Don't hide your light! Let it shine for all; let your good deeds glow for all to see, so that they will praise your heavenly Father. – *Matthew 5:16*

St Mary and St Thomas CE Primary School Newsletter

SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT

This week we want to highlight the importance of PEGI (Pan European Game Information) age ratings on video games. These ratings are designed to help parents and carers make informed choices about the games their children play. Just like film classifications, PEGI ratings indicate the suitability of a game's content for different age groups. They take into account factors such as violence, language, fear, gambling references and many more factors. Allowing children to play games that are not age appropriate can expose them to these and behaviours they are not yet ready to process. We encourage families to check the PEGI symbol on the front of every games purchased or played. Talking to children about why certain games are not suitable yet can also help them understand boundaries and build healthy digital habits.

SCHOOL CLOSED THIS FRIDAY

We are back open Monday morning as usual.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Our School Christmas Dinner this year will take place on Friday 12th December. All children are able to opt to have one. And your child should have bought home a letter with details this week. Please complete the slip on the letter if your child is on packed lunches but would like a Christmas dinner and please pay on Arbor if you are not entitled to free school meals. If your child already has school dinners they will automatically receive a Christmas dinner that day.

NURSERY AND RECEPTION CAROLS AROUND THE TREE

All Nursery and Reception parents are invited to join us for Carols Around the Tree on Friday 12th December at 9:15am in the school hall.

Y4 PARENT INSIGHT

Thank you to all Y4 parents who joined us the Y4 Parents Insight session this Wednesday, we hope you found it useful.

RECEPTION STAY AND PLAY SESSIONS

Thank you to all Reception families who joined us for our 'Maths in Class' stay and play sessions, we hip you found it useful and fun!

NURSERY FAMILY LEARNING

Thanks to all Nursery families who joined us for a family learning session this Thursday afternoon. We hope you enjoyed it!

PANTO / PARTY DAY

A reminder to pay for panto for your Reception to Y6 children as soon as possible. Our Christmas Pantomime trip this year is to see 'Dick Whittington' at the Theatre Royal. Reception and KS1 are booked to see the show on Monday 15th December and KS2 on Tuesday 16th December. Children will walk to the theatre and will be back in time for lunch. The trip is now open on Arbor and **tickets cost £13** (please note there was an error in last week's newsletter, apologies!). For lunch all children with be provided with a party box lunch free of charge (this includes those on packed lunches), the part box normally consists of chicken nuggets and chips. Then in the afternoon there will be a Christmas party for the children in the school hall, so party dress for all!

Barton Close, WA10 2HS **Tel** 01744 734320 **Email** stmarythomas@three-saints.org.uk

Web www.sm-st.co.uk

IMPORTANT REMINDER: AFTERSCHOOL AND BREAKFAST CLUB BOOKINGS

Please ensure that your child is booked onto Afterschool Club (ASC) or Breakfast Club before they attend. This is essential so that we can make sure there are enough staff members to supervise all children safely. Booking in advance also helps us avoid unnecessary phone calls home and prevents any worry or confusion for your child if no parent arrives to collect them when they were expected to be in ASC.

If your child is booked into ASC, a member of staff will collect them directly from their classroom at the end of the school day. This helps avoid disruption and ensures a smooth, reassuring transition for your child.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.

HEADLICE AND WORMS

We have had a few cases of headlice reported to us recently. Please regularly check your child's hair and treat if required. We have also had a report of worms- please encourage hand hygiene particularly under finger nails. Thank you for your support.

NHS guidance on headlice https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/

NHS guidance on worms https://www.nhs.uk/symptoms/worms-in-humans/

PARKING

Parents and Carers who drive to carefully read and follow the signage around the school, including access instructions and the yellow road markings. Please note: The road directly in front of the school is restricted to pedestrian and cycle access only during the following times: 8:00–9:30am and 2:00–4:00pm, Monday to Friday. This means that no vehicles are permitted to drive along this road during these hours. Your cooperation helps ensure the **safety** of our children and the smooth running of the school day.

