



ELY ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER - AUTUMN 1, 2025

Welcome back!

Dear Parents & Carers,

We hope you have all enjoyed a happy and restful summer holiday. We are really looking forward to welcoming the children back to school on **Wednesday 3rd September** and are excited for all the learning, growth, and achievements the year will bring.

This new term is full of opportunities for the children to learn, explore, and succeed. We have high expectations for every child and will be encouraging them to take responsibility for their own learning, to work hard, and to always try their best. We are confident that, with encouragement and support, each child will grow in confidence and be proud of what they achieve.

We are especially looking forward to the learning journey ahead and to celebrating the children's successes—both big and small—as they develop new skills and discover new interests. With school and home working closely together, we know this will be a positive and rewarding year for everyone.

Please find below some helpful information for the first term back, but if you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

With best wishes,

Miss Gardner, Mrs Gilpin-Davies & the ESM Team

DROP OFF & PICK UP

Drop off & Pick up Information

Morning Drop Off (8:40–8:50am)

- Gates open at 8:40am on the Top Playground (Spring Meadow, pedestrian, and vehicle gates).
- Year 3 pupils: Meet Miss Handscomb/Dr A and go straight to classrooms via the blue courtyard gates.
- Families can still access the office via the path next to the staff car park — but the car park will be in use until 8:50am and is not safe for waiting.
- Staff cannot supervise children before 8:40am - there is Wraparound Care before school (see Active Play Education website to book a place in Breakfast Club).
- From 8:40–8:50am staff will welcome children and begin early morning work.
- Please leave morning messages with the office team; class teachers are available after school.

Afternoon Pick Up (3:20pm)

- Year 3 pupils: Teachers will lead children to the blue courtyard gates where parents can collect them. This also provides a chance for a quick chat with the teacher.
- Years 4–6 pupils: Parents can collect children from classrooms or wait on the Top Playground for them to come out.
- **Children walking home alone: we need written permission (if not already given on the Admission Form). Please email: office@esm.school.**

"Every child deserves a
Champion
an adult who will
Never give up
on them, who understands
the power of
Connection
and insists that
they become
The best
they can possibly be."
Rita Pierson

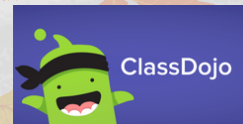


COMMUNICATIONS

- **Contact details** – If your phone number, email, or address has changed, please let the school office know so we can stay in touch with you quickly and easily.
- **MCAS app / Bromcom** – We share important updates through Bromcom. To make sure you don't miss anything, please check that notifications are turned on in your MCAS app. If you need help with this, the school office team will be happy to support you.



CLASS DOJO



- Class Dojo is a helpful way to share positive communication between home and school.
- Families of children in Years 4, 5 and 6 should now be connected with their child's new class teacher. Year 3 children will bring home a paper invitation by the end of the week with details on how to connect.
- We believe children thrive best when parents, teachers, and pupils work in partnership. Class Dojo supports this by helping us celebrate achievements, share learning, and keep you informed.
- For urgent messages or conversations needing more detail, please contact the office or speak with the class teacher directly, as staff may not see Dojo while teaching.



TIMETABLE UPDATES, INCLUDING PE

School Day

- Breaktime 10.30 - 10.45am.
- Lunch time for all children: 11:50am – 12:50pm. Please see the lunchtime menu on our [website](#). We start on week 2 so the first day is Roast Gammon. Please ensure your MCAS accounts are in credit. Year 3 parents will receive access to their MCAS accounts this week.

PE Days

- On their PE day, children should come to school wearing their indoor/outdoor PE kit.
- If wet weather is forecast, please pop a spare dry top in your child's bag—PE is not usually done in the rain, but the occasional shower can interrupt lessons.
- For after-school clubs, children should bring their kit to change into after the coach has registered them (to make sure no child misses the register).

