

The Saint Raphael's News



Lent Newsletter 2026 / John 11:25
Jesus said "I am the Resurrection and the life"

Dear Parents and Carers,



As we continue on our Lenten journey I wanted to update you on the activities that we have planned during Lent in school.

CATHOLIC LIFE

LENT & EASTER: The children continue on their Lenten journey and have been involved in quiet liturgies and Celebrations of the Word throughout Lent. The Year 6 Worship Leaders are leading all classes beautifully in worship.

Year 6 are going to lead key stage 2 in a Stations of the Cross service as part of our Holy Week work and everyone is welcome to join us for this service.

Year 3 will lead our next Lenten whole school Mass on Thursday, 26th March and again all are welcome.

We have a variety of activities planned for our Retreat Week. All dates and times are below.

EASTER RETREAT WEEK: We will be celebrating Holy Week in school and our Easter Retreat will have lots of activities for the children to help them reflect on this special season in the Church year and to continue our Lenten journey.

| Day | Activity |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Monday, 30 th March | House Day (non-uniform day-wear house colours if you have them) to include; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiet reflection• Art and craft activities based around the theme of Catholic Social Teaching• Bunny Hop for Willow Wood Hospice• EYFS Easter Coffee Morning 9.10am |
| Tuesday, 31 st March | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiet reflection• Cake Sale (Proceeds to Mary's Meals)• Activity day - including preparation for prayer trail• Easter Bingo for the children in the afternoon• Prayer Trail in chapel open to parents and families from 3.15pm. All welcome |
| Wednesday, 1 st April | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9.15am Stations of the Cross led by Year 6 on the school field-parents, carers, families welcome to join us.• School closes 3.15pm |

HOUSE DAYS: On Monday, 30th March the children can wear non-uniform in house colours if they have them or simply non-uniform. The children will be taking part in a variety of activities around the theme of Catholic Social Teaching.

WILLOW WOOD BUNNY HOP: Our Lenten Fundraising activity will once again include the Willow Wood 'Bunny Hop.' The details are in the letter that the children have brought home. If you wish to donate please follow the instructions on the letter. We recognise that families have many financial pressures at this time but if you did want to donate to this local cause to support the hospice it would be much appreciated.

EASTER BINGO: On Tuesday, 31st March in the afternoon the children will play Easter Bingo. (No money is required for this.)



MINI VINNIES: Our Mini-Vinnie group are selling toast during Lent to raise money for Missio. Thank you for your support with this charity work.

The next toast sale will be Wednesday 1st April if children wanted to bring a 20p donation.

May God's love shine in our lives as we care, share and learn together



CAKE SALE: On Tuesday, 31st March the Mini-Vinnies group of children in school will be organising a cake sale. The proceeds will go to Mary's Meals. This is a charity which provides meals to children living in some of the world's poorest countries. If you wanted to send in cakes for the sale please send them either on Friday 27th March or Monday 30th March. If you want to give a donation to Mary's meals for the children to buy a cake please send donations in with the child on Tuesday, 31st March. Thank you for your support with this.



EASTER PRAYER TRAIL: Parents, carers and families are invited to our Easter Prayer Trail in the chapel on Tuesday 31st March from 3.15pm. This will be an opportunity for you to see the work that the children have produced during Holy Week on the theme of Catholic Social Teaching. The chapel will also be open on the morning of Wednesday 1st April from 8.30am for parents, carers and families to look at the children's work. All are welcome.

EASTER HOLIDAY: School will close at 3.15pm on **Wednesday 1st April** and re-open for the Summer Term at 8.45am on **Wednesday 15th April 2026**



SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME:

We celebrated First Forgiveness with our pupils which was a beautiful celebration. The children will celebrate their **First Holy Communion on Saturday 9th May, 2026** at 10.00am in St Peter's and St Raphael's Church, Stalybridge.

I would like to thank Father Owen, Deacon Antony and the parish for their help.

Summer Term Dates

YEAR 6 SATS WEEK: SATS week for year 6 commences on **Monday 11th May, 2026**.

Year 2 SATS are now not statutory although the children will be completing some tests over the summer 1 half term.

Year1 Phonic Screening will take place week beginning 8th June, 2026

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check will take place week beginning 8th June, 2026

As always please ensure that children are in school during these periods and the time leading up to them.

SWIMMING LESSONS: Year 3 and Year 4 will begin swimming lessons during the school day in Summer Term 1 and Year 5 and Year 6 will have swimming lessons during the school day in Summer Term 2.

Year 3 and 4 start their lessons on Tuesday 21st April, 2026. The children will swim in the afternoon and will be travelling by coach to Copley Swimming Pool. They will be accompanied by St Raphael's staff. All children will require a one-piece swimming costume or swim shorts and a towel. The children do not need shampoo, shower gel, deodorant etc.