RECEPTION 2026

All of our current nursery cohort go up to reception next September 2026. The application to apply for their place is now open and the closing date for you to submit your child's application is 15 January 2026. Please click the link above next Monday and follow the steps to apply for their primary school place.

You will be notified on 16 April 2026 confirming your child's school place.

Please note, your child is sadly not guaranteed a place in our school reception despite attending our nursery. This is a council and admissions decision not the schools. If we could, we would undoubtedly have all of our nursery children continue their St Mary and St Thomas journey and attend our reception class.

Please do apply as soon as you are able and definitely before the 15th January 2026

https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/article/2868/Applying-for-primary-school-for-September-2026

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FAMILY OF FAITH

A reflection from… Miss Hughes

As the weather starts to turn colder and the nights draw in closer, it's easy to notice the world becoming darker and quieter. But in school, this time of year is filled with light, laughter, and so many joyful things to look forward to. December always brings a special kind of excitement, and it gives us the chance to pause, take a breath, and enjoy moments that bring our whole school community together.

As we move into December, we have so many joyful things to look forward to. One of the first joyful signs of the season is the Christmas tree going up in school. Seeing it sparkle in the hall with all of our decorations reminds us that something magical is on the way. Another highlight is our Breakfast with Santa; there is something wonderful about seeing the delight on everyone's faces as Santa arrives. These moments help us remember that joy often comes from being together. We also have our school pantomime trip - a chance to laugh, shout, sing along, and enjoy a story brought to life on stage. Pantomimes remind us that joy can be loud, playful, and shared with everyone in the audience.

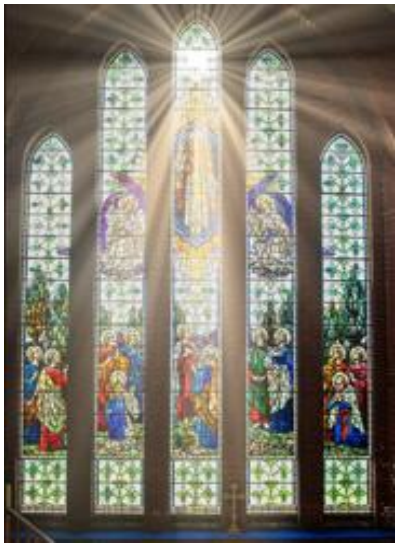
During this season, we can also reflect on the deeper meaning of joy. The Bible reminds us of this in Luke 2:10: "I bring you good news of great joy for all people." This message encourages us to look for joy not only in big events, but in kindness, generosity, and the moments when we uplift one another.

As we look ahead to December, may we welcome joy in all its shapes - quiet, sparkly, silly, shared - and carry it with us into the new year.

Our **Christian value** focus this half term is…

Joy

We have looked this week into joy around us. Children were excited to share their joy this week with a number of children bringing in sporting awards, which filled them with joy and pride.



St Thomas Church
Peter Street, St Helens, WA10 2EB
01744 732463 / stthomaseccleston@gmail.com

Sunday Services
Parish Mass: 9.30am – 10.30am
Evening prayer: 4.30pm

"Seeking to love God and neighbour in the community of which we are part."

BEHAVIOUR MATTERS!

Ready, Respectful, Resilient

Mr Pow's Golden Book

Each week, staff write the names of children who have gone above and beyond in Mr Pow's Golden Book. It is so exciting when the names and reasons are read out in our celebration assembly!

It may be that a child has been ready to learn every moment of every day. Maybe they have been incredibly respectful to a visitor or a friend. Or maybe they have been resilient in a way that has *wowed* the staff!

Class Dojos

Children can receive Dojo points for being ready, respectful and resilient throughout the school day. They receive 5 Dojos if they read five times, which they should do every single week.

Each child has their own Dojo character and milestones are celebrated with certificates and prizes each time they meet one.

