



St. Mary's Church of England Primary School, Putney

Vision: *Delivering excellence, allowing all to flourish*

Mission: *Creating a culture of wonder, guided by Christian faith*

Values: *Compassion • Endurance • Thankfulness*

Year 1: Half-Termly Letter to Parents

Spring Term 2, February 2026

Dear Parent(s) and Carer(s),

I hope you all had a restful and enjoyable half-term break. The children have returned with great enthusiasm and excitement to learn, and they have already made a fantastic start!

We are all looking forward to another busy and fun-filled half-term, filled with plenty of learning and growth. Here is to a wonderful second half of the term!

Classroom Resources and fundraising

Thank you in advance for all your efforts at the cake sale.

We plan to put the money raised to excellent use! We will be purchasing a range of new resources, including playdoh, craft supplies, fun wet play games, and, of course, plenty of stickers for the children. Your support truly makes a difference, and we are incredibly grateful for all that you do.

School Trips

This half-term, Year 1 will visit The Paddington Bear Experience to support our geography learning. The children will develop their understanding of location knowledge by spotting famous landmarks such as the London Eye and Big Ben, travelling by train and comparing human and physical features along the way. We will also visit Waterstones to celebrate World Book Day where the children will enjoy a story, create bookmarks and have a drink in the café. More details to follow - watch this space!

The Curriculum

To view the Year 1 curriculum intent please see the Year 1 Curriculum Map, which can be viewed on our school website here: <https://www.stmarysschoolputney.co.uk/curriculum/y1/>

We will be following the content outlined in the Spring Term.

There has been a slight change to our English curriculum map this half-term. We will now be exploring *The Yeti and the Bird* by Nadia Shireen and *The Odd Egg* by Emily Gravett.

The children will immerse themselves in the stories through drama, discussion and rich vocabulary exploration. Through the story *The Yeti and the Bird*, the children will write a story about a two seemingly different characters, in the third person using past tense. They'll use adverbs to sequence and add cohesion, as well as conjunctions to write sentences using *but* and *'and'*. Through the story of *The Odd egg*, the children will write short guides for how to look after eggs, thought bubbles to capture how characters are feeling, awards to celebrate Duck's egg, supportive letters of advice to Duck and congratulations cards to welcome the baby birds. The main outcome is a non-fiction *'Egg Spotter's Guide'* after researching different types of eggs. Perfect for Easter!

We will continue to explore grammar and spellings which I will speak about in weekly Friday updates and optional sheets on the grammar focus will be sent home each week.

Please do not explore these texts at home just yet as we will be discovering them slowly together in class and want to avoid any spoilers. Knowing key events in advance can sometimes limit children's creativity and independence in their writing.

Look out for my Friday updates to let you know when we have finished each text, at that point it would be wonderful to revisit the story together at home. Re-reading stories helps children build fluency, deepen comprehension, notice new vocabulary, strengthen prediction skills and develop greater confidence and enjoyment in reading.

Vocabulary

We know from research that the size of a child's vocabulary is a good predictor of success. Children with a poor vocabulary at five are four times more likely to struggle with reading in adulthood (*Why Closing the Word Gap Matters: Oxford Language Report, 2018*). A wide vocabulary not only aids reading and writing but also supports success across the entire curriculum. For this reason, the acquisition of new vocabulary is an important part of a child's development.

Vocabulary can be learned in two ways:

- Through indirect instruction
- Through direct instruction

Indirect instruction can be through rich reading experiences, conversations, games etc and involve a natural development of vocabulary. Children will need to use their background knowledge and pay attention to context to work out the meanings of words.

Direct instruction involves teaching specific vocabulary. This happens across the curriculum at school. Children are taught both general and subject specific vocabulary.

You can help to develop your child's vocabulary at home by reading a range of high quality texts with them, having conversations, playing word games, using a range of vocabulary yourself and discussing new vocabulary words that they might come across.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding the children at St. Mary's is the responsibility of all staff, parents and professionals who come on site. If you have a safeguarding concern, our Designated Safeguarding Lead in school is Miss Cheryl Payne. Her contact email is:

dsl@st-marys-school.putney.wandsworth.sch.uk

If there are safeguarding concerns, which take place outside of school hours please contact the Wandsworth Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Their contact details are: Telephone: 020 8871 6622 or e-mail: MASH@wandsworth.gov.uk.

PE Arrangements

PE lessons will continue to take place every **Monday** and **Friday**. Your child should attend school on these days wearing the St. Mary's PE kit. If your child takes part in a school sports club before or after school on a non-PE day, they are required to change i.e., sports club before school please bring school uniform to change into and after school bring PE kit to get changed into.

