



# St. Mary's on the Hill December Information 2025

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🎄 *Welcome to December's Information Sway!* 🎄

*The festive season has arrived at St. Mary's on the Hill, and the excitement is building throughout the school! December is always a special time, and we are delighted to share the wonderful activities and events that will make this month memorable for our pupils and families.*

🌟 *Christmas Preparations in Full Swing*

*Our classrooms are alive with anticipation and creativity as we prepare for Christmas:*

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- ***P1** pupils are working hard on their Christmas Performance, a Wiggly Nativity.*
- ***P2** pupils are rehearsing for their concert performance, **The Sleepy Shepherd**, which promises to be full of festive cheer.*
- ***P3–P7** pupils are practising carols to support our **P5 Carol Service**, bringing the whole school together in song.*

- Our **school choir** is preparing to visit local nursing homes, spreading warmth and happiness to members of our community.
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### **A Gentle Reminder**

While this is an exciting time for everyone, we kindly ask parents to remind children about the importance of **making good choices**. Our high expectations for positive behaviour remain in place throughout these busy weeks, ensuring that everyone enjoys the season in a safe and respectful environment.

### **Giving Back This Christmas**

Christmas is a time for generosity and compassion. On **Friday, 12th December**, we will hold a **Christmas Jumper Day** in aid of **The Developing World Group**.

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- **Donation:** £1 per child (or any amount you can give)
  - **Payment:** Through **School Money** Your support will make a real difference to families in need this festive season. Thank you for helping us share kindness and joy.
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### **A Message of Hope**

As we journey through Advent, we reflect on the values of **Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace**. May these blessings fill your homes and hearts this Christmas. On behalf of everyone at St. Mary's, I wish you and your family a **happy, peaceful, and joyful Christmas**.

If you have any queries, please contact us at:

 [info@stmarys.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@stmarys.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk)

Kind regards,

**Mr. Matthew O'Brien**

Principal

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We are delighted to invite you and your child to our Open Day on Friday 5th December.

Come and experience, first hand, life in St. Mary's on the Hill, including:

- Centre of pastoral excellence
- Child-centred learning and provision
- Our amazing school choir and orchestra
- Engaging interactive activities
- Enthusiastic and approachable staff



*Learn to Love, Love to Learn*

# OPEN DAY

FRIDAY 5th  
DECEMBER



Mr Matthew O'Brien (Principal)  
will host an information session  
at 9:30am in the school's assembly hall  
**We look forward to meeting you all!**

142 Carmoney Road,  
Co. Antrim, BT36 6JU  
(028) 9083 6284

Find us on



1 - Open Day 2025

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*Prospective P1 parents/carers we are delighted to invite you, to our Open Day on Friday 5th December.*

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*Come and experience, first hand, life in St. Mary's on the Hill Primary School, including our*

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- *Centre of pastoral excellence*

- *Child centred learning and provision*
    - *Amazing school choir*
    - *Engaging interactive activities*
  - *Informative and approachable Early Years team*
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*Mr Matthew O'Brien (Principal) will host an information session at 9:30am in the school's assembly hall*

*We look forward to meeting you all*

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## Open Enrolment Timetable - September 2023



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***Wednesday 10th December 2025*** EA publishes information on website about the primary one admissions procedure and admissions criteria for schools.

***Wednesday 7th January 2026*** Primary One application procedure opens with online portal available

*Note: When an application is submitted an applicant must provide supporting \*documents if requested by **ANY** preference listed. (A parent must read the published admissions criteria of their listed preferences to find out if any documentation is requested by a school).*

*\*In addition to any documents required the applicant must also provide the **CHILD'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE**.*

***Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 12 noon***

*Note: Online Portal will not be accessible **after** this date/time to apply.*

*Date/time by which parents submit an application and documents\* in support of their application (**treated as punctual**).*

*An application received after **12 noon on 21st January 2026** will be treated as late.*

*Applicants will be guided after the Online Portal closes on how to complete a late application.*

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👏 Celebrating Our New Class and School Councillors! 👏

On **27th November**, we had the pleasure of welcoming the **Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey, Mrs. Leah Fitzpatrick**, to our school. She congratulated our newly elected **class and school councillors** on their fantastic achievement and wished them every success for the year ahead. 🌟

These councillors play a **vital role** in our school community by ensuring that **pupils' voices are heard**. They help shape decisions, share ideas, and represent their classmates with pride and responsibility.