PE Timetable:

- Year 3 & 4 – Wednesdays
- Year 5 – Tuesdays
- Year 6 – Fridays (Y6 Huskies – Tuesdays)

Swimming

- Year 4: Autumn 1 (Mr Greenwood will confirm details)
- Year 5: Autumn 2 (details to follow)



ATTENDANCE

Last year, our children achieved attendance above the national average of 93%, which makes a real difference to learning and wellbeing. Please see the Attendance Section on our website for the latest guidance and policy. If you need any support, our Attendance Champions, Miss Handscomb and Mrs Vitacolona, are here to help children and families.



UNIFORM



As we begin the new term, we would like to remind families of our school uniform expectations.

Wearing school uniform is an important part of school life. It helps children feel a sense of belonging, sets a positive tone for learning, and reflects the high standards we want every pupil to embody and achieve. Uniform will be a focus at the start of this year and will continue to be monitored throughout the year. We ask for your continued support in ensuring all children attend school each day in full uniform.

Uniform reminders:

- Footwear – Plain, flat, black trainers, shoes, or boots. Summer shoes/sandals must be closed-back and toe for safety.
- Clothing – Skirts, gingham dresses, and shorts are welcome but must be knee-length (or at least mid-thigh). Hot pants or short shorts are not permitted.
- Hairstyles – Neat and tidy. Pupils with long hair should keep a hair band in school to tie it back when required (e.g. PE, DT).
- Jewellery – No jewellery should be worn during PE. Pupils with pierced ears must be able to remove their own earrings and are responsible for placing them somewhere safe. We recommend that new piercings are done in the summer holidays to allow for healing.
- PE kit – Pupils should come to school in their PE kit on PE days. Shin pads (football/hockey) and gum shields (tag rugby/hockey) are strongly recommended for lessons and fixtures.

We are really looking forward to welcoming the children back, smartly dressed in their school uniform, ready for a new year of learning. If you have any questions or need support with uniform, please contact the school office.



PE & GAMES



We're delighted to see children arriving prepared and enthusiastic for their PE and Games lessons. It is our expectation that all pupils wear the correct PE uniform, which helps build team spirit and ensures children are ready to take part fully throughout the day.

PE Kit:

- House-colour T-shirt
- Black jogging bottoms
- Black sweatshirt
- Trainers



PE and Games are an essential part of the curriculum, helping to build fitness, teamwork, resilience, and confidence. We ask that children participate in every lesson, just as they would in any other subject. If a child is unable to take part, a brief note should be provided for their class or PE teacher. Our teachers will always work with families to support individual needs and ensure that every child has a positive experience.

These lessons are not only important for health and learning but also great fun. The half-termly mini house tournaments bring excitement, friendly competition, and a wonderful sense of school community. Thank you for continuing to support your children in these vital activities!



MOBILE PHONES IN SCHOOL



- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 who walk home alone may bring a mobile phone to school.
- Phones are taken into the classroom at morning registration, placed in a box, and then taken to the office for safe keeping during the school day.
- Parents/carers must give consent via the online form on the school website.
- Mobile phones are brought to school at pupils' own risk.
- Parents/carers must also give permission for their child to walk home alone (if not already done).



SCHOOL WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA



Stay Connected

Please remember to visit our school's Facebook page, where we regularly share news, highlights, and celebrations of the children's achievements throughout the year. It's a wonderful way to keep up to date with what's happening in school and to celebrate our pupils' successes together.

You can also access the school website - using the QR code provided - for key information, updates, and resources for families.



CLUBS & EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



We are proud to offer a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities throughout the year, giving children the chance to develop new skills, build confidence, and enjoy experiences beyond the classroom. It would be fantastic to see as many pupils as possible joining in!

- A full list of this term's clubs and activities will be sent out soon – please keep an eye out for details.
- Pupil Premium funding may be able to support with the cost of some activities – please contact the school office if you would like to find out more.

For families needing childcare, Breakfast Club and After School Club can be booked directly with Active Play Education.



MUSIC LESSONS



ESM has a proud tradition of music, with opportunities for children to sing in choirs and to learn and play a wide range of instruments. We are fortunate to have many fantastic peripatetic teachers who enjoy coming into school to share their expertise and inspire our pupils.

Our music concerts are always a highlight of the year – memorable occasions where children can perform in front of an audience and celebrate their hard work and talent.