We celebrate milestones such as 100, 200 and 300 dojos in assembly too!

Headteachers Award Winners

Nursery – Lyla- For persevering to ride a bike.

R – Ginevra- For always working hard and never giving up.

Y1 –Arthur- For trying so hard with writing.

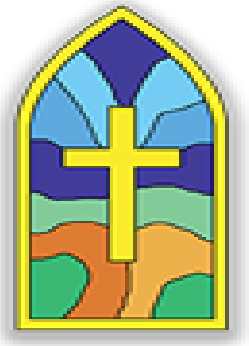
Y2 – Sam- Super effort in class

Y3 – Poppie- For always being ready and respectful in every lesson

Y4 –

Y5 –

Y6 – Muhammed- Being a star pupil every day.



Moments Matter, Attendance Counts!

Our school day starts at 8.45am; that's when the doors open!

Children should arrive at school on time, so they don't miss any learning! Regularly missing lessons can have a negative impact on wellbeing and on your academic achievement too.

Being on time is such an important skill and sets you up for a life of success and positive wellbeing!

Children should be in school EVERY DAY… unless you're poorly. Every day counts!

Every minute in school is a learning minute. The research tells us that children who are in school every day achieve more, and their wellbeing is better too!

Please let school know if you'll be absent before 9.15am or we'll have to contact you to check in.