A **special thank you** goes to **Mrs. Magee** for organising this wonderful initiative. She not only schedules meetings and visits for the pupils but also serves as a **great role model**, inspiring children to lead with confidence and care. 🙌

We also want to say a **huge thank you** to **all the children who took part in the election process**. While not everyone was elected, we truly appreciate the effort, enthusiasm, and courage shown by every pupil who applied. 📝 Your willingness to step forward and take part is something to be proud of!

Here's to a year of **leadership, teamwork, and making a difference!** 🌍🌟

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Pupils of the Month November



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*Congratulations to all our wonderful Pupils of the Month. They have worked so hard and we are very proud of them all.*

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Class	Name	Name
P16B	Lia Lim	Theo Flynn
P1SK	Arthur Brady	Sophia Phillips
P2PMcI	Megan McCleery	Scarlett Neill    Lorcan Wylie
P2MM	Darragh Jones	Ariadne Tsalma
P3KR	Aoife McManus	Rejus Munius
P3	Maria Lesniak	Cillian Mooney
P4MMcM	Annie Prendergast	Diamond Adhkari
P4AW	Dima Mousa	Erin Devlin
P5MD	Nuala McCleave	Conlin Doherty
P5EC	Thomas Kelly	Iris McLaughlin
P6SMCC	Grace Mc Dowell	Rosa Mc Mullan    Cathal Magee
P6SR	Oisin Kim	Isabella McFarlane
P7JP	Cara Douglas	Julia Borkowska
P7JOK	James McMullan	Ciara McCleave
SPiM DMcE	Artur Kepa	
EMcE	Michael Molloy	Mason McParland

## Value of Month



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*In addition, our **Value of the Month** is **Resilience**. This is a wonderful opportunity to help children develop the ability to cope with challenges, adapt to change, and persevere when things feel difficult. Resilience is not just about “bouncing back” from setbacks—it’s about learning strategies to stay positive, problem-solve, and keep moving forward even when faced with obstacles.*

*At school, we will encourage pupils to:*

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- ***Keep trying*** even when tasks seem hard.
  - ***Ask for help*** when they need support.
  - ***Celebrate effort***, not just success.
  - ***Stay calm and positive*** when things don’t go as planned.
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*We invite parents and carers to reinforce these messages at home by praising persistence, modelling problem-solving, and reminding children that mistakes are part of learning. Building resilience is an essential life skill that will serve them well both now and in the future.*

*Thank you for your continued support in helping us create a positive, caring, and respectful school environment where every child feels empowered to grow and thrive.*

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## P2 Nativity Play - Sleepy Shepherd



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### **P2 Christmas Concert – The Sleepy Shepherd**

*Our **P2 pupils** have been working tirelessly and with great enthusiasm to prepare for their Christmas concert, “**The Sleepy Shepherd**.” This heartwarming performance promises to be a wonderful celebration of the season, showcasing the children’s hard work, talent, and festive spirit.*

*There will be **two performances** in the **Assembly Hall**:*

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- **Monday, 8th December at 9:30 am**
  - **Tuesday, 9th December at 9:30 am**
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*We warmly invite parents, carers, and family members to join us for one of these special occasions. It's a fantastic opportunity to see the children shine on stage and share in the joy of Christmas together.*

***Tickets** are available from the **school office**, so please secure yours early to avoid disappointment.*

*We look forward to welcoming you and celebrating this magical time of year with our P2 pupils!*

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## P1 Nativity Play - Wiggly Nativity



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### **P1 Christmas Concert – Wiggly Nativity**

*Our **P1 pupils** have been working incredibly hard and showing great enthusiasm as they rehearse for their Christmas concert, “**Wiggly Nativity**.” This delightful performance promises to be full of festive cheer, music, and joy as the children bring the story of Christmas to life in their own unique way.*

*There will be **two performances** in the **Assembly Hall**:*

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- **Wednesday, 10th December at 9:30 am**
  - **Thursday, 11th December at 9:30 am**
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*We warmly invite parents, carers, and family members to join us for one of these special occasions. It's a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the season together and see the children's hard work and creativity shine on stage.*

***Tickets** are available from the **school office**, so please secure yours early to avoid disappointment.*

*We look forward to welcoming you and sharing this magical experience with our P1 pupils and their families!*

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## P5 Carol Service



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***Carol Service – A Special Celebration of Christmas***

We are delighted to announce that our **Carol Service** will take place in **St. Mary's on the Hill Church** on **Wednesday, 17th December at 11:00am**. This is one of the most cherished events in our school calendar and a wonderful opportunity for our community to come together in faith and celebration.

