

# HEADLINES 12TH NOVEMBER 2021

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter (Issue 9 2021-22)

## “Lest We Forget...”



### Acting Heads of School Update Mr Johnston & Miss McHugh



*They shall not grow old, as we that  
are left grow old:*

*Age shall not weary them, not the  
years condemn.*

*At the going down of the sun and in  
the morning*

*We will remember them.*

We held a two minutes silence on Thursday as a whole school community. Approximately 1200 people stood together outside to contemplate the sacrifices made; sounds such as the cawing of the crows and the wind in the trees, usually inaudible, added to the atmosphere and poignant sense of occasion.

Miss McHugh also led assemblies this week on the theme of Remembrance, including a history of conflicts and reflection that, even today, we are protected by brave men and women serving in our armed services across the globe, often in hostile environments.



We also returned to Mass at St. Joseph and the English Martyrs on Wednesday! This was the first time the church doors have been opened for such an occasion since the start of the Covid-pandemic so this marks a real milestone. Thank you to Fr. Peter for making this possible and to Fr. Antonio for leading the service.

Students in Year 11 attended the Sixth Form Open Evening on Thursday evening as they look ahead to the culmination of their 7-year St. Mary's journey. Our Sixth Form really is the 'jewel in the crown' of the St. Mary's experience where students are able to shine supported by their peers, teachers who know them well and a host of others, including Mr Butler our new Head of Sixth Form. We were delighted by the number of students from other schools who came to see what we have to offer.

Huge thanks to Summer (who is currently applying to study medicine at university) and Joe S, who is applying to Cambridge University) for speaking so eloquently and giving the Year 11 and their parents their perspective. For more information, please see: [www.stmarys.net/sixth-form](http://www.stmarys.net/sixth-form)

We're really pleased to have been recognised for our work with the Accelerated Reader Scheme (KS3) this week with students completing over 2000 'Star Reader' test, which is one of the highest figures in Herts. Reading is a key contributor to academic progress and the AR scheme accelerates this process, so we're pleased to be celebrating this success.

Have a great weekend.

**Tom Johnston**

## St Mary's Catholic School Piano Recital



**16<sup>th</sup> November 2021 7pm**

**Main School Hall**

Tickets are now available to purchase for this event, via this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/piano-recital-tickets-196438120707>

This promises to be a wonderful showcase of our many pianists we have here at St Mary's, with a wide range of performances from Haydn to Einaudi and many more in between.

**Miss J Matthews**, Head of Music

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**16th November**  
**Piano Recital**

**18th November**  
**Y11 & Y13**  
**Mock Interviews**



St Francis of Assisi  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

[www.stfrancistrust.net](http://www.stfrancistrust.net)



## District Rugby

Well done to the year 7, 8 and 9 rugby teams this week, who represented the school in the district rugby competition.

The boys played brilliantly, and did the school proud.

**Mr S Wright**  
Head of PE

## English Department

### Empowered

I am empowered by strength  
I am empowered by this world  
I am empowered by music  
I am empowered by word,  
But  
I am drained by war  
I am drained by suicide  
I am drained by clout  
You ask me why I don't look on the bright side.  
I focus on the light  
Where my mind is present  
I put aside the bad  
And wonder what I'm doing.  
I look online and see what is about  
I do what I can to try to help out  
The feeling of goodness rises inside me  
The light I was focusing on is blinding.  
This is supposed to be a happy poem  
I get it  
But why don't I tell you about the things you're forgetting  
It is not the fact that you're being empowered  
It is the fact that you are taking control of power  
His soul is fierce  
Her heart is brave  
Their mind is strong  
Yet they hide their face  
Tell me why this world can be so blind?  
Give me an explanation, don't be shy  
I am empowered by myself  
I am empowered by good  
Something people need to learn  
And they should  
I am empowered by love  
I am empowered by care  
But what people forget is that  
Love is rare  
People will rate you  
Shake you  
Break you  
But how strong you stand is what makes you.  
So let me tell you one more time  
As I try to finish up this rhyme

### National Young Writers Project

Well done to Josephina JA (Year 8) whose poem 'Empowered' is being included in a book of poems by young people from around the country as part of a national Young Writers project.