CLASS ASSEMBLIES:

Our class assemblies will continue in the summer term for the classes who have not yet done their class assembly. (See the dates below) They are all on a Friday at 9.05am when we have our usual weekly Praise Assembly. All are welcome. On these dates we do not have class certificates or the sharing of trophies, medals etc from home due to time constraints.

| Class | Date of Assembly |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| Class 3 | Friday, 24 th April, 2026 |
| Reception | Friday 15 th May, 2026 |
| Class 1 | Friday 26 th June, 2026 |

UNIFORM: The children continue to look very smart- thank you for your support with this. If the weather is warm enough the children can wear the summer school uniform in the weeks leading up to Easter. Then also after Easter summer uniform can be worn.

Summer Uniform

- Grey skirt/pinafore/trousers or grey shorts
- Dress - Gingham Blue
- Blue short-sleeved polo shirt or school polo shirt (available from uniform suppliers with school badge)
Ties are not worn with the polo shirts.
- Footwear - Only sensible, black footwear may be worn. Boots and trainers are not allowed.

Year 6 leavers: To give advance notice for the key dates for the events around the Year 6 leavers they are in the diary section at the end of the newsletter.

CONTACT DETAILS: We are continuing to send newsletters and other information through our text and email services. Please ensure that school has the correct contact details for you at all times. If there are any changes to your mobile numbers and/or email addresses, please inform us as soon as possible to ensure we have the correct contact information on our systems and we can keep in touch with you.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROVISION: Our Before and After School Club continues to be very popular. Bookings for the summer term will be made as always through Magicbooking. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

SCHOOL TRIPS: We are currently planning class trips in Summer 2026. More details will follow after Easter.

ROCK & RIVER: We are delighted to have secured a one day experience for the Year 6 children at Rock & River on Friday 17th July, 2026. More details including consent forms will be shared in the summer term.

YEAR 6 LEAVERS' HOODIES: Information will be sent home about ordering Leavers' hoodies if you would like your Year 6 child to have a hoodie.

RECEPTION ADMISSIONS - SEPTEMBER 2026: Children who are due to start in Reception in September 2026 will receive their letter from Tameside LA in April. We will then send out information in the summer term regarding an open evening and taster days etc

NURSERY ADMISSIONS - SEPTEMBER 2026: We will be processing applications for Nursery admissions for children who will be 3 prior to 1st September 2026. The Admissions Committee of Governors will then meet after Easter and letters will be sent out to parents in the summer term.

Thank you once again for your continued support. I would like to wish you all a happy and holy Easter. I hope that you enjoy this special time with your families and friends. Times for Masses and services at St Peter's and St Raphael's Church are available on the parish website and there is a link to this on our school website.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Mrs L. Lakner

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Next Newsletter: April 2026

DIARY DATES:

| MARCH 2026 | | |
|---|---|--------------------|
| Tuesday 24 th | Parents' Evening | 3.30-6pm |
| Wednesday 25 th | Parents' Evening | 3.30-6pm |
| Thursday 26 th | Whole School Mass (in school) Year 3 lead | 10am |
| Friday 27 th | Yr 4 Violin concert during Praise Assembly | 9.05am |
| Monday 30 th | Retreat Week begins - see details above EYFS Easter Coffee Morning | All week 9.10am |
| Tuesday 31 st | Retreat week activities - see details above Prayer Trail opens in chapel @3.15pm | |
| APRIL 2026 | | |
| Wednesday 1 st | School Closes for Easter holiday | 3.15pm |
| Wednesday 15 th | School opens for Summer term 1 | 8.45am |
| Tuesday 21 st | Swimming sessions begin for Years 3 and 4 | Afternoon |
| Friday 24 th | Year 3 Class Assembly | 9.05am |
| MAY 2026 | | |
| Monday 4 th May | School closed Bank Holiday Monday | All Day |
| Tuesday 5 th May | Class Photos | am |
| Saturday 9 th May | Sacrament of First Holy Communion @ St Peter's and St Raphael's Church | 10am |
| Monday 11 th - Thursday 14 th May | Year 6 SATS week | All week |
| Friday 15 th May | Reception Class Assembly | 9.05am |
| Friday 22 nd May | School Closes for half term holiday | 3.15pm |
| JUNE 2026 | | |
| Monday 8 th June | School opens for Summer term 2 | 8.45am |
| Week commencing 8 th June | Year 1 Phonics Screening | All week |
| Week commencing 8 th June | Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check | All week |
| Wednesday 17 th June | Full Governing Board Meeting | 4.30pm |
| Friday 26 th June | Year 1 Class Assembly | 9.05am |
| JULY 2026 | | |
| Tuesday 14 th July | Year 5 and 6 Production | 1.45pm and 6pm |
| Friday 17 th July | Year 6 Rock and River | All day |
| Tuesday 21 st July | Year 6 Leavers' Mass and whole school Mass in School Chapel | 9.15am |
| Wednesday 22 nd July | Leavers' Assembly | 9.05am |
| Wednesday 22 nd July | School closes for Summer | 1.30pm |
| SEPTEMBER 2026 | | |
| Tuesday 1 st September | School opens for Autumn Term 1 | 8.45am |