



St Michael with St Thomas C of E Primary School

Newsletter – Friday 26th September 2025

Parent Forum Invitation

We would love to invite you to join our wonderful Parent Forum! Your thoughts, ideas and experiences are so important to us and really help shape the decisions we make. Our Parent Forum is a friendly, welcoming space where we come together to chat about how we can make our school community even better. We are always excited to hear fresh perspectives and new ideas from our families.

Ideally, we would like a nominee from every class. The Parent Forum will meet with Miss Slingsby each term for an hour, from 3:30-4:30pm (coffee, cakes and free afterschool club provided!)

If you would like to get involved and be part of this lovely group, please email the office. Together, we can continue creating the very best learning environment for all our children.

Colour Run - Friday 3rd October

Get your running shoes ready—it's time for our very first Colour Run! This exciting event will take place after school, and we can't wait to see families getting involved. Alongside the run, we'll have food, drinks, and all the colour run essentials available for purchase. We are just finalising a few details and will share the full plan with you in the upcoming week.

Harvest Festival

We are looking forward to this year's Harvest Festival service led by Y5 which will be held in the church on Thursday 2nd October starting at 9:30am. Everyone is welcome and we will be accepting donations from up Monday 29th Sept until the service on Thursday. Please see the shopping list of suggested items below. If you would like to join us on our walk to church, please contact the office, your support is always appreciated.

Parent Insight

We have our first round of Parent Insight sessions coming up in October. For those of you that haven't experienced these afternoons, before it is an opportunity for parents to come and join in a lesson with their child, learning alongside them. This enables parents to get a flavour of what life is like in the classroom and also to see the different strategies and methods we use to teach, which will help you to support your child at home. If you wish to attend the session, please sign up on Arbor, you will be able to see within the app if you have secured a place. Unfortunately, due to space in the classroom, numbers are limited, if you would like to attend but are unable to book on as the session is full, please contact the office and another session will be put on for a different day so no one will miss out. Sessions will be available to sign on to from 6:00pm today.

These are live lessons and unfortunately younger siblings are unable to attend. Unfortunately, you will not be able to attend unless you have booked onto the session.

Whole School Eucharist

A big thank you to all the parents who joined us for our Whole School Eucharist on Thursday. It was wonderful to see so many of you there, sharing in this special occasion with us. We would also like to extend our thanks to Reverend Linda for leading such a lovely service and delivering a meaningful message, we are grateful for the sense of community it fostered. Thank you again for being part of this special time!

Online Safety Reminder

We have been made aware of some of our children being added to a “add all of your contacts group” in light of this we would urge all parents with children using a mobile device to check their group settings and remind all children of the dangers when accepting group requests. We have shared some information below to help guide these conversations and adjust settings. If you would like any support, please feel free to reach out.

Reception Open Evening

Even though our new Reception class has just started, we are already looking ahead to next year and would like to invite families of children starting school in September 2026 to our annual Open Evenings. Please support us by in promoting our event by sharing our advert on your social media and with family, friends, sports clubs, local group pages etc to help us get the word out to as many families as possible about our amazing school.



St Michael with St Thomas
CE Primary School

**RECEPTION 2026
OPEN EVENING**

**Tuesday 30th September
3.30pm & 5.30pm**

Parent Dates

Looking Ahead:

Here are some important dates for your diaries to help you plan for the next few weeks:

- 29th Sept – 1st Oct Y5 Bikeability
- 30th Sept – Reception Open Evening 3:30pm and 5:30pm
- 1st Oct – Sponsored Fitness Challenge
- 2nd Oct – Y4 Bikeability
- 2nd Oct – Y5 Harvest Festival Church (parents invited)
- 3rd Oct – Reception Welly Walk
- 3rd Oct – Y4/Y5 Bikeability Learn to Ride
- 3rd Oct – Colour Run
- 6th Oct – Reception Parent Insight
- 7th Oct – Y4 Clonter Theatre Trip
- 7th Oct – Y1 Parent Insight
- 9th Oct – Y6 Parent Insight
- 13th Oct – Y3 Parent Insight
- 14th Oct – School Photographer
- 14th Oct – Y6 Judo (children to bring PE kits in a bag)
- 14th Oct – Y4 Parent Insight
- 16th Oct – Y5 Parent Insight
- 20th Oct – Y2 Parent Insight

Please note, these dates are subject to change – please ensure you check them each week for any amendments or additions.