**Miss R Rose**

English—Second in Department





## MORE HOMEWORK SUPPORT



From next week, students have an extra opportunity for homework support on top of the options already in place!

F1, the 6<sup>th</sup> Form Study area, will be supervised each day until 4.30pm. On Thursdays, Year 11 are especially invited to work with leaders who are offering subject-specific support.

Year 13 student

Mr Walker will be working with invited students on their English, but others are welcome too. If your child has been absent from school, this might be a good catch-up opportunity for just a few days. If you know they find it hard to motivate themselves, or perhaps your Wifi is not great, or you don't get home from work until late, this might be just the support your child needs on a regular basis.

A small number of students are already invited to homework clubs supervised by LSAs, but these don't cover the full week. If your child attends these, they are welcome to go to F1 on the other days.

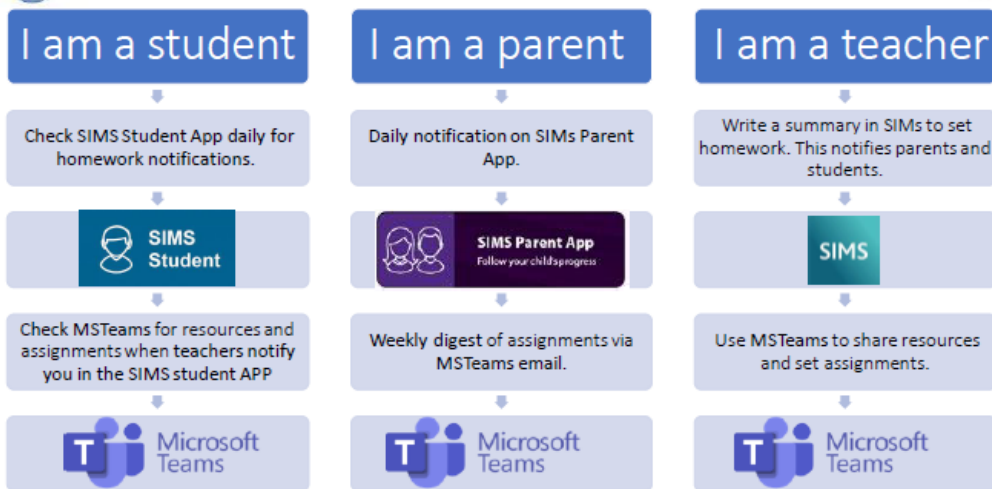
Additionally the Library is open from 8.15am until 4.00pm every day, plus on Tuesday and Thursday mornings we have Breakfast Club in the canteen where students can be supported by cover supervisors, LSAs and 6<sup>th</sup> form helpers to ensure a positive start to the day and an opportunity for revision or homework catch-up- or perhaps to complete and Accelerated Reader test, or just enjoy a library book! There is a delicious array of breakfast options, mostly priced at just 50p or 60p, but there is no requirement to be buying food in order to attend Breakfast Club. Students in receipt of Free School Meals can have financial support with the cost of breakfast. Please contact Mrs Wilkin if you would like your child to have this but have not yet received a letter.



## HOMework OVERVIEW



### Homework at St. Mary's Catholic School



Thank you for your continued support with the changes to how homework is being set since 1st November.

The diagram is a simple summary that clarifies student, parent and teacher expectations.

If your child is having any problems with downloading the Student SIMs App they can see Mr McMillan in classroom T21 every morning 8.30-9.00am, where he will be able to assist them with their issues.

If parents require support, please email [info@stmarys.net](mailto:info@stmarys.net) with a brief outline of the issue. Mrs C McGrath, Assistant Headteacher





# Remembrance Day

A time for reflection....



## Why do we have Remembrance Day?

Remembrance day helps us to remember what happened during World War 1. It was a terrible war and millions of people died or were injured.

We remember the soldiers who fought and died for our country. Some of the soldiers were as young as 17.



## Information about World War 1

- World War 1 was also called 'The Great War'.
- The war took place in Belgium, France, Africa and the Middle East.
- Over 10 million soldiers died



## Why do we wear poppies?



Poppies grew on the soldiers graves in the fields of France. Wearing poppies helps us show our respect for those who have died

The red colour reminds us of the blood that is shed during wartimes when soldiers are in combat.