Our **P5 children** will lead the service with meaningful **readings and prayers**, guiding us through the story of Christmas with reverence and joy. They will be joined by pupils from **P4 to P7**, who will lift their voices in song, creating a truly festive and spiritual atmosphere.

The Carol Service promises to be a beautiful occasion filled with music, reflection, and the warmth of the season. We warmly invite **parents of P5 children** to attend and share in this special moment with us.

We look forward to welcoming you to St. Mary's on the Hill Church for what is sure to be a memorable and uplifting celebration of Christmas.

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## Christmas Jumper Day



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### **Christmas Jumper Day – Supporting the Developing World Group**

We are excited to announce that **Christmas Jumper Day** will be held on **Friday, 12th December!** This is a wonderful opportunity for our pupils to get into the festive spirit while supporting a very worthy cause.

*We are asking parents and carers to kindly donate **£1 per child**, with all proceeds going to the **Developing World Group**, an organisation dedicated to helping communities in need. Your generosity will make a real difference and help us share the joy of Christmas beyond our school.*

***Payments** can be made easily via **School Money**.*

*Thank you for your continued support in making this event both fun and meaningful for our children and for those who benefit from the Developing World Group's work.*

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## Christmas Dinners



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### ***Christmas Dinners – A Festive Treat for Our Pupils***

*We are delighted to share that our **Christmas Dinner** will take place on the following dates:*

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- **Tuesday, 9th December for P1 – P4**



- **Wednesday, 10th December for P5 – P7**
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*This is always a highlight of the festive season in school, giving pupils the chance to enjoy a traditional Christmas meal together and celebrate the joy of the season. Our catering team is preparing a delicious menu, and the dining hall will be filled with festive cheer to make the occasion extra special.*

*We encourage pupils who come along in their Christmas spirit—perhaps wearing a festive accessory or jumper—to make the day even more memorable! Julie will require numbers by **Wednesday 3rd December**. Please login to School Money to book a dinner for your child.*

*Thank you for your continued support in helping us create these wonderful experiences for the children.*

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## Christmas Gifts for Teachers



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### **Charity Support – Developing World Group**

*This year, in lieu of Christmas gifts for staff, we have chosen to support the **Developing World Group**. This organisation works to bring **positive and sustainable change** to the lives*

*of children and families living in poverty. Their projects focus on improving education, healthcare, and living conditions for some of the most vulnerable communities.*

*The Developing World Group operates with a **global outlook**, challenging stereotypes and striving to create opportunities for those who need them most. By supporting this charity, we can help make a real difference in the lives of children who face significant challenges every day.*

*If parents would like to donate to this charity rather than purchasing Christmas gifts for staff, contributions can be made easily via **School Money**.*

*Thank you for your generosity and for helping us share the true spirit of Christmas with those in need.*

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## Christmas Cards



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### *Managing Christmas Cards for Classmates*

*To help keep the school day running smoothly during this busy festive season, we are introducing a simple plan for exchanging Christmas cards.*

*We kindly ask that parents send all Christmas cards for classmates on **Friday, 12th December only**. Collecting and distributing cards on one designated day will reduce disruption to learning while still allowing pupils to enjoy this lovely tradition.*

*Thank you for your cooperation in helping us make this process as organised and enjoyable as possible for everyone.*

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## Free School Meals



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*The application process for free school meals/uniform has commenced. Parents who are currently eligible to apply for free meals/uniform should now complete their application.*

***Please note that entitlement to free school meals will attract funding to the school's budget.** Whether your child wishes to partake of a meal or not is down to individual choice.*

*We would really encourage parents who fall into this category to **please make an application** as soon as possible for the incoming academic year. Application forms may be obtained via the Education Authority website – [www.eani.org.uk](http://www.eani.org.uk) or alternatively by contacting Free School Meals Section on 028 2566 1350. Should you have any further queries regarding this, please contact the school office.*

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## Car Parking



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**CHURCH CAR PARK:** I would like to gently remind everyone of the difficulties and dangers around drop-off and collection of your child/ren. I am asking that all parents exercise extreme caution. To alleviate the difficulty of congestion we are asking all parents to make a **LEFT TURN** when exiting the car park. **Please use the designated parking spaces or drop off zone.**