Trip Sign Up and Payment Dates

To help parents plan ahead we will be opening up all trips for the year ahead on Arbor and we will be issuing reminders for upcoming deadlines. Please find below some of the exciting trips we have planned so far. Additional trips will be added as and when confirmed.

Trip Sign Up and Payments Dates

Trip Date(s)	Trip Name	Groups	Sign-up/Payment deadline
07 Oct 2025	Clonter Theatre Y4	Year Y4	29 Sep 2025
10 Jun 2026 - 11 Jun 2026	Pettypool Y5	Year Y5	30 Sep 2025 Deposit
23 Oct 2025	KS1 Autumn Disco	Year R, Year Y1, Year Y2 and Year Y3	01 Oct 2025
		Year Y4, Year Y5 and Year Y6	
23 Oct 2025	KS2 Autumn Disco	Year Y6	01 Oct 2025
02 Jun 2026 - 03 Jun 2026	Y6 London Trip	Year Y6	06 Oct 2025 Deposit
12 Nov 2025	Y2 Liverpool Trip	Year Y2	10 Oct 2025
25 Nov 2025	Y6 Ancient Egypt Trip	Year Y6	11 Oct 2025

Quotes from Miss Slingsby's #Positivegossip Book this week:

- Noah K for fantastic learning in maths this week – Miss Ashton & Miss Manders
- Ruby and Charlotte (Y6) for being so helpful during lunchtimes ❤️
- Joseph (Y1) and Ryan (Y5) for playing bounce and catch with me so nicely at lunchtime – Miss B
- Whole school for being so enthusiastic and taking part in our sporting events this week (even the adults) – Miss Ashton
- Eva for always taking the time to stop and have a chat with me in Breakfast Club before the school day begins 😊 Mrs Worrall
- Reuben (Y3) for being so ready, respectful, and safe around school – Miss Bates
- Everyone who had their flu vaccines, especially those who helped their friends feel brave – Miss Brimble was blown away by such kindness
- Otis (Rec) for an amazing PE lesson – Mrs Bonnett
- Logan (Y1) for such amazing sentences in writing.
- Mason (Y6) for his growing maturity when facing a challenge!
- Annie for always giving me a wave and a smile when I leave work and she is playing out – Mrs Fisher
- Hazel (Y2) for being brave and asking for help when she felt a little worried – so mature 😊 – Mrs Worrall
- Arthur and Zac (Y6) for being so helpful and kind with one of our Reception children – Mrs Hughes

Harvest appeal

Help support your food bank this Harvest

Harvest is a time for thanks, a time to share and a time to care.

Donate food



Donate an item or two from our shopping list, ensuring we can provide food for people facing hardship in your community.

Donate money



All monetary donations are used to purchase items we are short of.



Shopping list

Tinned meat/fish

Tinned veg/fruit

Fruit Juice (1 litre)

Coffee/Tea

Long Life Milk

Cereal

Tinned Fruit

Jam

Toiletries

THANK YOU!

widnesfoodbank.org.uk

Living Our Values

Our Christian Value for this half term is:

Perseverance

"We keep trying and never give up"



St Michael with St Thomas Church

Come and join the Sunday services at our beautiful church! See times below. Don't forget Children's Church on the first Sunday of every month.



Holy Communion Service

Every Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for 1 hour

Let's Talk About Rights!

This week our Article of the week for you to discuss at home is: Article 12: Every child has the right to share their views and be heard

What does this mean?

- How do children access this right?
- How can duty bearers help to ensure children have this right?

Article of the WEEK



Ready, Respectful, Safe!