Whole school attendance this year to date…

95.1%

Whole school attendance last week

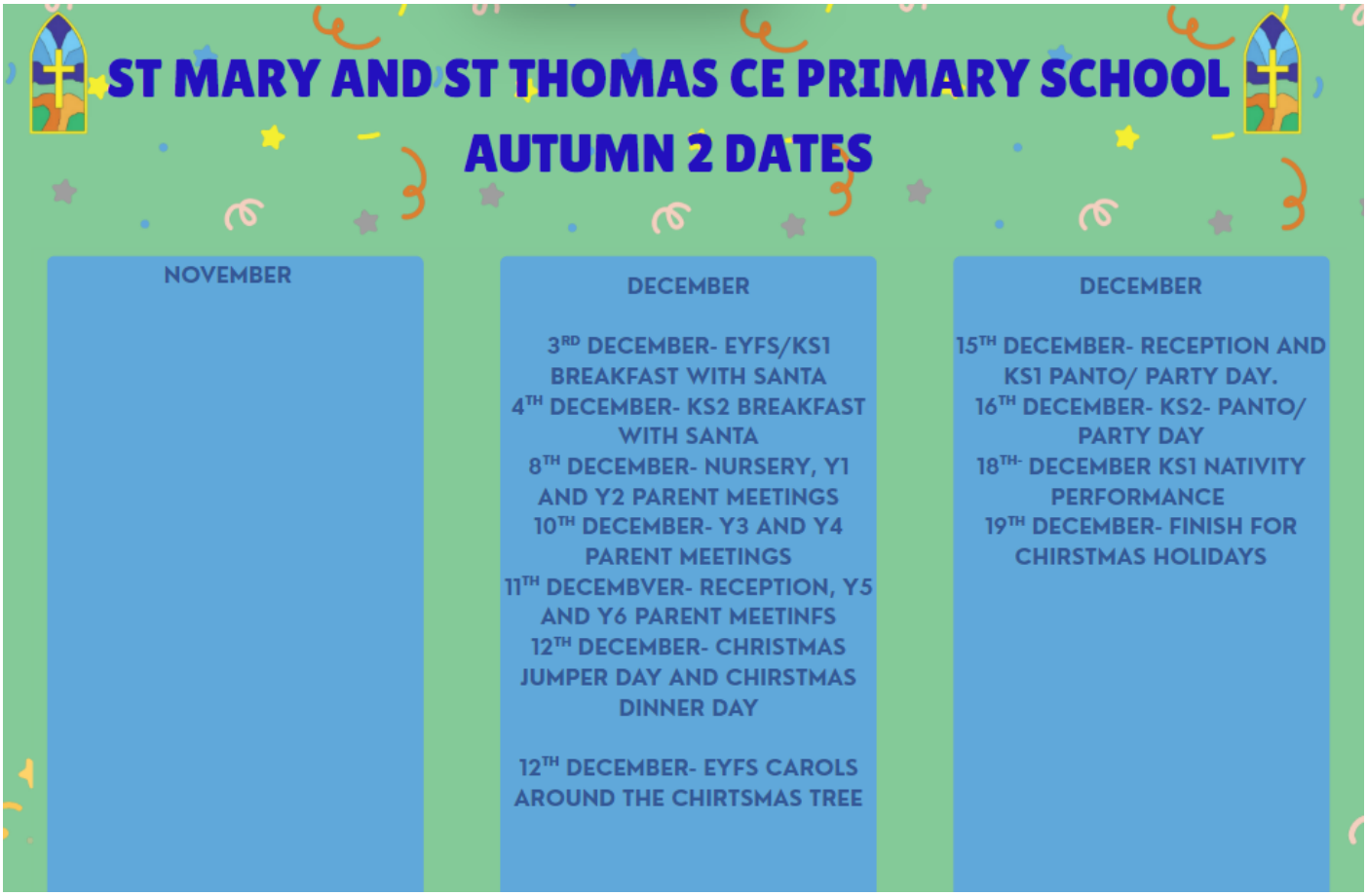
94.4%

Class attendance winners last week…

Y4 with 98.9%

Class Attendance Last Week

YN – 90.3%
YR – 93.8%
Y1 – 89.7%
Y2 – 94.1%
Y3 – 98.3%
Y4 – 98.9%
Y5 – 94.5%
Y6 – 93.7%



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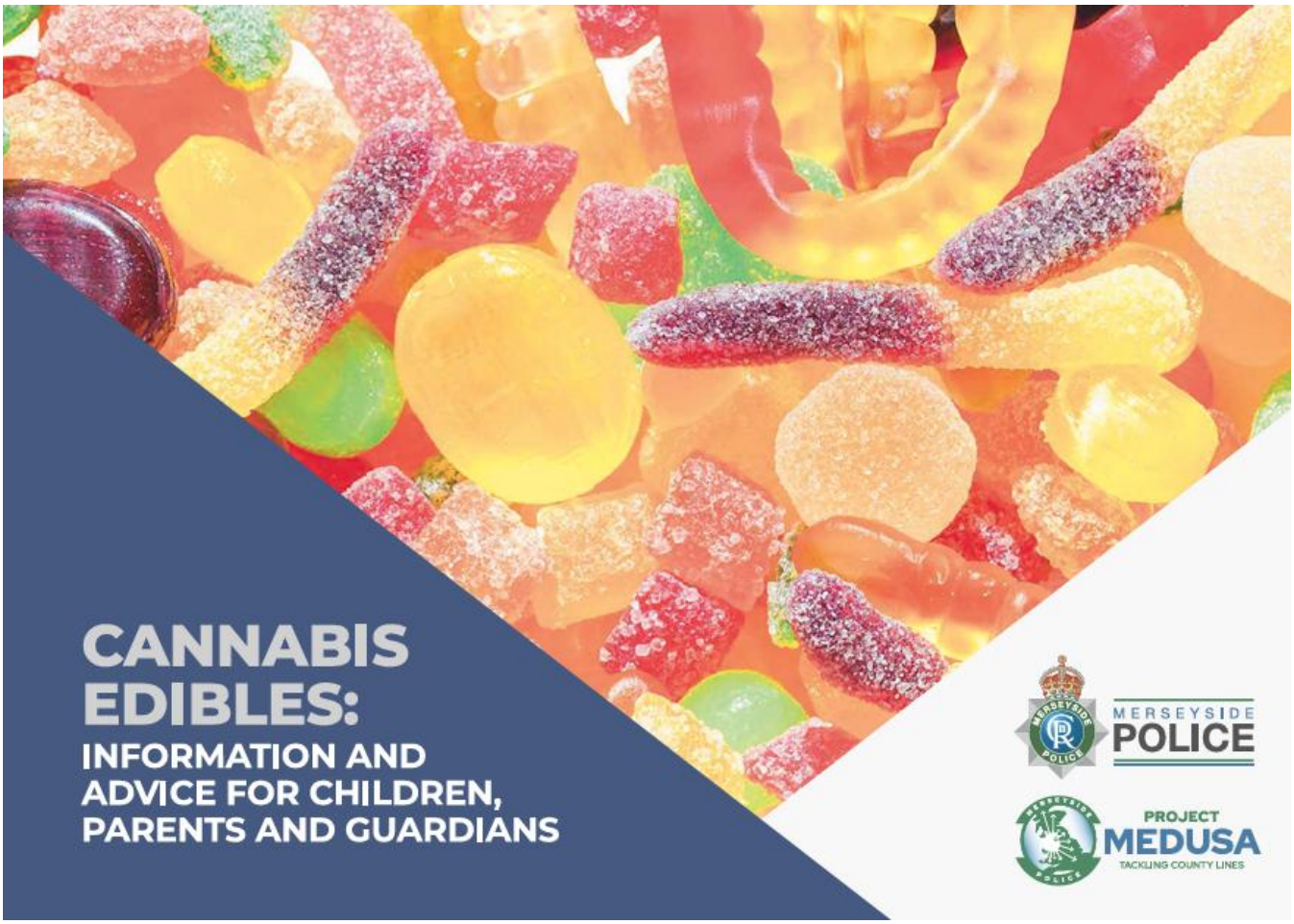


