



Newsletter

Monday 23rd February 2026

Lenten Blessings

I hope you all had a restful half term and enjoyed some special time together.

As we begin the second half of the Lent Term, we enter the Church's season of Lent – a time of reflection and preparation as we journey towards Easter.

Although we were not in school for Ash Wednesday, we will be coming together to celebrate the beginning of our Lenten journey on Monday 23rd February 2026 at 1.30pm. You are all very welcome to join us.

As usual, teachers will be sending out curriculum overviews for this half term so that you can see what your children will be learning and how you can support them at home. Please also take time to read this newsletter and note any important dates.

Thank you for your continued support.

*With every blessing,
Sarah Sweeney-McGinty
Headteacher*



National Assessments 2026

Our children are working hard as they prepare for their national assessments later this year, and we are very proud of their efforts.

Good attendance is especially important at this time and really helps children feel confident and ready.

Please ensure your child is in school on the dates below and in the weeks leading up to them.

Important Assessment Dates

- **Year 6 SATs: Monday 11th – Thursday 14th May 2026**
- **Year 1 & 2 Phonics Screening Check: Monday 8th – Friday 12th June 2026**
- **Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check: Monday 7th – Friday 25th June 2026**

Lent

Catholic Life Events at SMC in Lent 2026

We lead our children in their faith journey this Lent with a range of Catholic life events. Please join us whenever you can – your attendance means everything to us and to our children.

Monday 23rd February 2026 – 1.30pm *Ash Wednesday Celebration of the Word – Everyone welcome.*

Although Ash Wednesday fell during half term, we will come together on our first day back to mark the beginning of our Lenten journey as a school family. This will be a special time of prayer and reflection as we think about how we can grow closer to God through prayer, fasting, and acts of kindness during Lent.

Week Beginning 23rd February 2026 *Travelling Lent Bags will come home with children. Please take time as a family to share your hopes and feelings about your 2026 Lenten journey.*

Thursday 26th February 2026 – 9.30am *Year 5 Celebration of the Word – Everyone welcome.*

Sunday 8th March 2026 – 5.30pm *Children reading at Mass at The Good Shepherd Church. All children in Years 4, 5 and 6 are welcome to read – please let us know if your child would like to take part.*

Thursday 12th March 2026 – 9.30am *Year 6 Celebration of the Word – Everyone welcome.*

Friday 13th March 2026 – 7.00pm *Stations of the Cross at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church.*

We have been invited once again to lead the Stations of the Cross in our parish. Children will stand at each station and lead the parish in prayer as they journey with Jesus through His final moments. This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to share their faith and lead the community in prayer. **Please give your consent on Arbor if your child can take part. Children should be at church for 6.45pm and the service should be finished by 7.30pm.**

Tuesday 17th March 2026 *CAFOD Big Lent Walk.*

Children will take part in a sponsored walk to raise money for CAFOD, supporting communities around the world who are living in poverty. More details to follow – thank you in advance for your generosity in helping our children make a difference.

Thursday 19th March 2026 – 9.30am *Year 4 Celebration of the Word – Everyone welcome.*

Thursday 19th March 2026 – 1.30pm *Sacrament of Reconciliation.*

Father Richard will be coming into school to offer children the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of their Lenten journey. All children who have made their First Holy Communion are invited. Please support your children at home to prepare for this special and meaningful sacrament.

Sunday 22nd March 2026 – 11.00am *Children reading at Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church.* All children in Years 4, 5 and 6 are welcome to read – please let us know if your child would like to take part.

Tuesday 24th March 2026 – 1.30pm *Oscar Romero Feast Day*

Year 5 will join the other schools in the Oscar Romero Hub (The Good Shepherd, Holy Cross, Sacred Heart and Christ the King) at The good Shepherd Church to celebrate the feast day.

Wednesday 25th March 2026 – 2.00pm *Year 4 and 5 Easter Performance: Resurrection Rocks.*

Following on from the success of last year, Year 5 will perform the Easter story, supported by Year 4 who will sing in the choir. This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to share the story of Easter through drama and song with their families.

