

EYFS Information Booklet 2026-2027



Starting school



Below is the timetable for starting school in September. We build up the first few weeks gradually so that the children can become used to the new routines and staff in school. The children will be in school full time by week 3, providing they are able to cope with the length of the school day. Below is a timetable outlining the transition timings.

Week 1 Thursday 3 rd September All Children in Friday 4 th September All children in	9.00am- 11.00pm 9.00am-12.00pm
Week 2 7 th - 11 th September	9.00am- 1.30pm- Children to stay for lunch
Week 3 Flexi Week 14 th - 18 th September	8.40am- 3.15pm Children to stay for the morning, lunch and afternoon (full day).
Week 4 September 21 st - 25 th Children commence full time	8.40am- 3.15pm

Flexi week (Week 3)

If your child is struggling to cope with the length of the school day, for this week only, you can collect them at 1:30pm from the office. (Please chat with your class teacher if you require this arrangement.)

The School Day

Please bring your child onto the EYFS/KS1 playground where they will line up in class order. Reception children to line up on the red dot. The children will be taken into their class by the teacher and teaching assistant. If you would like to speak to your class Teacher, this is a great time to do so.

We appreciate that starting school can be a time of anxiety for parents, however we like to encourage the children's independence and therefore would appreciate your support and co-operation to allow your child to come into school by themselves. This will help support their transition. Your child will need to bring a water bottle and book bag to school daily. These must be clearly labelled. We do not encourage the children to bring in toys from home unless it supports our learning.

At collection time please wait for your child outside in the EYFS/KS1 playground. Your child will be sent out to the playground from the classroom door, once you have been seen by the class teacher. If somebody else is picking up your child from school, you **must** inform a member of teaching staff or call the school office.

You can buy name labels or name stamps online some of the recommended websites are as follows:

<https://www.mynametags.com/>

<https://stampstastic.co.uk/>



Meet our Team

Our caring, curious and courageous team is made up of:



Mrs Jepps

(Headteacher)



Mr Ball

(Deputy head Teacher)



Mrs Calabria

(Pastoral Lead and SENCO)



The EYFS Team

L-R:

Ms Farley, Mrs Thornbury, Mrs Boswell,
Mrs Eskain, Mrs Walton, Miss Paraskeva

Classes:

The Class Teacher for Cherry Class is Mrs Boswell.

The Class Teacher for Lime Class is Mrs Eskain.

****We will observe all children during the first 3 weeks of school and notice the relationships they build with their peers and adults. These observations will inform us of the best class for your child****

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

This is what a typical day looks like in Reception:

8:40am- Children collected from the EYFS/KS1 playground

8:50am- Registration

9:00am- Start of morning learning

9.50am- Morning snack/milk time

10.10am- Collective Worship

10:30am- Playtime (15 minutes)

10.50am- Phonics

12:05pm- Lunchtime

1:15pm- Start of afternoon learning

2.30pm- Playtime (15 minutes)

3:15pm End of school day



Tetbury was an important sheep farming town and Cotswold Wool and yarn came from here. It was stored in the Market House.



The National Arboretum at Westonbirt is right on our doorstep! It has one of the best tree collections in the world.



Tetbury's crest is a pair of dolphins. There's a legend about them saving a ship which belonged to a Lord of the Manor of Tetbury.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Three Prime Areas



During their time in Reception, the children will focus on **seven areas of learning** and development. All the areas are important and inter-connected. **The Three Prime areas** are particularly important for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. They enable us to build the foundations to learn, form relationships and thrive.

Communication and Language Development involves giving children opportunities to experience a language rich environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves, to hold a conversation and to speak and listen in a range of situations.



Physical Development provides opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children will be helped to develop their fine motor skills through 'funky fingers' activities and to form letters as they learn to write.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is all about helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups and to have confidence in their own abilities.



The Four Specific Areas

The children will also study **four specific areas**, through which the three main areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are; Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.



Literacy encourages children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to interest them. Phonics is taught daily following Essential Letters and Sounds.

Mathematics provides children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems and to describe shapes, space and measures. We use the White Rose maths scheme.