Buying poppies raises money for charities. This money goes towards helping wounded soldiers and their families.



## What is the Armistice?

The Armistice was when the war ended.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> hour...

...of the 11<sup>th</sup> day

...of the 11<sup>th</sup> month

This is why Remembrance Day is also called Armistice Day



## What happens on Remembrance Day?

On Remembrance Day we spend time remembering the soldiers who died during World War 1 and other wars and conflicts.



We also think about the soldiers who are stationed in war zones all around the world.

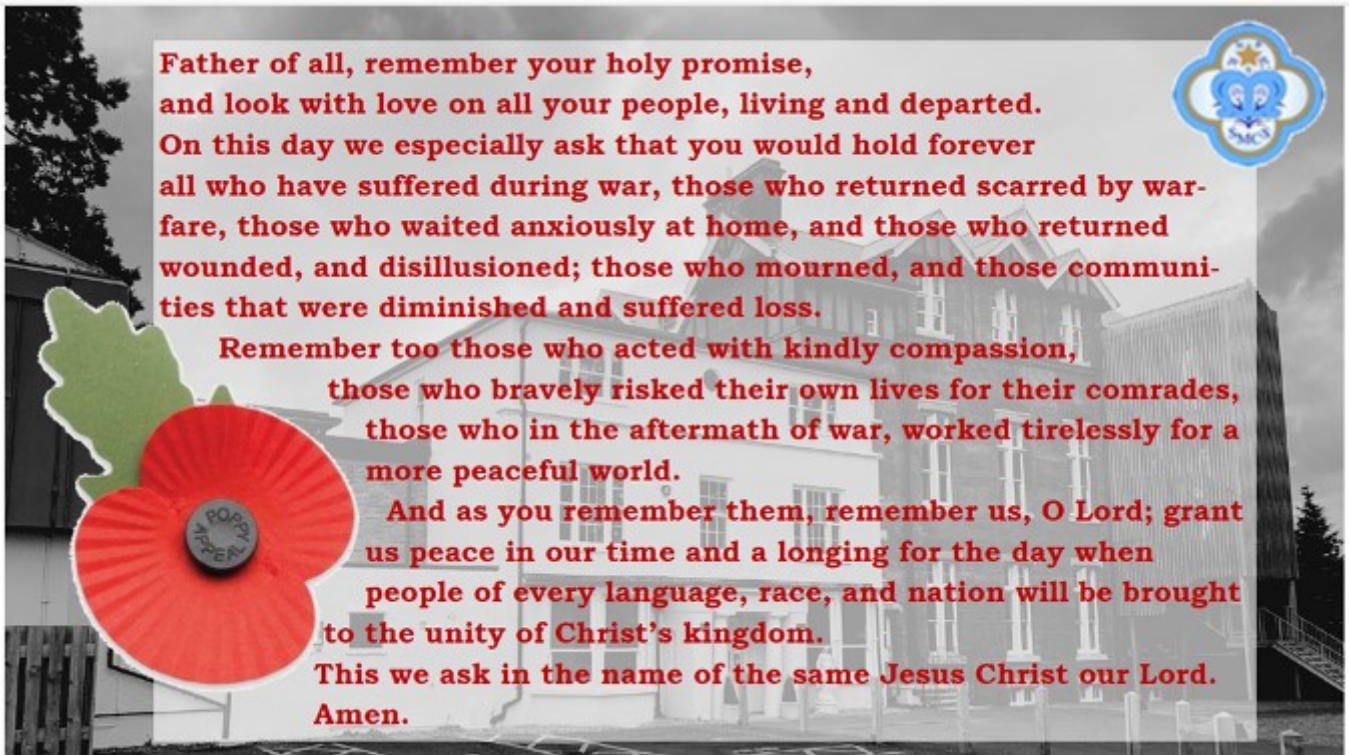
We lay wreaths and crosses and wear poppies as a mark of respect.







### Chaplaincy News:



THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF  
**BISHOP'S STORTFORD**  
Diocese of Westminster

**SYNOD 2023:  
THE TIME HAS COME TO  
PARTICIPATE!**

You may have heard of the synodal pathway that we, as a church, are being encouraged to engage with over the next few months. "Synod" simply means "journeying together" and the Pope has asked that every parish participate in a period of sharing and listening about how we want to move forward as a church, especially following on from the past difficult 18 months of the pandemic.