CANNABIS EDIBLES:

INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR CHILDREN, PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

MERSEYSIDE POLICE

PROJECT MEDUSA
TACKLING COUNTY LINES

WHAT ARE CANNABIS EDIBLES?

Laced with a mood altering ingredient from cannabis, cannabis edibles are an illegal and really strong 'sweet' aimed at young people/teenagers. They come in the form of sweets, chocolate and drinks. Although cannabis edibles contain an element of cannabis, they do not have the smell or appearance of cannabis. Instead, they look and smell like a shop bought item but are much stronger than other cannabis products.

PURCHASE AND SUPPLY

Due to being illegal in the UK, cannabis edibles are generally purchased through networks such as social media outlets including TikTok, Snapchat, and Instagram. It is because of these modern communication methods for supply and purchase, young people are able to access cannabis edibles at the touch of a button.

CAN YOU IDENTIFY CANNABIS EDIBLES?

Cannabis edibles can be difficult to identify. Sometimes the packaging differs slightly from shop bought items. Differences are in the form of appearance, spelling or poor quality packaging. Below are examples of shop bought items and how they compare to cannabis edibles.

Shop bought items		Purchased cannabis edibles
	Change of name Removal of additional logos Different font for text	
	Change of name Removal of additional text Amended logo	
	Change of logo Removal of additional text Change of colour scheme	
	Small change to title Decreased package quality Details removed	
	Change in colour scheme Change of package type Poor quality packaging	

THE EFFECTS OF CANNABIS EDIBLES

Cannabis edibles are much stronger than other cannabis products. Unlike smoked cannabis, swallowed cannabis is much easier to be consumed but takes longer to take effect. Young people are likely to eat too many due to the delayed effect. Eating one sweet is equivalent to smoking one cannabis joint.

Comparison point	Cannabis edibles	Cannabis joint
THC Strength	10-15mg per sweet	12mg
Time of impact	30-60 minutes	10-15 seconds
Length of impact	Up to three hours	1-2 hours

Short term effects

- Paranoia
- Anxiety
- Hallucinations
- Dry mouth
- Nausea
- Disorientation, confusion
- Dry, red eyes
- Changes in visual perception
- Increased appetite and thirst
- Changes in perception of time

Long term effects

- Changes in perception of time
- Loss of short-term memory
- Poor educational outcome
- Dependency
- Lack of motivation
- Poor sleep
- Longer term increased anxiety
- Increased risk of developing mental health illness
- Problems with thinking and understanding

My child has taken cannabis edibles.
WHAT DO I DO?