**WAITING AT THE GATE:** Thank you all for your support and cooperation in the mornings whilst leaving your children to school. **We would ask parents not to wait at the gate once**

*they have left their child to school. By leaving your child off and moving off-site you are freeing up limited parking spaces. It can be difficult for children to enter through the gate when parents are gathered there. As the gate is in close proximity to the entrance of the car park we want to make every effort to ensure no accidents occur. We would appreciate your cooperation in this matter as the safety of our children is our primary concern. Please pass this information on to anyone who will be responsible for leaving or collecting your child.*

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## Allergy Awareness



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*We have a number of children who suffer from allergies, which can result in potentially serious consequences. I would therefore ask that these children are not exposed to danger and that you are mindful of any children in your child's class who may have an allergy. We continue to be a Nut Free School, please do not send in anything which contains nuts.*

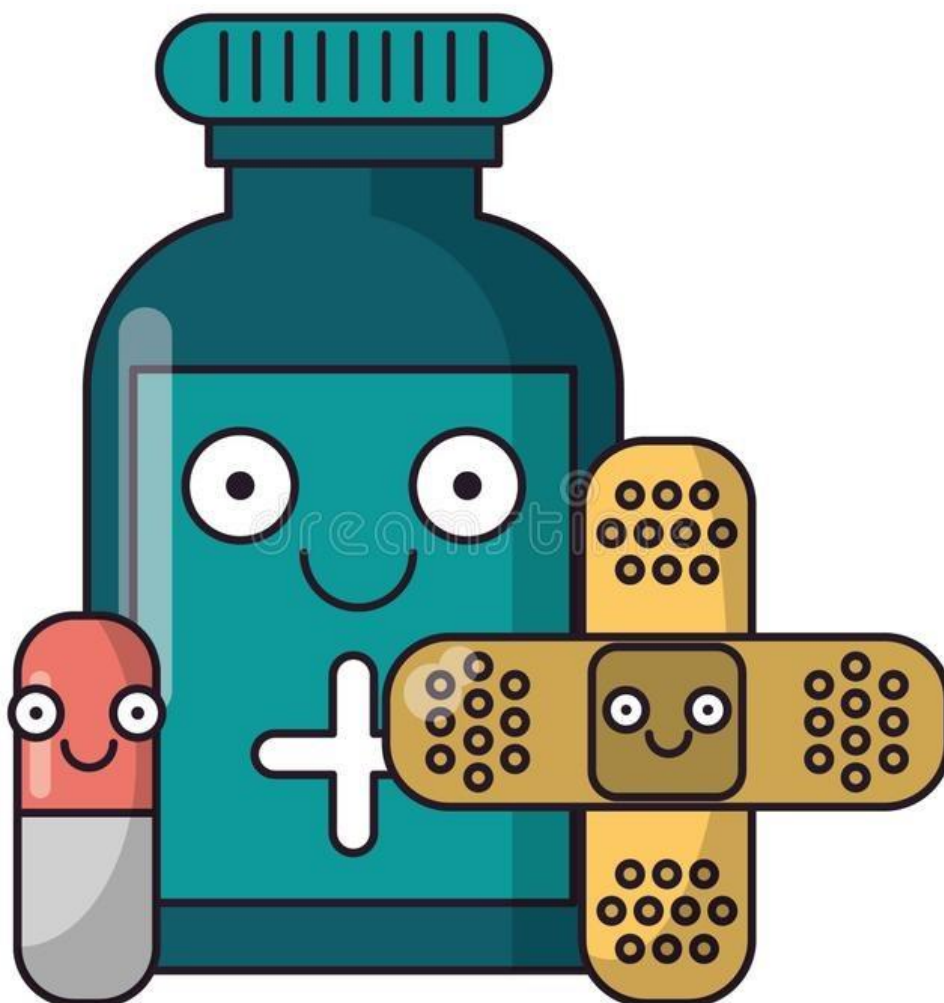
***Parents of children with diagnosed allergies are asked to provide the school with 2 Epipens (with valid dates) and any other necessary medication as soon as possible.***



*Please continue to support our 'Healthy Eating Policy' and provide your child with a piece of fruit and water or milk for break.*

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## Administration of Medicine