This is a wonderful opportunity for the families and parents within the St Mary's school community to be involved. The idea of the synod is to engage not only parishioners and those actively practising their faith, but to hear from those who do not attend church regularly or even those of no faith at all. We know that the families within St Mary's are made up of a diverse group of people and we look forward to giving everyone the opportunity to have their voice heard! Our local parish here in Bishop's Stortford is doing everything it can to allow this to happen in a way that is convenient to you - but it falls to you to take up, and participate in, this opportunity! There are many ways to get involved that will suit everyone:

The parish here in Bishop's Stortford will be hosting some listening meetings for two weeks in November, starting on Monday 15th November (taking place at various times of day and evening), as well as their being opportunities to take part in an online zoom meeting to do the same thing. A questionnaire is also available for those who don't feel able to come in person. Parents and young people are all invited to fill out the questionnaire.

It would be fantastic if at least one person in each family could actively engage in some way with this initiative. All the information you need is available using the following link:

<https://rcstortford.org.uk/2021/11/05/synod-2023-the-time-has-come-to-participate/>

**Miss McHugh, *Acting Head of School***



# JUST TALK WEEK



Next week is Just Talk week and we will be leading sessions during form time and assembly in line with this campaign. The Hertfordshire campaign aims to make it easier for all of us to talk about our mental health and seek help when it's needed. At the moment 70% of Herts boys and 72% of Herts girls think it's OK to talk about their mental health.

Hertfordshire want to make it 100%. More information is available for parents and carers can be found on the Just Talk campaign [here](#)

**Mrs Tatman, Assistant Headteacher**

## DON'T UNDERESTIMATE YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT OR CARER

In a recent Hertfordshire survey, we discovered that if teenage boys were worried about their mental health, almost half of them would seek support from their parent before anyone else.

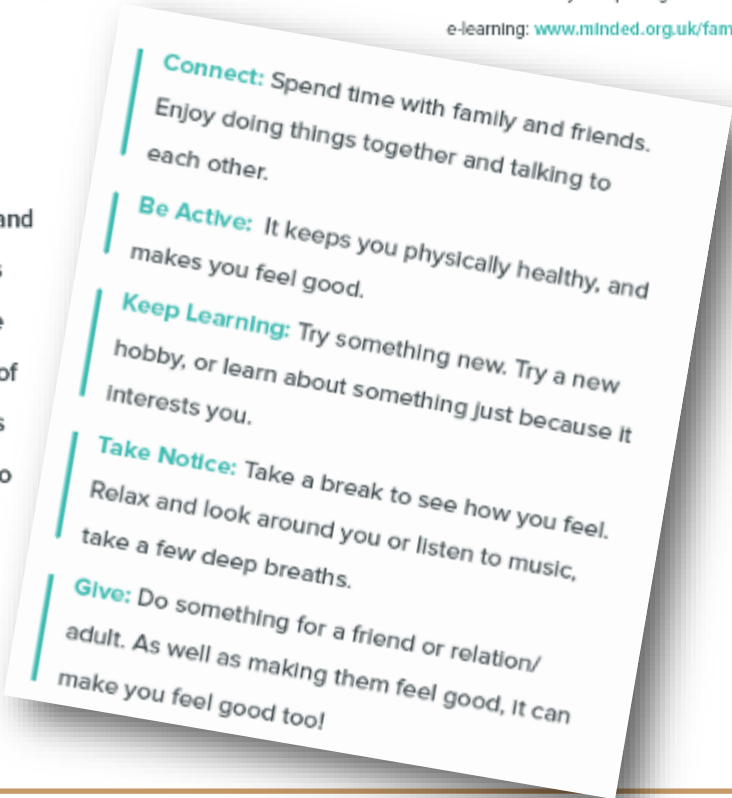
However, often boys do worry about talking to their parents because they don't want to burden them or are worried they won't understand.

It can help your son know that you are available to them if you tell them that if they ever want to talk about anything, you are there.

