



St Mary's News

We live, learn and grow together in Jesus

Ryda ni'n byw, dysgu a tyfu efo'n gilydd yn Iesu

May 2026

Mai 2026



Inside this month...

Glan-Ilyn

Live Simply Award

Mini London Marathon

Cycling Proficiency

Online Safety

Dear Parents and Carers,

We had some wonderful weather to welcome us back for the summer term so it has been nice to see the children enjoying themselves outdoors so much. The Forest School Area in school has had a big makeover thanks to Mr and Mrs Powell and the children have been making the most of it. This month's newsletter also highlights some of our other outdoor pursuits so far this term: Year 5 spent two and a half days in Glan-Ilyn, near Bala; many Year 6 children completed their Cycling Proficiency training and all of the school took part in the Mini Marathon in conjunction with many schools around the country. As we look forward to the rest of this month, there are lots of other outdoor activities planned, culminating in Sports Day on Wednesday 20th May. Children in Nursery up to Year 2 will compete in the morning and children in Years 3 to 6 will compete in the afternoon. We'd love to see lots of you there.

May is the month of Mary. During this month, we will have regular opportunities for the children to pray the rosary. Pope Leo urges the faithful to imitate Mary's "yes" this month by living as witnesses of faith, justice, and peace.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Phillips

Headteacher/Pennaeth



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Attendance Matters



Attendance for April 2026:

Class	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Attendance (%)	93.9 ↑	96.4 ↑	84.4 ↑	92.9 ↑	87.4 ↑	93.4 ↑	94.7 ↓	82.8 ↓	92.9 ↑

Colours denote comparison to last month

The overall attendance for April was **91.5% ↑**

The overall attendance for the year is **90.4% ↑**

Please do not book holidays during term time.

Children are not granted leave of absence unless there are **exceptional** circumstances. Holidays are **not** considered exceptional circumstances.

Any child who has an attendance of less than 90% is considered to be **persistently absent**. Parents of children who are persistently absent will receive reminders and support to improve their child's attendance.

Live Simply Award

We were delighted to be awarded the CAFOD Live Simply Award at the end of April. The award is confirmation that we are living simply, sustainably and in solidarity with communities around the world experiencing poverty.

The award, championed by the international aid charity CAFOD, was presented after we successfully planned and implemented faith inspired actions that highlighted the importance of caring for people and the planet. The actions have had a positive impact throughout the school, in their local community, and globally too, as we reached out to make a difference.

To find out more about our activities and to see the presentation we made, click [here](#) to go to the [Live Simply Award page on the school website](#).

CAFOD's LiveSimply Coordinator for Schools, Siobhan Farnell, said: "Congratulations to the pupils and staff on achieving the LiveSimply award. Their actions are wonderful examples of caring for others and our common home and we wish them well as they continue to live simply, sustainably and in solidarity with communities around the world experiencing poverty."

Congratulations on achieving the LiveSimply Award



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Year 5 at Glan-llyn

A fantastic three-day, two-night residential trip to Glan-llyn was enjoyed by 31 children, packed full of adventure and memorable experiences. The group took part in a wide range of exciting activities, including wall climbing, canoeing (which certainly left everyone very wet including the staff!), raft building, archery, orienteering, and bushcraft—where roasting marshmallows around the fire was a definite highlight.

Throughout the trip, the children showed excellent behaviour and a great sense of teamwork, making the experience even more enjoyable for everyone involved. A great time was had by all, and the children have returned home with wonderful memories that will last a lifetime—along with feeling just a little bit tired after such an action-packed few days! Thank you to the staff who accompanied the children on the trip.

Lots more pictures are visible on Class Dojo!



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tcs Mini Marathon

On 16th April, all of the children in the school took part in the tcs Mini London Marathon. Children walked, skipped or ran around the Daily Mile Track in solidarity with the thousands of other children around the country taking part.

Children completed two miles around the track and, as a result, we received a plaque to be displayed in school. We want the children to be out of breath at least once every day. This is what helps them get fitter and healthier. The children in all classes did really well. Llongyfarchiadau, pawb!



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Canon Adrian in school with Year 6

Year 6 were delighted to welcome Canon Adrian into their classroom, recently. As we have been exploring the seven sacraments, his visit provided a wonderful opportunity to learn from his expertise and personal experiences. Canon Adrian brought the topic to life with beautifully crafted banners from church, and he even gave the children a special, first-hand look at the three holy oils. We reflected on how the sacraments serve as sacred meeting



places with God, drawing us closer to Jesus. Diolch yn fawr, Canon Adrian, for a truly blessed experience, filled with thoughtful questions and deep engagement. ★

Year 6 children complete Cycling Proficiency

Congratulations to the Year 6 children who successfully completed their cycling proficiency training.

After honing their skills on the playground with the trainers from Seiclo Clwyd, the children rode around the local area, learning about the rules of the road and how to stay safe. Llongyfarchiadau to all of the children who took part!