Understanding the World involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design enables children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.



Although they are learning and developing many important skills, most of the time the children will feel they are just playing and having fun. Sometimes they will choose what they want to do. Sometimes they will take part in a teacher led, planned activity that helps them learn how to concentrate or develops a particular skill, like using scissors.



Reading

Children begin learning Phonics at the very beginning of Reception and it is explicitly taught every day during a dedicated slot on the timetable. Children are given the knowledge and the skills to then apply this independently.

Throughout the day, children will use their growing Phonics knowledge to support them in other areas of the curriculum and will have many opportunities to practise their reading. This includes reading with a partner during paired reading and as a class.

Children continue daily Phonics lessons in Year 1 and further through the school to ensure all children become confident, fluent readers.



We follow the ELS progression and sequence. This allows our children to practise their existing phonic knowledge whilst building their understanding of the 'code' of our language GPCs (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence). As a result, our children can tackle any unfamiliar words that they might discover.

In September we will be holding a meeting on Reading to explain how you can best support your child at home and our expectations as a school. During the summer holidays we recommend that you read with your children every day. Reading has so many benefits these include:

- Helps your child get to know sounds, words and language, and develop early literacy skills
- Spark imagination and curiosity
- Promotes brain development and ability to focus and concentrate
- Build social, communication and emotional skills
- Learn about the world, their own culture and other cultures

Below is a link with 50 recommended reads for preschool children:

<https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/recommended-reads/preschool-nursery/>



Maths

The best way to help your child develop mathematical skills is to talk to them about numbers, shape and measures while out and about, or at home. Recognising numerals on doors, road signs, in shops and so on is a good way to aid number recognition. Counting stairs as you go up or down, counting plates for the tea table etc. is useful too. Maths in EYFS is about developing mathematical language and comparing measures.

How will I know what my child has been doing?

We will keep you informed about the activities your child has been engaging in at school via Tapestry, an online learning journal. You download an app or access the website online. We then send regular observations home to you, with photos and videos to show you exactly what your son/daughter has been doing at school.



School Uniform



At St. Mary's CE VA Primary School we are extremely proud of our school and our pupils and believe that by wearing school uniform children develop a sense of pride and belonging to their school, as well as being easily recognisable as St. Mary's pupils. We respectfully ask for the co-operation of parents to ensure that pupils are suitably dressed and thus represent the school and themselves appropriately. We aim to provide parents with a clear uniform policy and the uniform itself is intended to be practical, smart and cost effective. Most of the uniform can be purchased on the high street or in supermarkets. Specific items with the school logo are available online from www.michaelhope.co.uk. Your order can either be sent free of charge to the school or you can choose to pay for delivery to your own address. We also have a small amount of second-hand uniform for sale, please contact the school office for details.

In readiness for September we ask that you purchase a school jumper or cardigan and a light blue polo shirt for your child, along with a book bag. There is the choice of either a knitted or a sweater style jumper or cardigan. These items can all be ordered via the Michael Hope website.

Reception Uniform

All children should arrive at school in September wearing school uniform. The uniform for Reception children consists of:

Light blue school polo shirt

Grey trousers, shorts, skirt or pinafore dress

Blue and white checked dress/playsuit (summer)

Navy blue school jumper/cardigan

Grey or white socks or grey tights.

Black sensible shoes (no boots, trainers or laces please)

PLEASE NAME ALL ITEMS OF UNIFORM!



PE Kit

Plain navy blue shorts/skirt/skort

White T-Shirt (version with school logo optional)

White socks

Daps/trainers (no laces please)

From Easter onwards it would be beneficial to add a plain navy blue sweatshirt/hoody and navy blue tracksuit bottoms for outdoors PE.

PLEASE NAME EVERYTHING, including the bag!

Bags

Book bags are recommended for all children. They are stored in boxes in the class-room. Please name your child's book bag on the outside, or to attach a keyring/ribbon to make it distinguishable from the other bags! **Please avoid sending back packs as they take up a lot of room!**



Jewellery

In the interests of safety, you are asked to support us in not allowing your children to wear any jewellery in school. Apart from the obvious possibility of items being lost, they can also cause nasty accidents if they catch on clothing or P.E. equipment. If your child's ears are pierced, stud earrings may be worn.