You could also broaden your knowledge of mental health by completing the free MindEd e-learning: [www.minded.org.uk/families](http://www.minded.org.uk/families)

## HELPFUL COPING STRATEGIES

Boys most commonly use physical activity and sports, and technology and video games as a coping strategy. Girls most commonly use music or chatting to friends. There are lots of things that can help boost a young person's wellbeing as well as potentially help them to cope when things go wrong.







## St Mary's Tops STAR reading stats!

### St Mary's Tops STAR reading stats!

St Marys Catholic School has been identified as a top Star Assessments user school in Hertfordshire. Over the last twelve months, the school has carried out over 2,100 individual Star Reading assessments.

Key Stage 3 students do their Star Reading tests four times a year, so that English teachers can track progress and give help and support whenever this is needed.



Over the past year during lockdowns, current Year 8, 9 and 10 students often had to take the tests at home, so they deserve extra thanks for approaching the tests with great maturity and concentration. Well done to all the teachers and students involved!

**Mr R Graves,**  
Head of English

## Competition for Y7 AR groups

**Book club**

**BOOK OF THE WEEK**

### The Chime Seekers

by Ross Montgomery  
(Walker Books)

Yanni is unhappy about moving with his family to their new home, Follow Hall, and it doesn't help that his baby sister Ari takes up all of his parents' attention. When a mysterious visitor arrives on All Hallows' Eve (Halloween), something strange and terrible happens. The new arrival is none other than an evil faerie, who steals Ari away. Now, with the help of his cousin Amy, Yanni sets out to save his sister before the end of All Hallows' Eve. To do so he has to complete a perilous quest, navigating the faerie's tricks and deceptions and encountering goblin palaces, battle-swept oceans and ancient treasures along the way. This richly imaginative tale shows faeries at their darkest and most sinister, but there are plenty of funny moments along the way.



**WIN!** We're giving away six copies of *The Chime Seekers*.

For a chance to win a copy, just send your name and address to [competitions@theweekjunior.co.uk](mailto:competitions@theweekjunior.co.uk) and put CHIME in the subject line.\* Closing date: midnight, Friday 19 November. See [theweekjunior.co.uk/terms](http://theweekjunior.co.uk/terms) for rules.

### 'The Week Junior' Competition

AR students in Year 7 could try to win this book.

For a chance to win a copy, just send your name and address to [competitions@theweekjunior.co.uk](mailto:competitions@theweekjunior.co.uk) and put CHIME in the subject line. Closing date is Friday 19 November.

NB You don't have to be a subscriber to the magazine to enter.

Good Luck!