PLEASE ENSURE YOUR CHILD'S PE KIT AND UNIFORM IS ALL LABELLED CLEARLY.

Home Learning

All home learning is set on **Friday** to be returned/completed by the following **Wednesday**

Maths: This will be set on **Friday** please refer to your child's home learning book and complete at least one of the options. This should be completed by the following **Wednesday**. Please also look at Friday update emails for areas in which you could further support your child's learning.

Dictation: Dictation cards will be sent home the week after spelling cards and are to be completed by the following **Wednesday**. Dictation covers the spelling pattern from the previous week to check that your child can recall the spelling rule and not just rote learn for the test. The due dates are written on the cards to help you! The dictation helps us to see what your child has been able to retain and what we might need to go over again so please do not let your child see the card before writing and please **DO** leave in any mistakes that your child might make.

Grammar: reinforcement sheets will be sent home during the week, for the children to complete and to let you know what we have been covering in class. These are for your reference and do not need to be returned.

Handwriting: Optional handwriting reinforcement can be completed using the Letter Join online program (**Login/username: I st-marys-putney_1 Password: felsham1**). As the children have very different needs with regard to handwriting, I recommend you go into the Year 1 folder and choose an appropriate letter pattern each week, to suit your child's ability.

Spellings: Physical copies of Spelling cards will be sent home after the first spelling test (6th March 2026). Weekly spellings are tested on **Friday**. Please ensure that your child brings their spelling card to school on a **Friday** so that we can mark down their score for you to see how they did and what they might need to work on.

Reading: We expect that children will read aloud every night for *at least 10 minutes*. Inside the front and back covers of the books, there are useful questions to ask your child to probe their understanding of the text. Please refer to these before, during and after reading together. Reading folders should be brought into school *every day* in order to enable us to read with your child at school as well. Every child will read with an adult (whether the class teacher, teaching assistant or a volunteer) every week. Every child will read with the class teacher every two weeks and a comment will be written in their Reading Record book. Reading books are changed on a **Wednesday evening**. We will keep reading folders overnight on a Wednesday and they will be returned home every **Thursday** after book change. Please ensure that you write in the Reading Record when your child needs new books, otherwise they will not be changed! Books are changed, if requested on **WEDNESDAYS ONLY**. We cannot guarantee that books can be changed after this. Any other comments or feedback regarding your child's reading is always welcome via the online PACT book.

Home learning will not be set during holidays

Show and Tell -

This half-term, our focus is on poetry!

Please support your child by helping them learn a poem. They can choose one of their own, write their own. If your child wants to learn a more challenging or longer poem get them to recite one stanza/verse. Two great books you might be able to get from the library to explore with your child are 'The Puffin Book of Fantastic First Poems' Edited by June Crebbin or "We Can" from A Great Big Cuddle by Michael Rosen. While this is an option for them to perform, this wonderful book offers plenty of other poems they might like to explore. Other examples of poems that your child may like to recite are: 'Chocolate Cake' by Michael Rosen, 'Be Glad Your Nose is on Your Face' or 'Homework! Oh, Homework!' by Jack Prelutsky or 'I Like My Bike' by Aileen Fisher.

It is a statutory requirement in the National Curriculum for children to learn and recite poems by heart. Learning to recall a poem from memory can be a challenge, which is why the poems I have selected were chosen for their rhythm, rhyme, and vivid imagery. Encourage your child to perform their poem with energy—using movement, gestures, and changing the level of their voice to bring it to life!

Performance Dates:

Green Family	Yellow Family	20 th March 2026
Red Family	Blue Family	26 th March 2026

Communication

If you have any queries about the daily routine or what your child is learning, or to inform us of other matters relating to your child (e.g., if your child is being collected by someone who does not usually collect them), then do not hesitate to get in touch with any member of the Year 1 team. As always, the best way to do this is through the PACT e-mail. The PACT e-mail is a great tool for communication between home and school, so please do not hesitate in using it. The address is:

Class2024@st-marys-putney.wandsworth.sch.uk

Dates for your diary:

Friday 27th February

- Celebration Worship
- Year 1 Cake Sale

Tuesday 3rd March at 8.50am

- Y1 trip to Waterstones - **no packed lunch needed**

Thursday 5th March

- World Book Day

Friday 13th March

- Mothering Sunday Service at St Mary's Church

Tuesday 17th March

- Y1 Trip - The Paddington Bear Experience

Wednesday 18th March

- Whole School Photograph

Wednesday 18th - Thursday 19th March

- Progress in learning meetings

Thursday 19th March

- DT Day 4

Friday 20th March

- Comic Relief

Friday 27th March

- Last Day of Term. **Term ends at 2.30pm**

Best wishes for the term ahead.

Kindest regards,
Miss McCarthy