Extras!

Your child will need a pair of wellies to be kept at school. Children are able to access the field in all weathers during playtimes.

Please also pack spare underwear and socks into your child's book bag, in case of 'accidents'!

Before and after school

Breakfast Club

Our wonderful Teaching Assistants run a Breakfast Club from 7:45 am to 8:45am every day in the hall. Places must be pre-booked through Arbor (login details will be released during the first week of school). This costs £3.40 per child per day.

After School Club

Twiglets is our onsite after school club which runs from 3:15pm to 5.30pm. They plan lots of fun activities for the children to do. Afternoon tea is served at 4:30pm. If you wish your child to attend Twiglets, please book via Arbor (login details will be released during the first week of school). A session costs £10.15 per child.





ParentPay
COUNT ON US

Lunches

Every pupil in the infants (Early Years and Key Stage 1) is entitled to a universal free hot school meal. If you are a parent in receipt of qualifying benefits please also register online for free school meals — more information is in your pack. This attracts additional support throughout all of your child's primary school years. There will be several choices available to your child and a sample menu is included. All hot school meals are cooked in our school kitchen by Caterlink staff. Your child can either have a hot school meal or bring a packed lunch from home. All hot school meals must be pre-booked online in advance via Parentpay. You will receive a Parentpay activation letter in the first week of school.

Website and newsletters

You will receive a copy of the fortnightly school newsletter via email. This will keep you up to date with what is happening at school and future events/appointments. Please ensure you put your main email address on the admission form. We also regularly update our website with news articles, communications and photos.

School Office

Communication with school

When sending communications to school please send an email referencing your child's name and class to admin@st-marys.dgat.org.uk

Illness notification

The School Office must be notified of absence due to illness, by email or telephone by 9:00am of each day of absence on 01666 502275. Please keep your child off school for 48 hours if he/she has been sick or had diarrhoea to help us prevent the spread of sickness bugs.

Absence

Ensuring positive attendance is the collaborative effort of families and school staff. Whilst there are some exceptions (illness and attending medical appointments) the law is clear that all children are to be in school every day that the school is open. If you're experiencing any difficulty in ensuring this strong attendance, or are aware of any barriers to your child's attendance then please do speak to our attendance champion, Mrs Helen Calabria.

Following government guidelines, the Head teacher can only authorise requests for absence if there are exceptional circumstances. Please do not plan family holidays during the school term as they will not be authorised and are disruptive to children's learning. Unauthorised family holidays can also subject to a penalty notice. Absence request forms are available from the school office.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Foundation Stage Team: admin@st-marys.dgat.org.uk

Useful website links:

School link: <http://www.stmarystetbury.com>



Recommended reads:

<https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/recommended-reads/preschool-nursery/>

Uniform ordering: www.michaelhope.co.uk

Name labels: <https://www.mynametags.com/>

Name stamps: <https://stamptastic.co.uk/>

Phonic information for parents:

<https://essentiallettersandsounds.org/parents/>

Toilet training tips and advice: https://eric.org.uk/potty-training/?gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI1Y2K3ozvhQMV6JtQBh13fwmEEAAYASAAEgIZSfD_BwE

Preparing your child for school:

https://www.pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/being-school-ready/?gad_source=1&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI8_n9ozvhQMV6JtQBh3LugGVEAAYASAAEgJbrfD_BwE#factsheets



