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
During the festive season, we know that this time of year can bring both joy and additional pressures for many families. If you have any worries or concerns about your child, or if things feel a little overwhelming, please remember that you can always talk to us. Our staff are here to listen, to offer support where we can, and to help signpost you to further guidance if needed. You are never alone, please reach out if you need us.

MRS CAESAR
This term, we say a heartfelt thank you and a fond farewell to **Mrs Caesar**, who has been a valued member of St Mary and St Thomas CE Primary School for the past 20 years, working as both a class teacher and our SENDCO.

Throughout her time at St Mary's, Mrs Caesar has played a significant role in the life of the school. Her commitment, expertise and compassion have made her an integral part of our team and have contributed greatly to the success of both the school and the Trust.

Over the years, she has supported children, families and staff with exceptional care, always giving generously of her time, knowledge and talent. Her dedication to ensuring every child feels understood, included and able to thrive has left a lasting impact on our community.

We are deeply grateful for everything Mrs Caesar has brought to school. She will be greatly missed by pupils, colleagues and families alike, and we wish her every happiness and success in the future.

SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator)
Following on from the above announcement about Mrs Caesar leaving at the end of this calendar year, we would like to share an update regarding our SEND provision. We are pleased to let you know that Mrs Thompson, our Year 4 teacher, will be taking on the role of SENDCO from January. Mrs Thompson brings a wealth of experience and a strong commitment to supporting children with additional needs, and we are confident she will continue to build on the excellent work already in place. In addition, we will be further supported by colleagues across The Three Saints Academy Trust, ensuring that our SEND provision continues to be robust, collaborative and responsive to the needs of all our pupils. We look forward to this next chapter and thank you for your continued support.

Y6 CHURCH SERVICE
A big well done to our Y6 class who conducted a beautiful church service this Wednesday morning. Thank you for all parents and families who came along to support.

CHRISTMAS DINNER AND CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY
We hope all children and staff enjoyed today's wonderful festivities! The school was filled with excitement as everyone tucked into a delicious Christmas lunch and proudly showed off their colourful Christmas jumpers and festive outfits. It was a joyful way to celebrate the season together, and we are so glad to see so many happy faces throughout the day.

THANK YOU ASDA!
We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the ASDA store next to school for their generous support. They have kindly provided additional items for our families, as well as resources that we can use throughout the school year. Their contribution has made a real difference to our school community.

NURSERY AND RECEPTION CAROLS AROUND THE TREE
Well done to our wonderful Nursery and Reception classes, who serenaded parents and staff with a selection of beautiful Christmas songs. The children sang with such confidence and joy, and we are incredibly proud of them. Thank you so much to everyone who came along to support the performance (we particularly enjoyed your participation during 'We Wish You A Merry Christmas') .

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Web www.sm-st.co.uk

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK
This week, Mr Pow received a wonderful surprise in the post from the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell. The Archbishop kindly sent a signed copy of his book *The Lord's Prayer: A Beginner's Guide (Young Explorers)*, which was a thoughtful and much-appreciated gesture. We are delighted to share that we will be using this book in our worship sessions in the New Year as we continue to deepen our understanding of the Lord's Prayer with the children. We also hope that one day the Archbishop may be able to visit our school and see the wonderful work taking place.

PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS
Parent/Teacher meetings have now all been added to class dojo for you to select your slot. If you cannot make these times please speak to the class teacher.

MONDAY 15TH / TUESDAY 16TH DECEMBER: PANTO / PARTY DAY
Next Monday and Tuesday is Panto and Party day. Reception and KS1 are booked to see the show on Monday and KS2 on Tuesday. 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 ensure this is paid on Arbor under TRIPS by Monday morning. For lunch all children with be provided with a party box lunch free of charge (this includes those on packed lunches), the party 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!

WEDNESDAY 17TH DECEMBER: Y3 CINDERELLA THEATRE TRIP WEDNESDAY
Thank you to all who have paid for the Y3 trips to Cinderella next Wednesday. A reminder that if anyone is straddling to pay please speak to school. Children will leave via coach at 9am to arrive for the 10:30am performance. They will leave the venue at 12:30pm and arrive back at school for 1pm when they will have their lunch. As this is later than normal lunchtime, they will be provided with a packed lunch if they are on school dinners. Packed lunch children can eat their lunch as normal. The cost of the trip is £24 per child. We appreciate this is a lot of money to ask for at this time of year. Please speak to school if there are any issues with payment.

THURSDAY 18TH DECEMBER: KS1 NATIVITY THURSDAY
Each Y1 and Y2 child will get 4 tickets which can be used to attend either the 10am or 2pm performance. They will be sent home with children at some point over the coming weeks.