Stay calm and try not to panic.
Assess the situation and gather the facts.

What information would be good to know?

It may not always be possible but there are pieces of information which would be beneficial to know if medical professionals are required. This information includes:

1. Details of the child (age, name, medical history etc.)
2. What actually happened? Did the child digest cannabis edibles or is it believed to have happened?
3. What type of edible were they?
4. Retain any packaging
5. When were the edibles consumed?
6. Has your child consumed any other substances/alcohol?

Is the child conscious and responsive but not themselves?

If the chid is conscious and responsive but not themselves as a result of cannabis edibles, gather the facts and **telephone 111 for advice and additional information.**

Is the child coherent, conscious and responsive?

If the child is stable, speak to your child at an appropriate time.

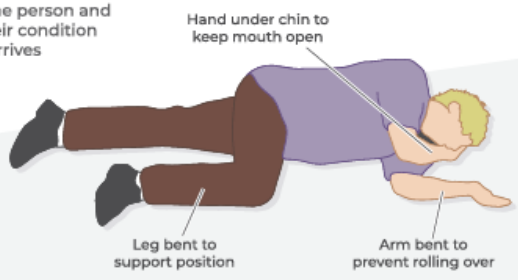
⚠ **If the family pet accidentally eats cannabis edibles seek veterinary treatment.**

⚠ **Is speech slurred?**
Is the pulse rate elevated?
Are they disorientated, unresponsive or unconscious?

Call 999 without delay.

If a person is unconscious but breathing and has no other life-threatening conditions, they should be placed in the recovery position following the 9 steps below:

1. With the person lying on their back, kneel on the floor at their side.
2. Extend the arm nearest you at a right angle to their body with their palm facing up.
3. Take their other arm and fold it so the back of their hand rests on the cheek closest to you, and hold it in place.
4. Use your free hand to bend the person's knee farthest from you to a right angle.
5. Carefully roll the person onto their side by pulling on the bent knee.
6. Ensure the bent arm is supporting the head.
7. Open their airway by gently tilting their head back and lifting their chin.
8. Check that nothing is blocking their airway.
9. Stay with the person and monitor their condition until help arrives



For further information or support regarding drugs and alcohol, please contact your local service:

For young people living in...

St Helens
Young Person's Drug and Alcohol Team (YPDAAT)
01744 675605
ypdaat@sthelens.gov.uk

Liverpool
River Young People Support Service
0151 706 9747
liverpool.info@cgl.org.uk

Wirral
Response
0151 666 4123
response@wirral.gov.uk

Sefton
Rise Up | Change Grow Live
0151 203 9755 (Option 1 for South and Option 2 for North)
sefton.service@cgl.org.uk

Knowsley
Engage | Change Grow Live
0151 482 6291
knowsley@cgl.org.uk

For adults living in...

St Helens
St Helens Integrated Recovery Service | Change Grow Live
01744 410752
Sthelens.info@cgl.org.uk

Liverpool
River Drug and Alcohol Support Service
0151 706 7888
Liverpool.info@cgl.org.uk

Wirral
Wirral Ways | Change Grow Live
0151 556 1335
wirral.services@cgl.org.uk

Sefton
Change Grow Live
0151 318 2804
seftonyp.info@cgl.org.uk

Knowsley
Knowsley Integrated Recovery Service | Change Grow Live
0151 482 6291
knowsely@cgl.org.uk

If you think that someone is supplying cannabis edibles in your local area please contact **Merseyside Police on 101 or visit www.merseyside.police.uk**

If you prefer to remain anonymous contact **CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111**

MERSEYSIDE POLICE

PROJECT MEDUSA
TACKLING COUNTY LINES

Believe in ourselves, each other and God; Achieve in all we do; Shine every day!