Thursday 26th March 2026 – 9.30am *St Margaret Clitherow Feast Day.* Whole School Mass at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Church to celebrate our patron, St Margaret Clitherow. Everyone Welcome.



First Holy Communion 2026

Saturday 13th June 2026 - 10.30am
Our lady of Perpetual Succour Church

We are delighted that our First Holy Communion preparation lessons begin this Thursday. These sessions are both exciting and essential for our children as they continue to grow in their faith. Throughout the programme, children will learn about their faith journey so far through Baptism, how Jesus teaches us to follow Him, and they will begin their preparation for the special sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion (Eucharist).

All children are expected to attend every session. Please support them by helping with their homework tasks each week, as their completed work is needed for the following lesson.

On lesson days, children should bring their prayer bag and workbook and be collected promptly at **4:30pm**.

To avoid unnecessary calls to the school office, please refer to the First Holy Communion Programme 2026 – Key Dates list for confirmation of lesson dates.

Children should bring their prayer bags and First Holy Communion Work Books to every session.

We look forward to supporting the children on this very special journey.



Parents and Friends Association Events

We would like to say a huge thank you to our wonderful PFA for all their hard work in organising events that enrich the experiences of our children at SMC. This term is packed with exciting events, so please make a note of the dates below. If you would like to join the PFA or offer your support, please get in touch at **PFA@st-margaretclitherow.nottingham.sch.uk**.

Wednesday 25th February 2026 – PFA Pyjama Day

All children are welcome to come to school in their pyjamas. There is no charge for this day.



Wednesday 25th February 2026 – PFA Movie Night

There are four movies to choose from. Children should be collected at 4.30pm. Tickets cost £2.50, including a movie and snack, and will be sold outside the school office on Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th February 2026.

Thursday 26th February 2026 – PFA Non-Uniform Day

Children come to school in non-uniform and bring a book to donate. If everyone donates a book, we will have 228 books for World Book Day!

Thursday 5th March 2026 – World Book Day

Children should come dressed as their favourite book character. Following the success of last year, the PFA are organising a World Book Day Fashion Show in the afternoon – more details to follow.

Wednesday 18th March 2026 – 2.15pm – Reading Retreat

The PFA will be hosting another “Reading Retreat” to encourage parents to read with their children.

Friday 27th March 2026 – SMC Easter Fest

An afternoon of games, parades and fun organised by the PFA – look out for more details!

We are so grateful to the PFA for their dedication in making these events possible. Their work brings our school community together and creates wonderful memories for the children.



OPAL NEWS



Our OPAL play is going really well, and it has been wonderful to see the children embracing the freedom to be creative outdoors. They absolutely thrive on opportunities to build, invent and work together – and we would love your support to help us develop this even further.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!

We are in real need of additional donations, especially loose parts that can be used for den building and imaginative play. Items such as plastic sheeting or large pieces of material, pallets, tyres, wooden planks, plastic crates – anything that children can safely use to create dens, cars, spaceships... the possibilities are endless!

We are also looking for small world toys, pots, pans, utensils, scooters, pushchairs and suitcases.

With our OPAL accreditation due in March, we are working hard to make our outdoor provision as exciting and enriching as possible. If you are able to donate any suitable items, we would be extremely grateful. Thank you for supporting our children's creativity and play.



LOST PROPERTY

There are a number of unnamed items left in lost property from last term.

These have now been placed on a clothes rail outside the school office and will remain there for the rest of this week. Any unclaimed items will then be donated.

Please remember to clearly label all of your child's clothing – including coats, hoodies, wellies and other items – to help us return lost belongings quickly

HOMework AND HOME READING

Children in Key Stage 2 brought homework books home before half term to practise Reading and Maths each week. Please read the teacher's letter carefully so you know which pages to complete and when books need to be returned.

We have invested in these books, so please help your child look after them and take their time with their work. Unfortunately, we cannot replace lost homework books.

For children in EYFS and Key Stage 1, the most important homework is reading. Research shows that children who are not fluent by age 7 can find it harder to access the wider curriculum. Please read with your child regularly – little and often makes a big difference. You may also wish to visit your local library for additional books.