RECEPTION HEARING SCREEENING
The 0-19 team will be in school on MONDAY 2ND FEBUARY to carry out a hearing screening on all Reception age children. A letter has been sent out via email and Class Dojo with more detail. If you do not wish for your child/children to take part in the hearing screening you need to email the School Screeners on wchc.schoolscreeners@nhs.net with your child's full name, DOB and the school they attend.

WALKING HOME
As the evenings are becoming darker, starting Monday 8th December, any children who usually walk home on their own will no longer be permitted to do so. For safety reasons, they will only be dismissed to a parent or carer outside their classroom door. Thank you for your understanding and support in keeping our pupils safe.

A NOTE ON CONTACTING TEACHERS
A reminder to parents that if you wish to speak to your child's teacher please do so via the school office rather than the chat/message function on class dojo. This may be missed by teachers so we cannot guarantee a response. The school email/phoneline and office are regularly monitored so someone will always get back to you.

RECEPTION 2026
Please ensure all Reception September 2026 application are completed by 15th January 2026. Nursery children are not guaranteed a place in our reception so please ensure you apply promptly.
https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/article/2868/Applying-for-primary-school-for-September-2026

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Web www.sm-st.co.uk

CHRISTMAS AT ST THOMAS'S CHURCH

A celebration of Christmas with traditional carols is being held at St Thomas's Church on Sunday 7th December at 3pm. All are welcome! Further details can be found on the leaflet at the end of this newsletter.
Opposite is a list if dates for St Thomas Church over the festive period which you can attend.

FAMILY OF FAITH

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

Joy

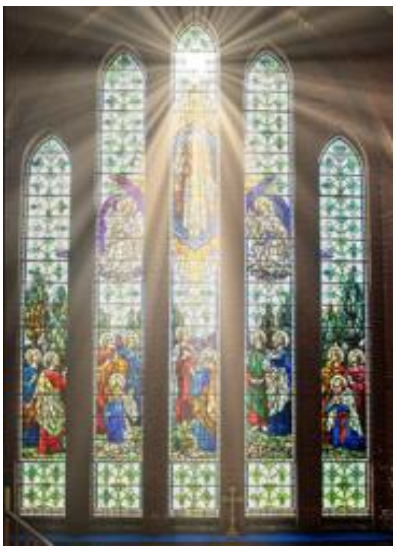
A reflection from… Mrs Banks

This week, our school was filled with the joyful sounds and sights of the Christmas season. Our Nursery and Reception children lifted their voices in cheerful carols, reminding us of the angels who first proclaimed the good news of Jesus' birth. Their singing invited us all to pause and remember that joy begins in simple, heartfelt moments. Across the school, pupils gathered to enjoy Christmas dinner together, dressed in colourful Christmas jumpers that brightened every hallway. Sharing a meal and celebrating as one community reflects the love and togetherness at the heart of the Nativity story. Just as the birth of Jesus brought hope and joy to the world, we see that same spirit shine when our pupils laugh, sing, and celebrate side by side.

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 – Harrison for always reciting his prayers beautifully.

Rec – Everyone for amazing singing at our performance

Y1 – Jessica for being kind and respectful

Y2 – Leo for super contribution in Maths

Y3 – Marni for helping others with their DT

Y4 – Joe C for settling back into school wonderfully!

Y5 – Jacob for excellent participation

Y6 – Johnathon for making a huge contribution all week

Lunchtime Award Winners

Y1 – Neita

Y2 – Maui

Y3 – Theo

Y4 – Wamidi

Y5 – Maddy

Y6 – Lucy

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.

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Whole school attendance this year to date… ***94.6%***	**Class Attendance Last Week** **YN – 92.6%** **YR – 85.3%** **Y1 – 97%** **Y2 – 93%** **Y3 – 97.9%** **Y4 – 93.6%** **Y5 – 95.4%** **Y6 – 94.3%**
Whole school attendance last week ***93.7%***	
Class attendance winners last week… ***Y3 with 97.9%***	

A CELEBRATION OF CHRISTMAS

With Traditional Carols at

St. Thomas's Church, Westfield St.