**Mrs L Frino,**  
Librarian



## After School Activities List

AFTER-SCHOOL	CLUBS	CHNAGES/NEW CLUBS IN YELLOW	NOV/DEC 21
<b>MONDAYS</b>			
CLUB	VENUE	LEADER	YEARS
DRAMA	HUME	MR BAMLETT	7 TO 9
DT CATCH UP	DT	MR HUNT	10 & 11
ORCHESTRA	M1	MS MATTHEWS	ALL
HOCKEY/NETBALL	COURTS	PE dept	7 TO 10
MATHS CATCH-UP	K1/K5/J1	Mrs Atanassova/Mrs Brewin/Mrs Vermaak	11
BASKETBALL	SPORTSHALL	PE dept	7 & 8
HOMEWORK CLUB/English Booster	F1	Mr Walker	all
<b>TUESDAYS</b>			
CLUB	VENUE	LEADER	YEARS
GCSE ART Coursework	C7	Miss Nairn	10 & 11
GCSE Science Revision	Hblock	Science Dept	11
Choir	M1	Mrs Salter Kay	all
Lego Club	K1	Mrs Knight	7 and 8
Polish Club	K5	Mrs Nestorovska	Year 7 to 9
Sports fixtures	field/away	PE dept	all
BASKETBALL	SPORTSHALL	PE dept	9 & 10
Invitation only Homework Club	B1 and B3	Mrs Henderson Mrs Wilson	8 and 9
GCSE Maths Catch-up	K block	Mrs Velani/ Mr Antwi	11
GCSE RE Revision	K Block	RE dept	11
HOMEWORK CLUB/English Booster	F1	Mr Walker	all
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>			
CLUB	VENUE	LEADER	YEARS
CANDLE MAKING CLUB	Art dept	MRS KNIGHT	7 & 8
GCSE HISTORY revision	E4	HIST DEPT	11
A LEVEL HIST/POLITICS CLINIC	E5	MR DOLMAN	13
GCSE GEOGRAPHY CATCH UP	D2	MRS HUGHES	11
GCSE SCIENCE DROP IN	H2	MR NICOL	11
KS3 DRAMA CLUB	HUME	MR MCHUGH	7,8 AND 9
DT CLUB: FORMULA 1/eco-design	A BLOCK	MR HUNT	9
Open Homework Club/English Support		Mr Walker	all
GCSE MUSIC CATCH UP	M1	MISS MATTHEWS	10 and 11
<b>THURSDAY</b>			
CLUB	VENUE	LEADER	YEARS
ENGLISH BOOSTERS	B4	Mrs Laurie	8
Graphic Novel/Manga Club	Library	Mrs Frino	7 to 9
National Tutoring programme ( starts 14 Oct)	F6	Mrs Knight	10
Arts and Crafts	C2	Mrs Lee	7 to 9
Invitation only HW Club	B1 and B3	Mrs Wilson and Mrs Henderson	8 and 9
6th form Homework Club/English Support	F1	Mr Walker	all- but a special focus on Y11
<b>FRIDAY</b>			
CLUB	VENUE	LEADER	YEARS
Homework Club	F1	Mr Walker	11
National Tutoring programme ( Maths)	E1	Mrs Laurie	11
Library Books and Biscuits	Library	Mrs Frino	All
Rock and Pop Bands	Music Block	Miss Matthews	All
<b>VARYING DATES</b>			
DUKE OF EDINBURGH	E5	Mr Dolman	Y12