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Change of Date for Class 3 Assembly

There has been a change of date for the Class 3 assembly. It will now take place on Tuesday 12th May at 9.00am.

Online Safety Updates

We are dealing with more and more issues involving children's improper use of devices and social media at home. We speak to the children regularly about how to stay safe online and how they can protect themselves and their own wellbeing. PC Louise is in school this week to speak to the children about online safety too. When we speak to the children about their experiences, many tell us that their parents are not aware of what they are doing online. I would urge all parents to talk to their children about their online experiences, positive and negative, so that you are informed and can support them when needed. At the end of this week's newsletter is a poster about digital devices and wellbeing.

Safeguarding Updates

No dogs are allowed on school premises. Please do not bring them onto the school grounds.

Please see details here of [Flintshire County Council's Public Space Protection Order](#) explaining the rules.

Upcoming Dates

6th May - Y3/4 Elwyn Owen football tournament at Deeside Leisure Centre

7th May - PC Louise in to speak to Years 3 - 6 about online safety



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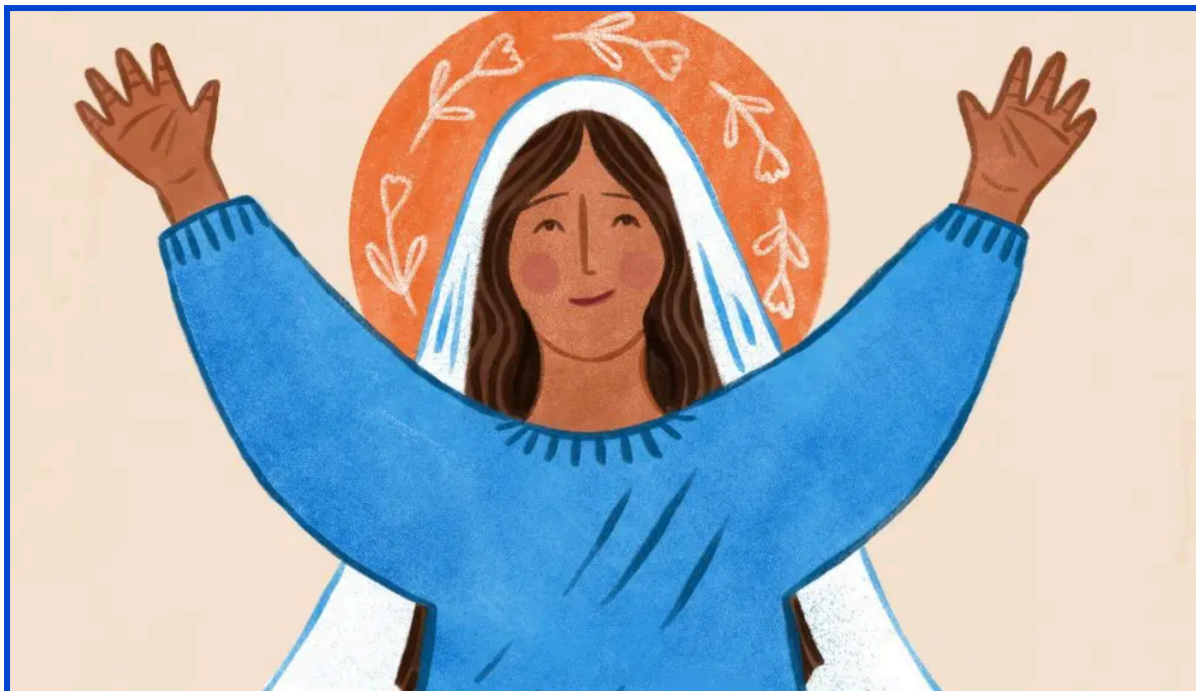
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7th May - Mission Team/Mini Vinnies trip to Rhiwlas
8th May - PC Louise in to speak to Years 3 - 6 about online safety
11th May - PC Louise in to speak to Years R - 2 about online safety
12th May - Class 3 assembly (parents invited)
14th May - Year 5/6 Tom Roberts Ron Bishop football tournament at Airbus
18th May - Healthy Living Week starts
20th May - Sports Day (Nursery - Year 2 in the morning; Years 3-6 in the afternoon)
22nd May - Year 6 leavers' photos day

Reflection

May is the month of Mary, Jesus's mother. This month, the Mission Team have chosen our prayer focus to be on mums and nans. We pray for all of our mums this month.

During this month, we ask for Mary's intercession in the world. Here are some [family prayer resources](#) for the month of May, based around Our Lady.



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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

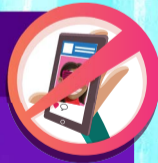
PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

Advice for Parents & Educators

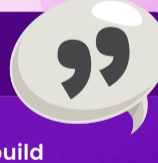
SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.



ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.



MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.



PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.



Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College