on Sunday, 7th December at 3.00pm

The Vicar of St. Thomas's Rev. Harry Wood
The Pilkington Choir

The Sea Cadets

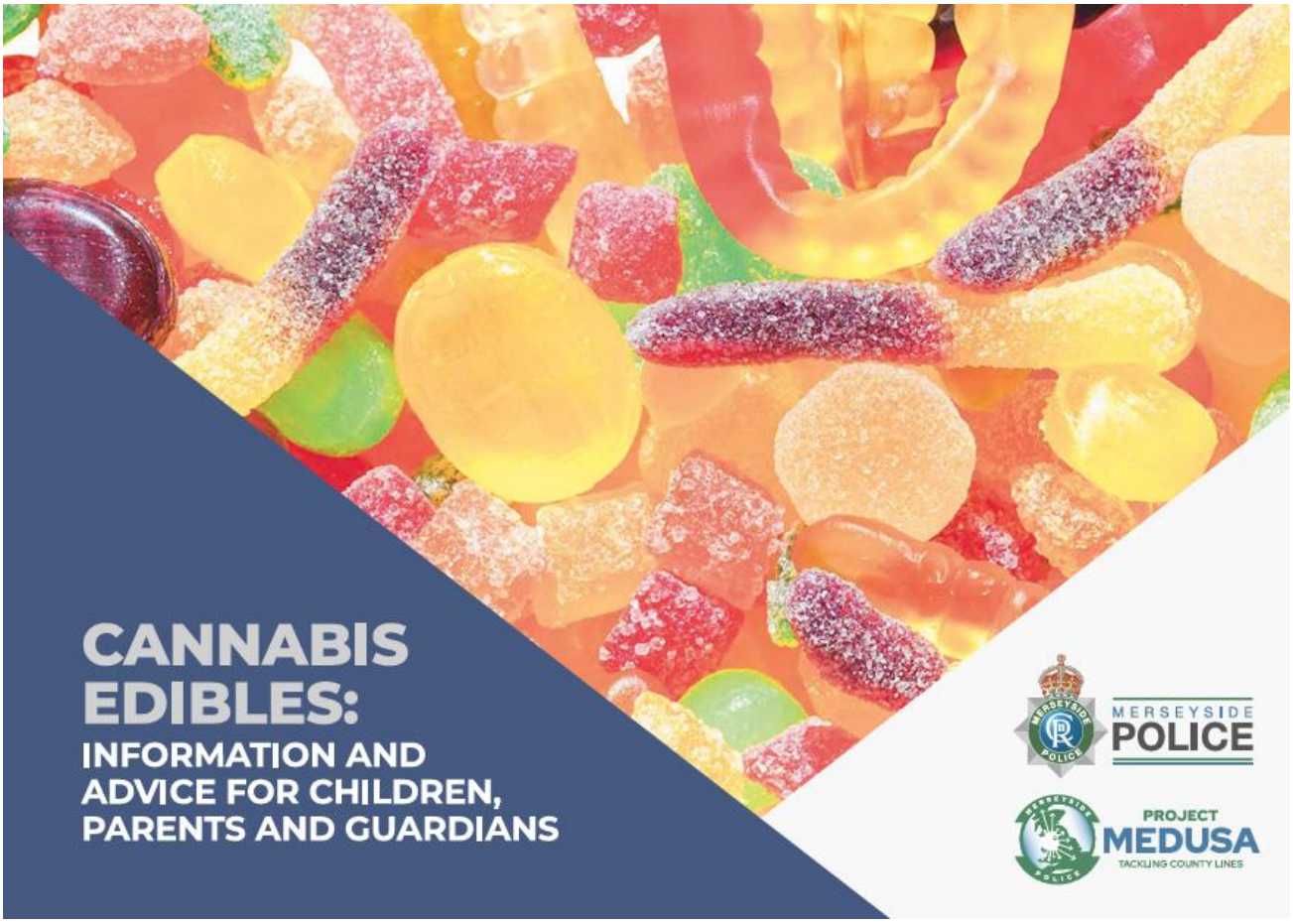
ALL WELCOME

Coffee and Mince Pie
Served After the
Celebration.

MS Society

The Event Hosted by
St.Helens & District Multiple
Sclerosis Society.

MS Society



CANNABIS EDIBLES:

INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR CHILDREN, PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

MERSEYSIDE POLICE

PROJECT MEDUSA
TACKLING COUNTY LINES

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

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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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?

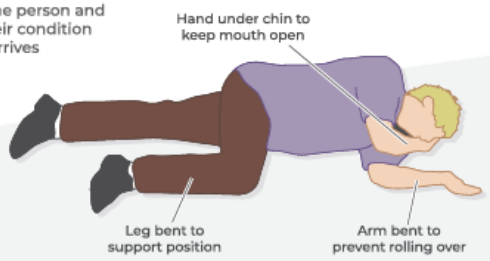
If the child is stable, speak to your child at an appropriate time.

⚠ **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**

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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