- If you are interested in arranging music lessons for your child, please look at the flyers in the parent section of our website.
- Ms Law will be sharing details about choirs and auditions with the children soon.

We are looking forward to another year rich in music, full of creativity, performance, and joy!



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

At ESM we are proud of the personal development opportunities we provide through trips, visits, and visitors. We are working ahead to plan this year's enrichment programme and will share details for each year group soon. Much thought goes into offering a wide variety of experiences, while being mindful of costs so that all children can benefit. Thank you for your support in helping us give pupils the best possible opportunities.



HOME LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Reading at ESM

Reading is an essential skill—we encourage children to read every day, ideally to an adult, to build fluency, understanding, and a love of reading.

Each class has a Class Library with Recommended Reads from the Year Group Reading Passport. Staff ensure every child has a book to take home by the first week.

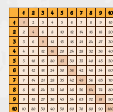


Children are expected to:

- Read at home at least 4 times a week
- Complete 1 Accelerated Reader (AR) quiz per week

This year children can apply to be a Reading Ambassador. Reading Champion postcards will be awarded weekly and also for reaching word count milestones.

In the first weeks of term, children will be introduced to our new reading initiatives. Miss Gardner, Reading Lead, has been developing exciting plans—more details to follow!



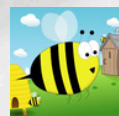
Multiplication Tables

Knowing times tables securely is one of the most important skills in maths. Regular learning, practice, and fluency with multiplication facts make all areas of maths much easier and more enjoyable.

- By the end of Year 4, all children are expected to know all their times tables, and they will take the Multiplication Tables Check to demonstrate this.
- However, times tables don't stop at Year 4—they are used even more in Years 5 and 6, and are in fact a skill for life.
- Everyone learns in different ways: chanting, games, apps, or songs—all of these can help.
- Each week, children take part in "Beat Your Best", a fun challenge where they try to improve on their own score.

We have a real expectation that children practise their times tables regularly, but we will support them in school and at home. Teachers can provide paper copies of times tables for extra practice if needed.

Spellings



As in previous years, we will be using the platform of Spelling Shed to support the learning of spelling rules. Your child will be set a weekly spelling list and there is an expectation that they use Spelling Shed to practise these, through the use of games and challenges. Teachers can provide copies of weekly spellings if needed. Year 3 children will receive their log-in details within the first 2 weeks of term. Log-in details for existing pupils will remain unchanged.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - AUTUMN

- Monday 1st/Tuesday 2nd September - Professional Training Days
- Wednesday 3rd September - Children return to school
- Friday 19th September - School Photos
- Friday 26th September - Year 5/6 Boys Football Tournament
- Wednesday 1st October - FoSMs AGM 3.45pm
- Thursday 16th October - Girls Football 5&6
- Thursday 23rd October - Last Day of Autumn Term 1
- Friday 24th October - Professional Training Day
- *27th October - 31st October - Half Term*
- Week beginning 10th November - 14th November - Anti-bullying Week
- Wednesday 12th November - Netball 5&6
- Monday 1st December - DEMAT Carol Service Ely Cathedral
- Friday 19th December - Last Day of Autumn Term
- Monday 5th January - Professional Training Day
- Tuesday 6th January - First Day of Spring Term - Children return to school

Trips and Visits - Look out for the information during the term.



WELCOME TO YEARS 3 & 4

We are very excited to welcome back our Year 4 pupils and to warmly welcome our new Year 3 pupils and their families as they begin the next stage of their learning journey with us. Across both year groups, teachers will be using Class Dojos the main method of communication. If you haven't yet managed to connect successfully, please speak to the office and we will be happy to get you set up.

At the start of the year, we will work together to establish routines and expectations that support positive learning behaviours. Children will be reminded of our school rules and ethos, and expectations for learning will be revisited regularly through whole school assemblies and PSHE sessions. We want all pupils to grow in confidence and resilience so that they can be the very best they can be.

For our new Year 3 pupils, the first two weeks will focus on reading assessments to help us provide the right support. Once completed, children will bring home a reading book from our wonderful class libraries. We hope you enjoy sharing these book choices at home. Pupils will also be given access to Spelling Shed to help develop their spelling skills, and we encourage regular practice.