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*Please visit the school office if your child requires medication to be administered whilst at school. Parents need to sign and complete an 'Administration of Medication' form (available from the school office) before the school will administer the medicine. All medication should have the child's name on it and the dosage clearly labelled. Please do not send any medication with your child – it must be handed into the school office by an adult. Thank You.*

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## School Dinners



**EAT SMART WITH THE LUNCH BUNCH** STARTS 6th OCTOBER 2025

**WEEK BEGINNING** **MONDAY** **TUESDAY** **WEDNESDAY** **THURSDAY** **FRIDAY**

4th October, 2nd November, 1st December, 20th January, 29th February	Over baked Fish Fingers Apple & Pear & Cinnamon Compote Chopped Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Chicken Mince & Mashed Potatoes Chips	Beef Bolognaise Steamed Broccoli & Cauliflower Florets Serves & Baby Potatoes Apple Sauce & Custard	Lunch Bunch Chicken Curry with Fragrant Basmati Rice & Roast Potatoes Kashmiri Chutney & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding with Stuffing & Gravy Sautéed Potatoes & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Hot Dog with Tomato Ketchup Milk Corn on the Cob & Baked Beans Chopped Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes
12th October, 10th November, 28th December, 15th January, 24th February	Over baked Fish Fingers with Apple & Pear Steamed Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Kashmiri Chutney & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Traditional Sunday Roast Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding Steamed Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Kashmiri Chutney & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Lunch Bunch Chicken Curry with Fragrant Basmati Rice & Roast Potatoes Kashmiri Chutney & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding with Stuffing & Gravy Sautéed Potatoes & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Hot Dog with Tomato Ketchup Milk Corn on the Cob & Baked Beans Chopped Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes
20th October, 18th November, 5th December, 22nd January, 31st February	Over baked Fish Fingers Apple & Pear & Cinnamon Compote Chopped Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Chicken Mince & Mashed Potatoes Chips	Beef Bolognaise Steamed Broccoli & Cauliflower Florets Serves & Baby Potatoes Apple Sauce & Custard	Lunch Bunch Chicken Curry with Fragrant Basmati Rice & Roast Potatoes Kashmiri Chutney & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding with Stuffing & Gravy Sautéed Potatoes & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Hot Dog with Tomato Ketchup Milk Corn on the Cob & Baked Beans Chopped Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes
28th October, 26th November, 13th December, 30th January, 1st February	Over baked Fish Fingers Apple & Pear & Cinnamon Compote Chopped Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Chicken Mince & Mashed Potatoes Chips	Beef Bolognaise Steamed Broccoli & Cauliflower Florets Serves & Baby Potatoes Apple Sauce & Custard	Lunch Bunch Chicken Curry with Fragrant Basmati Rice & Roast Potatoes Kashmiri Chutney & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding with Stuffing & Gravy Sautéed Potatoes & Cucumber Pickle Steamed Potatoes & Mashed Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes	Hot Dog with Tomato Ketchup Milk Corn on the Cob & Baked Beans Chopped Potatoes & Baked Potatoes Vegetable Curry & Potatoes

MILK, WATER, BREAD AND FRESH FRUIT AVAILABLE DAILY | MENU SUBJECT TO PRODUCT AVAILABILITY | IF YOU REQUIRE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON ALLERGENS OR SPECIAL DIETS PLEASE CONTACT YOUR SCHOOL.

Parents can now select and pay for dinners for the second term by logging on to School Money using your unique username and password. Your child's dinner should be ordered before midnight prior to the day it is required. Please contact the school if you have any problems. We require every parent to use this facility. A copy of the menu can be found on our website

## Dates for Diary



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**5th December** Open Day Prospective P1 parents for September 2026

**8th December** Feast of the Immaculate Conception/P2 Nativity

**9th December** Christmas Dinner Day for Pupils P1 - P4/P2 Nativity

**10th December** Christmas Dinner Day for Pupils P5 - P7/P1 Nativity

**11th December** P1 Nativity



**12th December** Christmas Jumper Day/Christmas Cards to be distributed

**17th December** P5 Carol Service in St. Mary's on the Hill church at 11am

**19th December** School Closes 11:45am for P1 – P3 and 12:00pm for P4 – P7

**22nd December** School Closes 11:45am for P1 – P3 and 12:00pm for P4 – P7

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## Contact Details



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*There are some contacts in school which do not appear to be working, perhaps due to change of number or email address. If your address, telephone number or email address has changed please inform Mrs Mason in the office to ensure we have up to date information should we have a need to contact you.*

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