The Children's Bowel & Bladder Charity

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS 2026/27



SEPTEMBER						OCTOBER						NOVEMBER						
Mon		7	14	21	28	Mon		5	12	19	26	Mon		2	9	16	23	30
Tues	1	8	15	22	29	Tues		6	13	20	27	Tues		3	10	17	24	
Wed	2	9	16	23	30	Wed		7	14	21	28	Wed		4	11	18	25	
Thur		3	10	17	24	Thur	1	8	15	22	29	Thur		5	12	19	26	
Fri		4	11	18	25	Fri		2	9	16	23	30	Fri		6	13	20	27
Sat		5	12	19	26	Sat		3	10	17	24	31	Sat		7	14	21	28
Sun		6	13	20	27	Sun		4	11	18	25		Sun	1	8	15	22	29
DECEMBER						JANUARY						FEBRUARY						
Mon		7	14	21	28	Mon		4	11	18	25	Mon	1	8	15	22		
Tues	1	8	15	22	29	Tues		5	12	19	26	Tues	2	9	16	23		
Wed	2	9	16	23	30	Wed		6	13	20	27	Wed	3	10	17	24		
Thur	3	10	17	24	31	Thur		7	14	21	28	Thur	4	11	18	25		
Fri	4	11	18	25		Fri	1	8	15	22	29	Fri	5	12	19	26		
Sat		5	12	19	26	Sat		2	9	16	23	30	Sat		6	13	20	27
Sun		6	13	20	27	Sun		3	10	17	24	31	Sun		7	14	21	28
MARCH						APRIL						MAY						
Mon	1	8	15	22	29	Mon		5	12	19	26	Mon		3	10	17	24	31
Tues	2	9	16	23	30	Tues		6	13	20	27	Tues		4	11	18	25	
Wed	3	10	17	24	31	Wed		7	14	21	28	Wed		5	12	19	26	
Thur	4	11	18	25		Thur	1	8	15	22	29	Thur		6	13	20	27	
Fri	5	12	19	26		Fri	2	9	16	23	30	Fri		7	14	21	28	
Sat		6	13	20	27	Sat		3	10	17	24	Sat		1	8	15	22	29
Sun		7	14	21	28	Sun		4	11	18	25	Sun		2	9	16	23	30
JUNE						JULY						AUGUST						
Mon		7	14	21	28	Mon		5	12	19	26	Mon		2	9	16	23	30
Tues	1	8	15	22	29	Tues		6	13	20	27	Tues		3	10	17	24	31
Wed	2	9	16	23	30	Wed		7	14	21	28	Wed		4	11	18	25	
Thur	3	10	17	24		Thur	1	8	15	22	29	Thur		5	12	19	26	
Fri	4	11	18	25		Fri	2	9	16	23	30	Fri		6	13	20	27	
Sat		5	12	19	26	Sat		3	10	17	24	31	Sat		7	14	21	28
Sun		6	13	20	27	Sun		4	11	18	25		Sun	1	8	15	22	29

Term Time		Holidays	
Bank Holiday		Inset Day Holiday	
Term 1: Tue 1 st Sept – Fri 23 rd Oct 2026	39 days		
Term 2: Mon 2 nd Nov – Fri 18 th Dec 2026	35 days		
Term 3: Mon 4 th Jan - Fri 12 th Feb 2027	30 days		
Term 4: Mon 22 nd Feb – Thur 25 th Mar 2027	24 days		
Term 5: Mon 12 th April – Fri 28 th May 2027	34 days		
Term 6: Mon 7 th June – Wed 21 st July 2027	33 days		
Total	195 days*		
Christmas Bank Holidays 25 th December 2026 26 th December 2026 New Year Bank Holiday 1 st January 2026 Good Friday 26 th March 2027 Easter Monday 29 th March 2027 Early May Bank Holiday 3 rd May 2027 Spring Bank Holiday 31 st May 2027 Summer Bank Holiday 30 th August 2027			

*195 days are defined as "School days". In the school year 2026/27 pupils must attend for 190 days. Schools may decide individually or collectively which 5 days in the year are INSET or non-contact days (days pupils do not need to attend). Academies and free schools are not legally bound by school day and school year regulations; however, the DfE has stated they should be working towards a minimum of 32.5 hours per school week by September 2024 at the latest.

Please Note: As per the Governance handbook, academies and free schools can choose to set their own term dates. Schools considering alternative dates or considering changes to their school opening times may wish to contact our Transport Team to discuss transport implications and contact local childcare providers to discuss what impact this could have.