A very warm welcome back to Year 4! This year, we will be consolidating and strengthening the core skills of spelling, reading and times tables. Times tables practice will be a particular focus, not only to support learning but also to prepare pupils for the Year 4 national times tables check in the summer term. We encourage children to read at home every night and look forward to introducing some exciting new texts to share. Year 4 will also be heading to the swimming pool for weekly swimming sessions from 16th September to 14th October. Further details will be shared closer to the time.



WELCOME TO YEARS 5 & 6

We are delighted to welcome our Year 5 and Year 6 pupils back for what promises to be a year of leadership, independence, and exciting new opportunities. Across both year groups, we have high expectations that children take responsibility for their learning and always aim to be the best they can be.

In Year 6, pupils can look forward to their final year at ESM—a year of challenge, enjoyment, and achievement. SATs are part of this journey, and past pupils have embraced them positively, seeing them as an opportunity to understand their progress, set personal goals, and celebrate their success. It truly is an exciting year where children rise to the challenge and make memories that last.

In Year 5, pupils step into the upper end of Key Stage 2, building resilience and confidence as they prepare for the responsibilities and opportunities that lie ahead.

We look forward to working in partnership with families throughout the year. Please keep an eye on Class Dojo for updates, celebrations, and classroom news. Together, we can make this a year of growth, achievement, and many happy memories.

WHAT WILL WE BE LEARNING ABOUT?

AUTUMN 1	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6
As a Reader and Writer...	Class Reads Krindlekrax - Philip Ridley Tales of King Arthur - Orchard Books - Matthews & Utton	Class Reads The Paperbag Prince - C.Thompson Homecoming - Michael Morpurgo Narrative Writing Non-chronological report Writing	Class Reads Narrative: Skellig Instructional writing: Survival	Class Reads Windrush Child Holes Armistace Runner Non - chronological report writing - Dragons/ Mountain animals Instructional writing
As a Mathematician..	Place Value Addition/Subtraction/Multiplication and Division	Place Value Addition/Subtraction/Multiplication and Division	Place value Addition and subtraction Multiplication and division A Fractions A	Place Value Addition/Subtraction/ Multiplication and Division
As a Geographer and/or Historian ...	Kings and Queens Why is the landscape of England covered with ruined castles? Alaska Why is the polar bear in peril?	Rainforests What challenges does the country of Brazil face? Ancient Maya Would you like to have lived as an ancient Mayan?	Maps How is our world divided up and why? Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: What is the Legacy of slavery for Britain?	Mountains Are all mountains the same? (inc a comparative study of mountain ranges in Europe) World War 1
As a Scientist...	Human Body: How do our bodies move?	Human Body: What do our bodies need to be healthy?	The Human Body Human growth stages, adolescence and puberty, the human reproductive system. The endocrine system.	Human body The Circulatory System What is the human circulatory system and how does it work?
As an artist and/or designer...	Krindlekrax Designing and making pop-up books	Recycled / Upcycled Purse Textiles	Lino Printing & Wax Print	Dragons Drawing skills, collaborative work and clay
As a Technologist...	Touch Typing Skills	Touch Typing Skills	Touch Typing Skills Excel	Touch Typing Skills Excel
As a Musician...	Charanga - RnB	Charanga - Mama Mia!	Charanga 'Livin' On a Prayer	Charanga -Happy Pharrell Williams
As a Linguist... French	'Greetings' in French	'Welcome to School' Numbers, days of the week, classroom objects	Introducing myself, feelings, opinions, likes/dislikes, school in France	Revisiting 'me', telling the time, everyday life and routines
As an Athlete...	Fundamentals Ball skills	Fitness Swimming Basketball	Gymnastics Basketball	Basketball Gymnastics
As a Global Citizen (RE & PSHE)	Rights and Responsibilities Anti-Bullying	Rights and Responsibilities Anti-Bullying	Rights and Responsibilities Anti-Bullying	Rights and Responsibilities Anti-Bullying