Headteacher Award Winners

Rec - Lucian for always being Ready, Respectful and safe'

Y1 - Logan for always giving 100% and for coming out of his shell 😊

Y2 - Emmie for always being an amazing role model

Y3 - Joshua for always having such a positive attitude towards learning

Y4 - Dylan for his super handwriting improvement

Y5 - Freddie for incredible resilience, coming into school and working his hardest despite feeling unwell ❤️

Y6 - Finlay for his dedication to learning times tables outside of school!

Lunchtime Superstars

Rec - Zac H

Y1 - Harper-Rose

Y2 - Lola

Y3 - Reuben

Y4 - Evelyn

Y5 - Max

Y6 - Isabelle

Attendance Counts!

#momentsmatter

Whole School Attendance - this year:

94.9%

Whole school attendance - this week:

96.2%

Class attendance winner:

98.3% - Y3

Class Attendance:

Rec - 93.3%

Y1 - 97.1%

Y2 - 95%

Y3 - 98.3%

Y4 - 98.2%

Y5 - 94.8%

Y6 - 96.3%



Important reminder regarding reporting absences.

Please be reminded that you need to notify school before 9am with the reason for absence for this to be recorded appropriately.

Please note 'Feeling unwell', 'poorly' or 'under the weather' is not sufficient, more detail is required such as 'has been sick' or 'has a temperature' is required.

There are lots of ways to notify school of absence. You can call the school number and leave a message on the absence line, you can send a message via Arbor or you can email the school office.

Thank you for your continued support

Saints Peter and Paul Bingo Night

You are invited to attend a fun-filled evening of music and prizes at our Bingo night hosted by our expressive arts team on:

Date: Wednesday 15th October

Time: Doors open 5:45pm. Eyes down 6:15pm

Location: Saints Peter and Paul CHS school hall

Entry is free. You just need to register your place at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/pandpchs/bingo/e-lemll>

Bingo tickets and refreshments will be available to purchase on the evening and all proceeds will support fundraising for our expressive arts department.

The event is open to all, so please feel free to share the details of this event with your school families.

Bring your friends and family to what will surely be an evening of laughter and big wins!!

We can't wait to see you there.



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

TEASING AND BULLYING

Children of all ages are keen to fit in socially and group chats can sometimes exacerbate that process. While group chats can foster connection, they can also give way to mean comments or jokes at someone's expense, especially when others join in for laughs. When bullying happens publicly, in front of friends and classmates, it can intensify the emotional impact – adding to embarrassment, anxiety and feelings of isolation for the child being targeted.

UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Children often don't control who is added to a group, which can lead to privacy concerns. Sharing personal details in group chats can be dangerous, and children have no control over what others do with the material they send. Some members of the chat might even decide to use such information maliciously.

PEER PRESSURE

Children may feel they have to constantly stay engaged just to be included and keep up with the conversation. In some cases, they might partake in inappropriate behaviour – like sharing explicit photos, jokes or memes – just to fit in. Group settings can also encourage children to act in ways they normally wouldn't, or stay silent when they know something is wrong, out of fear of being excluded. Some children may find it difficult to leave toxic group chats.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some group chats may include inappropriate language or imagery. Even if a child isn't actively participating in the conversation, they may still be exposed to this content simply by being part of the group. Some apps have disappearing messaging features, where content is only available once or for a few seconds, which makes it harder for children to report something they've seen.

EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

Exclusion in group chats is common and can take several forms. Sometimes a new group is created specifically to leave one child out, on purpose. In other cases, the chat may happen on an app that a child doesn't have access to, making it impossible for them to join in. This can cause feelings of being left out – even unintentionally.

VIDEO AND LIVE CHATS

Many popular apps allow children to engage in live streaming with interactive chats or have group video chats. Anyone can be added to these streams, and often children tag peers in the comments and have conversations which are unmoderated. There's a risk of being exposed to inappropriate or violent content and offensive language, either in the group video or via the group chats.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for children to compete for social status. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave unkindly. If a child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being bullied.

