



# St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Buckfast

Headteacher – Mrs Sophie Kerswell

Email: [admin@st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk)

Tel: 01364 642389.8<sup>th</sup> September 2025



## Dates for your diary. 😊

Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2pm.  Y2 to Y6 children.	Welcome Mass for the start of the school year and commissioning of our new Pupil Chaplains. Blessed Sacrament Chapel- Buckfast Abbey.
Half Term	Last day of school is Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October. <u>Pupils return Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November.</u>
End of Term:	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2025

### Apples – Free to Take!

Our orchard has produced beautiful apples again this year, and we're happy to share them. If you'd like some, please help yourself at pick-up time. Bags are provided.

## Beginning and End of Day Arrangements

Thank you for your patience as we continue to review our drop-off and pick-up routines.

We are trialling a small adjustment for Year 1 children: they may now be taken down the hill each morning and enter through the side door of Venford (Year 1 classroom). This is **only if your child is accompanied by an adult**. Otherwise, they should continue to use the main side door into school, where staff can ensure they arrive safely.

At the end of the day, children in Year 1 and Year 2 (Venford and Avon) will be collected from Venford classroom, using the side door. This arrangement has worked well this week and we will continue to monitor it carefully to make sure it is effective for children, families and staff.

For safeguarding reasons, we kindly ask that parents do not come into the classroom at drop off and pick-up, as this interrupts learning and compromises the safety of other children. We will soon be holding our 'Gather and Grow' sessions, which will give you the chance to come into school, meet the class teachers, and hear more about what the children are learning this term.

Please also note that the bottom gate must not be used at the start or end of the school day, as it is not our main entrance and cannot be safely supervised during busy times. A very small number of families have prior written permission to use this gate due to exceptional circumstances (e.g. walking from the far end of Buckfast Road). If you have not received written agreement, please continue to use the top gate.

If you or a family member or friend finds the hill difficult to manage due to a health condition, we may be able to arrange for your child to be brought up to the top gate. Please speak to us in advance if this would be helpful.

Thank you for your understanding and for helping us to keep every child safe. 😊

## Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of St. Mary's,

I hope you have all had a lovely summer. We were certainly blessed with many weeks of glorious sunshine – perhaps the sunniest and driest summer I can remember! It has been wonderful to see our families again and to welcome everyone back to a new school year. A very special welcome also to all our new families – we are delighted that you have joined our St Mary's community.

School has been a busy place over the holidays. We completed a major **office reorganisation**, and our **Year 2 classroom** has had a full renovation with fresh paint, new flooring, a new Smartboard and whiteboard. Other rooms will be refreshed with painting across the coming year. With our class swaps, the whole school also had a big tidy and sort-out, ready for the year ahead.

We are delighted to welcome new staff to our team:

- **Ms Siobhan Deeny** – teaching Year 4/5 (Fernworthy)
- **Mrs Eleanor Sanderson** – Teaching Assistant for KS2
- **Mrs Jenna Scholz** – Higher Level Teaching Assistant, leading our Butterbrook provision
- **Coach Taylor Perrott** – teaching PE on Mondays and Fridays
- **Coach Chey Taylor** – teaching PE on Thursdays

The children have spent their first days settling into new groups, classes and routines, as well as enjoying time in our Woodland area, *Believer*. Each class now has a dedicated weekly **Forest School session** alongside their PE slot. A timetable with details of PE and Forest School days for each class is attached to this newsletter.

We are also continuing to share **The Wednesday Word**, a beautiful Catholic Life prayer and reflection resource that links to each week's liturgy. It can be used both in school and at home to reflect on the Gospel message together. Please do click the link below to explore this week's edition, and if you would prefer a printed copy, simply email Ania in the office and she will be happy to prepare one for you:

🔗 [The Wednesday Word – Summer Holiday Special](#)

As always, we are here to listen and support you. If you wish to speak with me informally, I am usually on the gate most mornings, or you can email the school office. If you would like to contact your child's class teacher, please email Ania, who will pass on the message. Teachers are happy to have a quick informal chat at the end of the day once all children have been dismissed. For a longer discussion, we are always happy to arrange a meeting at a convenient time.

Wishing you all a very happy and positive start to the new school year.

Warm regards, Mrs Sophie Kerswell Headteacher

## Snacks

**KS1:** Children receive free fruit each day to share with their peers – helping to build healthy habits and encouraging them to try new fruits and vegetables.

**KS2:** If your child would like a breaktime snack, please send:

- Fruit or vegetables (preferred)
- Crackers, muesli bars or similar are also fine
- **Please avoid** crisps and chocolate snacks

**Drinks:** Children may bring a bottle of water or squash. Fresh water and cups are always available in school.

We will be **reviewing our breaktime snack policy** over the coming weeks and will keep you updated.

## Pupil of the Term Award Summer 2025:

Meldon – Dulcie

Venford – April

Avon – Jasmine

Roadford – Lupin

Fernworthy – Eric

Burrator - Charlie



## 🔒 Safeguarding at St. Mary's

**Because every child's safety matters.**

At St Mary's, keeping our children safe is our highest priority. We are proud to be an **Operation Encompass School**, working in partnership with local agencies to ensure children are protected and supported. You can find out more here:

🔗 [www.operationencompass.org](http://www.operationencompass.org)

## 👥 Who to Contact

If you have any concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, please speak to a member of our safeguarding team immediately:



**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Mrs Sophie Kerswell

**Deputy DSLs:** Mrs Jessica Hutchinson and Mrs Kayleigh Teeder

can also email any safeguarding concerns directly to:

📧 [safeguarding.stmarys.buckfast@plymouthcast.com](mailto:safeguarding.stmarys.buckfast@plymouthcast.com)

## 📞 Worried About a Child Outside of School?

If you're ever worried that a child is at risk of harm – whether inside or outside of school – you can also make a referral directly to Devon's **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**:

- **Call:** 0345 155 1071
- **Email:** [mashsecure@devon.gov.uk](mailto:mashsecure@devon.gov.uk)