

ST MARGARET CLITHEROW ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Friday 14th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

I can't believe we're half-way through the school year already! Time flies when you're having fun, I guess!

60th Anniversary of SMC

As mentioned in my Christmas newsletter, our school is celebrating a momentous milestone this year - our 60th anniversary! We are looking forward to a special Mass on Thursday, 22nd May, at 2pm, which will be celebrated by Bishop Paul McAleenan. The Mass will take place outdoors, and we encourage all to join us for this memorable occasion – further details to follow. In addition to the Mass, there will be other celebrations throughout the year, all tying into the Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee Year. Exciting new designs will also be created above each classroom door as part of our anniversary celebrations.

Jubilee Year – Pilgrims of Hope

We are excited to launch the Jubilee Year with the theme Pilgrims of Hope. This special year will include a variety of events, which started with a launch assembly earlier this term. Every child received a prayer card as we begin this journey of faith and celebration. Throughout the year, we will be participating in various events that reflect the theme, bringing our school community together in prayer and reflection.



Number Day

This half term, we supported the NSPCC by participating in Number Day. The children looked fantastic in their digit-themed outfits! We were thrilled by the number of parents who joined us for the open session and took the opportunity to learn more about maths at our school. We truly hope you enjoyed engaging in the maths activities. In total, we raised £291 for the NSPCC.

'Lovely to come in and experience maths at SMC – much more fun than when I was little.'

Reading Session – Reception and Year 1 parents

We were thrilled to welcome almost all of the Year 1 and Reception parents to a special reading session recently, where they learned practical ways to support their child's reading at home. The session highlighted the importance of reading and how it plays a crucial role in their child's development. Parents were given helpful tips and resources to continue fostering a love for reading. It was a fantastic opportunity to strengthen the partnership between home and school in supporting our young readers.



I love reading! Very useful and informative. Great for parents and grandparents to understand how reading is taught and encouraged in school. Thanks! PS: off to buy some new books ha ha!

Update from the Governing Body

This half term, the governors have been busy with regular meetings covering health and safety, finance, curriculum, and admissions. As the school's admitting authority, we have ranked Reception 2025 applications. We've also focused on the school's planned curriculum, reviewing the adjustments and changes that staff have implemented to enhance learning. Governors were pleased to attend the recent reading session and Number Day, engaging with both children and parents to support our school community. We've also worked closely with senior leaders to plan the exciting celebrations for the school's 60th anniversary. We look forward to continuing our work to ensure the best outcomes for all children.

Attendance and Lateness

Our school target for attendance is set by the Local Authority at 96%. **Our current whole school attendance figure since September is 96.3%.** Attendance figure includes unauthorised absences, absences related to illness, medical appointments, and lateness. We must all work together to ensure children are in school providing they are well enough. Please find current class attendance below.

Nursery	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
94.3%	94.2%	94.9%	98%	97.2%	97%	97.1%	97.2%

A reminder that your child's school day starts at 8:45am. Once the children enter the building, their learning begins, and every moment is important. If your child arrives at 9am, they miss out on valuable learning time - over a week, that's 1 hour and 15 minutes, and it adds up quickly over time.

Also, please note the end of day timings: Nursery to Year 2 finish at 3:15pm, and Year 3 to Year 6 finish at 3:20pm. Arriving late for pick-up affects staff, as they need to stay with the children when they should be in meetings or training. Lastly, after-school clubs end at 4:30pm—please be mindful of staff time and collect your child on time. Thank you for your cooperation!

Stevenage FC Car Park

We have recently experienced near-miss accidents in the Stevenage FC car park due to some parents parking inconsiderately, particularly on the bend and outside of the marked bays. As the car park does not belong to the school, I can only politely ask that everyone parks sensibly to ensure the safety of all and to avoid blocking access to the school. In an effort to address this, I have reached out to our local Police Community Support Officer for guidance. Your cooperation in parking responsibly is crucial to preventing any accidents and maintaining safe access for everyone.

