food United account, please come and see Mrs Slater in the School Office.

We would like to remind you! That if your child is in Year 3 now and in a key stage 2 class and **YOU ARE NOT** able to access Free School Meals, then let us know because this could mean that you need to pay for your child's lunches. we are here to help, so please let us know. If you pay for school meals please clear your balance daily/weekly and this can be done on the app on School Food United and also by cash at the school office.



Reading at home

Reading is a key life skill and through our Read Write Inc Reading Scheme we support children with skills that support children to read with confidence, enjoyment and have a love for reading. We really want to share with you how important it is to read with your child at home. Your child is given a discussion book or reading book with a reading diary that goes home daily.

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We encourage parents to comment in the reading diary when your child is heard read at home as this helps us with tracking the progress. A big thank you to the parents who joined in our parent workshop!

We really appreciate your parent feedback and have taken into consideration your comments to promote better relationships with our parents.

Safeguarding

We are dedicated to safeguarding our young people at St Philip's Catholic Primary School. If you have any concerns with safeguarding, then please speak with a member of staff or myself and we will endeavour to help and support.

Could I please request that if your child has an injury that has happened at home or outside of school could you please be so kind to let us know. Telling us would avoid myself from contacting you unnecessarily.

If you do have a concern or would like to talk to someone in confidence about a safeguarding concern, then I am the Designated Safeguarding leader (DSL) in school. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer is **Mrs Anslow** and Safeguarding Officers are **Mr Padaton & Miss Reaney**. Our safeguarding policy is available on our website to help and support you with how safeguarding works in our local authority of Sandwell and the Multi academy Company of the Emmaus MAC.

Attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Please ensure that you endeavour to get your child to school and in on time for **8:50 am**. The playground opens at **8:40am and the official start to the school day is 8:50am**.

1. If your child arrives to school after the registers close, they will receive a late mark that is recorded on your child's attendance record.
2. If your child is ill and is unable to come to school, you must call school on the first day of their absence (and any further days) to inform the school office of the reason for the absence. Any medical appointments that are unavoidably in school hours must show proof of appointment to the school office. The school office number is 0121 558 1643.
3. On the third consecutive day of any absence, school will carry out a welfare check via telephone or a home visit.
4. If your child's attendance drops and is concerning then you will be invited to a meeting with school staff such as the learning mentor, Attendance Officer/Vice Principal to offer support with improving your child's attendance.

Please also remember that taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling and we ask for your co-operation to not take your child away in school time as this will be UNAUTHORISED and can result in a fine from the LOCAL AUTHORITY.



ST PHILIP'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

PTA

Our sincere thanks once again to our PTA -Parent Teacher Association for all your support given to St Philip's. We look forward to the next school event!

Wraparound

Please see below details of our Wraparound before and after school. Please contact the School Office for more details.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW VIBRANT WRAPAROUND CARE PROGRAMME AT ST PHILIP'S SCHOOL!

Are you looking for a fun, safe, and supportive environment for your child before and after school?

We're thrilled to announce the launch of our Wraparound Care programme! Designed to provide children with a creative, active, and caring atmosphere outside regular school hours. Our programme is all about flexibility and fun, making sure every child has a great time while offering peace of mind to busy parents.

Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity! Spaces are limited, and we want to ensure that all families have access to high-quality Wraparound Care. Book early!

REGISTER TODAY & SECURE YOUR SPOT!

WRAPAROUND CARE PROGRAMME AT ST. PHILIPS

Programme Highlights:

Flexible Hours to Suit Your Needs!

- Before School Care: 7:30 am to 8:40 am
- After School Care: 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm
- Need extra time? We've got you covered with extended care options!

Engaging and Fun Activities!

Arts & Crafts, Sports, Reading, Homework Help - there's something for every child!

Affordable Pricing:

We want our Wraparound Care to be affordable and accessible to all. Check out our competitive rates:

Breakfast Club:

- 7:30 am - 8:40 am: £5.00
- 8:00 am - 8:40 am: £3.00

After School Care:

- 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm: £6.00
- 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm: £9.00
- 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm: £10.00
- After Activity Club (4:15 pm - 6:00 pm): £5.00
- Late Pickup Fee: £1 per minute after 6:00 pm!

How to Enrol? It's Easy!

1. Complete the Registration Form (Available on our website or school office)
2. Book your sessions using the Arbor App
3. Make Payments via Arbor for your convenience

For more details visit <https://www.st-philips.sandwell.sch.uk/Page/Detail/wraparound-care>

Tax-Free Childcare & Other Financial Support

You may be able to save money on Wraparound Care through Tax-Free Childcare!

Here's how it works:

Tax-Free Childcare can help pay for before and after-school care if:

- You are eligible for Tax-Free Childcare
- The childcare provider accepts Tax-Free Childcare payments

How to Check Eligibility?