SET SOME GROUP CHAT RULES

Discuss safe group chat practices, such as asking a peer for consent before adding them to a group chat, or leaving a group chat if it's triggering. Tell children that if they're added to a group they didn't agree to beforehand, it's OK for them to leave immediately.

PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

It's vital for children to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure they understand the importance of not revealing personal details – like their address, their school, or photos they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up or how it might be used.

BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child encounters inappropriate content or feels uncomfortable in a group chat, encourage them to block and report the sender and leave the group. Make sure children know it's OK to leave a group chat if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Being bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of a group chat while disabling notifications. In fact, it would be healthier for them to do so, helping them avoid the pressure to respond immediately.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Celine Sutherland is an online safety consultant at iCyberAware, who has developed anti-bullying and cyber-safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government, comparing the internet use and online behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about WHATSAPP

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

GROUP CHATS

Group chats let friends talk together but can pose problems for young users. They might feel excluded – like dissociating events they weren't invited to. Hateful comments can also escalate quickly, as more people join in, amplifying the impact through wider audiences.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it attractive to scammers. Tactics include impersonating a child in an 'emergency' to request money, or triggering a logic-bomb, then pretending to be WhatsApp and asking for it – giving them access to private messages and personal data.

CHANNELS

'Channels' let users follow topics anonymously, interacting only through polls or emoji reactions. However, fake channels can spread real ones, spreading misinformation, hate speech, or phishing for personal data. WhatsApp may also collude and share channel-following info with third parties, raising privacy issues.

DISAPPEARING MESSAGES

Disappearing messages help share sensitive info, but young people may be angry because they're fully private. Recipients can opt for their message to vanish after 24 hours, 7 days, or 90 days – or for media, after one view. However, recipients can still save them by screenshotting or taking screenshots, reducing their privacy.

...ONLINE... Advice for Parents & Educators

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage children to treat unexpected messages with caution. But there's no guarantee, for example, whether it sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know never to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links or attachments. Setting up two-step verification adds an extra layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change a child's WhatsApp settings to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing permission. To do this, go to 'WhatsApp', then 'Version', then 'Permissions' (or 'My Contacts' on iOS). Additionally, if they need privacy (but location, emphasis, etc) they should enable this function for only one thing as they need – and then turn it off.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Butterfield is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian Government concerning internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

Source: <https://www.wakeupwednesday.org/guide/whatsapp/> (2021)



FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's simplicity makes sharing news quick – accurate or not. To keep curb misinformation, messages forwarded over that three, now allow in 'Forwarded many times' label with a double strike. This alerts users that the message isn't original and may be untrustworthy.

CHAT LOCK

The new 'Chat lock' feature lets users show specific messages in a separate container – in 'Message history' or 'Selected folder'. While useful for privacy, it could be misused by younger users to hide conversations or content they know parents and educators might find inappropriate, including age-restricted material.

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'Visible location' feature helps friends meet up or parents check a child's route home. However, anyone in a child's group chats can track their location, potentially revealing their home address or regular travel patterns to strangers.

AI INTEGRATION

Tools AI on WhatsApp passes info to children, including exposure to misinformation, inappropriate content, and data privacy issues. AI responses may be inaccurate, and kids might share personal information unknowingly. It can also hinder critical thinking by offering ready-made answers.

SECRET CODE

THINK BEFORE SHARING

Help children understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content sent to one user to then be shared more widely, and even publicly on social media. Encourage them to consider how and to whom they're sharing. If a friend messages them to share a secret, they might want to think about the sort of message that goes to them, who they're with, and why they have been told. Also, if a young person has seen any 'less safe' content, discuss their reasons for using this feature.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Have a conversation with your young about how they're using WhatsApp, emphasising that it's for their own safety. If you specify a 'locked chats' feature, you might want to talk about the sort of message that goes to them, who they're with, and why they have been told. Also, if a young person has seen any 'less safe' content, discuss their reasons for using this feature.

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