Highlights this term:

Despite the half term being just 6 weeks long, we have managed to enjoy the following:

- Year 1 Box of Childhood Stevenage Museum workshop
- Netball and football league and cup matches
- Show Racism the Red Card workshops for Year 4, 5 and 6
- Nursery trip to Radlett Theatre to see Room on the Broom
- Year 4 Mental Health Workshop with Stevenage Sporting Futures Team



- St. Josephine Bakhita Feast Day celebration for Year 6
- Year 6 Stevenage Museum visit – World War 2 workshop
- Racial Justice Sunday Assembly
- Youth Leadership Team members attended a School Parliament meeting at the Council Chambers
- Year 3 and 4 school football team friendly matches
- Bridgebuilders Assembly – Perseverance
- Safer Internet Day

Update from the PSFA

Every term we say it but we can't say it enough to show how thankful the PSFA are for your support and generosity. So far this school year, with your help, we have raised an outstanding £2,855.92. With the help from our Asda cash pot this term we have seen our funds increase by £346.98 for you simply doing your shopping - so thank you! This school year we have added an extra school disco, it's such a wonderful event to see all the children dancing and singing so loudly together. As part of the PSFA seeing the children's joy and happiness at these events truly cements why we work so hard behind the scenes. We would like to extend a big thank you to the school staff, Miss Puccio and our lovely parents/guardians this term for helping the PSFA make it all possible. From the Chair, personally I would like to say thank you to the PSFA team for alongside full time jobs, children and home life they work tirelessly to support the PSFA calendar.

Coming up this year we still have a number of exciting events. We are pleased to say in line with the school's 60th year we will be holding our first ever colour run! Parents get ready as we need as many of you as we can to throw paint at all our wonderful children. With bake sales, our sports day donuts, summer ice creams, free competitions and so much more we have a packed calendar for 2025!

With thanks always, the PSFA

Free School Meals

If your circumstances have changed or you believe you may be eligible for free school meals, please visit <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/at-school/free-school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx> The application only takes a few minutes to complete. If you are eligible, please inform the school. Even if your child is in Reception to Year 2, where they automatically receive a Government-funded free school meal, it's still worth applying as the school receives additional funding.

Stay connected and get a glimpse of school life by following us on Twitter @StMClitherow.

Wishing you all a wonderful half-term with your families! It's not always the most peaceful time, but it's a chance to focus on those we love and enjoy some quality time together. Have a great break, and I look forward to welcoming you back as we begin the Lenten journey towards Easter, which will be here before we know it!



God Bless

Puccio

Miss Puccio
Headteacher

KEY DATES

Please check the school website for any changes to dates

Friday 14th February 2025

Finish for half term (normal time)

Half term break: Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February

Monday 24th February 2025

Return to school: 8:45am

Tuesday 25th February 2025

Year 5 Love your Heart session

Thursday 27th February 2025

Year 4 trip to Bhaktivedanta Manor

Monday 3rd March 2025

Reception height, weight, vision and hearing

Wednesday 5th March 2025

Ash Wednesday Mass: 2pm in the school hall

Thursday 6th March 2025

EYFS Stevenage Museum workshop

Thursday 6th March 2025

World Book Day

Wednesday 12th March 2025

Whole School Sponsored Walk – SBFC stadium

Tuesday 18th March 2025

Year 3&4 Easter Play: 9:30am in the school hall

Wednesday 19th March 2025

St. Joseph's Feast Day – Reception non-uniform day

Thursday 20th March 2025

Lenten Mass & confessions: 9:30am in the school hall

Week beginning 24th March 2025

Other Faiths Week – Islam

Monday 24th March 2025

St. Oscar Romero Feast Day – Year 3 non-uniform day

Thursday 27th March 2025

K'NEX Challenge – Year 5 and 6

Friday 28th March 2025

PSFA Mother's Day gift sale

Wednesday 2nd April 2025

Parent Consultations. School finishes at 1:15pm

Friday 4th April 2025

Finish for Easter holidays at 1:15pm

Easter Holidays: Monday 7th April to Monday 21st April 2025

Tuesday 22nd April 2025

Return to school: 8.45am

Future date

Thursday 22nd May 2025

60th Anniversary Mass celebrated by Bishop Paul: 2pm on the school field