- Visit the Childcare Choices website to see if you qualify
- Use the government's childcare calculator for more details

How Does Tax-Free Childcare Work?

- You can open an account at any time of the year
- Deposit money whenever needed and use it for childcare
- Withdraw any unused funds at any time

Additionally, you can also use Universal Credit Childcare to help pay for Wraparound Care.

WHY CHOOSE OUR WRAPAROUND CARE?

CONVENIENCE: Designed to meet the needs of busy families.

FUN: We keep kids engaged and entertained with exciting activities.

QUALITY CARE: Our team is fully trained and dedicated to your child's safety and well-being.

EMMAUS CATHOLIC MAC

SCAN ME TO BOOK

Nursery places — Please see the information below!

We have nursery places available for this term! If you have a child that has turned 3 years old or will be within the term, please get in contact and we will be happy to support with completing the application forms and supporting you.

St Philip's Catholic Primary School
Learning and working together through Christ

Nursery Places Available

FREE 30 HOURS

FOR WORKING PARENTS

Ring us now on 0121 558 1643 to find out more

Messenger Road, Smethwick, B66 3DU

School places

We have places in our current Reception & Year 1 classes. Please come and talk to us if you want to find out more and visit our lovely school.

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Keep in touch

We are here to serve you and it is our pleasure to help. Your child's safety, happiness and academic progress are the reason why every single member of staff is here. If you are concerned about any aspect of school life - no matter how small - it's really important to let us know. The sooner we know about things the sooner we can do our best to sort things out. The Teachers and Teaching Assistants can take quick messages on the door before and after school - if you need a longer, private conversation please call the school and the member of staff that you need to speak with will be in contact with you.

Change of circumstances

It's important for us to know that if your personal circumstance have changed you may be entitled to Free School meals. You can help the school to access precious funding for years to come (called Pupil Premium) by registering for free school meals Please apply for free school meals if you are on a low income and / or receive benefits. As well as receiving a free school meal very day (if you choose to take it) you will generate significant funding for our school for many years to come - finding that is all spent on better provision for the children. If you think that you may qualify, please pop into school and speak to Mrs Slater.

Our School Website

Please remember to visit our school website which is full of useful and up to date information. Please log on and have a look. You can post a message on the guest book page to let us know your thoughts and take a look at our Twitter page and blog.

The address is : www.st-philips.sandwell.sch.uk/.

School term dates

Spring term 2026

- **Term starts: Monday 5th January 2026 Children return back to school**
- Friday 13th February 2026 children break up for half term
- Half-term holiday: Monday 16th February 2026 to Friday 20th February 2026
- **Monday 23rd February 2026 children return to school**
- Term ends: Friday 27th March 2026 Children Break up for Easter
- Easter Holiday: Monday 30th March 2026 to Friday 10th April 2026

Summer term 2026

- **Term starts - Monday 13th April 2026 children return back to school**
 - *Bank Holiday - Monday 4th May 2026 (school closed)*
 - Friday 22nd May 2026 Children break up for half term
 - *Half-term holiday: Monday 25th May 2026 to Friday 29th May 2026*
 - **Monday 1st June 2026 Children return to school**
 - Friday 26th June 2026 – *Training Day (School closed for children)*
 - Term ends: Thursday 16th July 2026
 - *Inset Day: Friday 17th July 2026*
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- **School Closes for the Summer: Thursday 16th July 2026**



Summer holiday starts: Friday 17th July 2026

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Dates for your diary ...

Month of January	RSPB The Big School Birdwatch
w/c 9 TH February	<p>Mental Health Week</p> <p>Safer Internet Day - parents invited to class workshop in the school hall -</p> <p>Tuesday 10th Feb afternoon -</p> <p>Year 5 1:15-1:45pm</p> <p>Year 6 2:20-2:45 pm</p> <p>Wednesday 11th Feb afternoon-</p> <p>Year 3- 1:15-1:45pm</p> <p>Year 4- 2:20-2:45 pm</p> <p>Thursday 11th February afternoon -</p> <p>Year 1- 1:15-1:45pm</p> <p>Year 2- 2:20-2:45 pm</p>
Wednesday 18 th February	<p>Ash Wednesday - MASS IN THE PARISH OF St Philip Neri Church</p> <p>Start of Lent</p>
Monday 23 rd February	<p>Return to school</p> <p>Year 3 Swimming</p>
Friday 27 th February	Lent Family Feast Day
Friday 5 th March	World Book Day
W/C 2 ND March	Beginning of Assessment Week
W/C 9 th March	British Science Week
Friday 13 th March	International Day of Mathematics
Tuesday 17 th March	St Patrick's Day - Wear Green for the day
W/C 23 rd March	HOLY WEEK Assemblies

Please note that dates may be added and amended.

With every good wish,

Mrs C Hinton

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