Compassion, Joy, Thankfulness, Forgiveness, Hope, Perseverance

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Is it okay if I haven't cried?

How do I go back to school?

When will I stop feeling like this?

Why do I feel like this?

WINSTON'S WISH now

When grief feels too heavy, you can get FREE, instant grief support via text or WhatsApp (13+), phone, email, or live chat. Open on weekdays, excluding bank holidays. Please visit our website to find current opening hours.

07418 341 800

ask@winstonswish.org

08088 020 021

winstonswish.org

Winston's Wish is here for young people (aged 25 and under) when someone dies.

WINSTON'S WISH

Giving hope to grieving children

Registered Charity Number 1061359 (England and Wales), SC041140 (Scotland).

Online relationship support for parents

Parents in this area can now access THREE ONLINE COURSES from the relationship experts at OnePlusOne. Learn to cope with stress and communicate better, wherever you are in your parenting journey.

Arguing better

Disagreements are a normal part of life. How you approach them can make all the difference to you, your partner, and your children. You will learn:

- How to recognise stress and how it can affect you.
- How to support each other through difficult times.
- What causes arguments and how to stop them.

Me, You and Baby Too

Learn how to navigate the changes that happen in a relationship when a baby arrives, including:

- How you and your partner can support each other.
- How to talk to bring up difficult topics.
- How arguments start, and how to stop them.

Getting it right for children

When parents are separating or separated, children can often get caught in the middle. Learn how to manage conflict to minimise the impact it has on your children, as well as:

- How to stop a discussion from turning into an argument.
- How to stay calm and listen as well as talk.
- Skills for finding solutions and making compromises.

To access the courses, you will need a smartphone, tablet, or computer, and a good internet connection. They are all FREE to use, so you'll just need to select your local authority area and create an account with a username and password.

You can get started by scanning the QR code or visiting:
www.oneplusone.org.uk/parents

Neurodevelopment pathway drop ins

NHS
Mersey Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Come along to one of our drop in sessions in St Helens.

Our team will answer questions you have about the neurodevelopment pathway process.

You don't need to be using our service, you can drop in if you have any questions to ask about this.

We look forward to meeting you.

Second Tuesday of the month at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon

(with the exception of October, see alternative dates below)

Fourth Tuesday of the month at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm

(with the exception of Oct/Nov/Dec, see alternative dates below)

12 August at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

26 August at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

9 September at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

23 September at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

7 October at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

21 October at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

18 November at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

25 November at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

9 December at Parr Children's Centre, 9am to 12 noon.

16 December at Central Link Family Hub, 1pm to 4pm.

Sutton Family Hub, Ellamsbridge Road, Sutton, St Helens, WA9 3PY

Central Link Family Hub, Westfield Street, (off Peter Street), St Helens, WA10 1QF

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAY DATES 2025/2026

Name of School: St Mary & St Thomas Church of England Primary School

The following dates were determined by the Governing Body at their meeting held on 27th November 2024.

*These should be the same as the dates in the standardised school year pattern unless you intend to take an in-service training day at the start or end of a term.

Term	Open on:	Close on:
Autumn Term	Wednesday 3rd September 2025	Friday 24th October 2025
	Monday 3rd November 2025	Friday 19th December 2025
Spring Term	Monday 5th January 2026	Friday 13th February 2026
	Monday 23rd February 2026	Friday 27th March 2026
Summer Term	Monday 13th April 2026	Thursday 21st May 2026
	Monday 1st June 2026	Friday 17th July 2026

Easter Bank Holidays:

Good Friday: 3 April 2026

Easter Monday: 6 April 2026

Bank Holidays during term time:

May Day: Monday 4 May 2026

CPD Days:

1st September 2025

2nd September 2025

21st November 2025

22nd May 2026

20th July 2026

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