## Menu in our Aspens Refectory

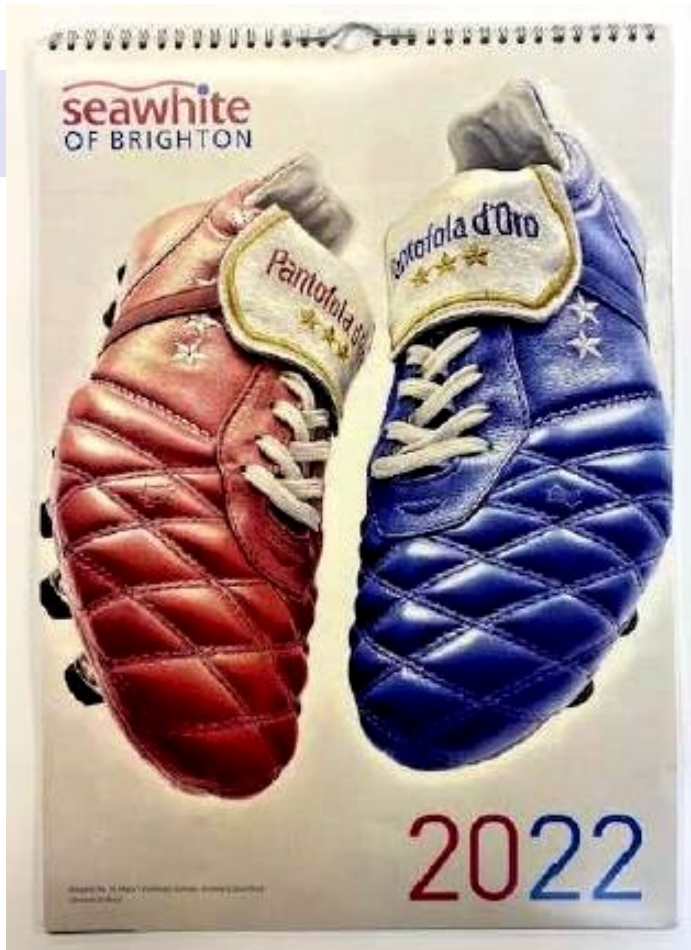
Autumn  
Winter  
2021

# STREATERIES

Aspens

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>STREET</b>	Spicy Andhra Chicken Curry	Sweet Potato & BBQ Pulled Jackfruit Burger	Roast Chicken & Stuffing Bap Gravyaise	Mongolian Lion's Head Beef Meatballs	Hand Battered Fish & Frickle
<b>VEGGIE</b>	Keralan Egg Molee Curry	Veg Chilli Nachos Homemade Salsa	Quorn Roast & Stuffing Bap Gravyaise	Korean Spicy Rice Bowl with Fried Egg	Homemade Fishless Cake Lemon Yoghurt
<b>SIDES</b>	Turmeric Rice Masala Roasted Cauliflower	Garlic & Herb Wedges Rainbow Slaw	Fennel Seed Roasties Roasted Carrots	Beggar's Noodles Sweet Chilli Broccoli	Chips Peas

WEEK 1



## Celebration of Former Student's Art Work

I am really proud to tell you that Angelo Re's shoe drawing has made it onto the front cover of the Seawhite of Brighton student calendar.

This includes entries from Camberwell college of Arts and Edinburgh College of Art – both undergraduates and KS4/5.

We are so proud of his achievement and glad this piece has some of the recognition it deserves as an outstanding piece of student artwork.

**Ms H Nairn**  
Subject Leader of Art





There's a very good chance you've heard of Fortnite, but what exactly is it? And why is it so popular amongst young people? Fortnite is an online multiplayer "battle royale" game developed by Epic Games, and is playable on Playstation 4, Xbox One, Nintendo Switch, PC and mobiles. It gained popularity in late 2017 and has since become the biggest game in the world, thanks to its rapid and engaging gameplay. As with most games, Fortnite itself is a highly enjoyable and safe experience, but it pays to be vigilant, as the safety is not water tight.



# What parents need to know about FORTNITE BATTLE ROYALE

**BATTLE ROYALE**

Battle Royale games have become very popular over the last couple of years, and most tend to follow a very similar setup. Taking Fortnite as an example, 100 players drop into a map, loot buildings for weapons and armour and attempt to beat all the other players to be crowned victor at the end. If you've ever seen the Hunger Games movies, you'll have an idea of what this entails. Each game can take up to 20 minutes (assuming you last to the end) and can be restarted relatively quickly once 100 free players have been found.

**IS FORTNITE ADDICTIVE?**

Fortnite is at the forefront of gaming addiction discussions because it is so popular with young people. But whether it actually contributes to gaming addiction is up for debate. WHO (World Health Organisation) have classified gaming as a legitimate addiction, but this is not solely a concern with Fortnite. Signs of addiction can include irritability when not playing, lying about the amount of time played and a preoccupation with thoughts of the next gaming session. Realistically, it must be down to parents and carers to recognise these symptoms and act accordingly if they think they are developing.

**FREE TO PLAY... OR IS IT?**

While Fortnite is technically free to play (in that you can download and play it without paying) it does come with the caveat that spending money on things like skins and emotes in-game is heavily pushed to players. The in-game currency is called 'V-Bucks' and can be bought with real money through the game's online store. It's worth remembering that these purchases are absolutely not necessary, are cosmetic only and that V-Bucks can be earned in game with enough play time.

**SEASONAL UPDATES**

Every 10 weeks or so Fortnite is updated with a new season. This essentially adds new things like skins and emotes to the game, adds also sometimes changing up the game map in interesting ways. These seasons are free to everybody and don't require additional money to play, though battle passes for each season can be bought with V-Bucks. A battle pass will typically allow a player to earn experience faster and gain fun in-game items by completing a host of daily challenges.

**CROSSPLAY IS AVAILABLE**

One of the wonderful things about Fortnite is that it can be played cross platform. This means that no matter what platform a person plays on (PC, Playstation 4, Xbox One etc) they can play with friends who own the game on a different platform. To do this, an Epic Games account must first be created online (which is free) and then linked with your platform account. Doing this removes the age-old boundary of not being able to play together because you don't have the same console and opens up a whole new world of playing online with friends.

**IS FORTNITE VIOLENT?**

Fortnite has been rated by the ESRB (Entertainment Software Ratings Board) as 'Teen', as it contains cartoon violence and the weapons and arts depicted in the game are some way removed from their real life inspirations. Characters don't draw blood when shot and instead of dying, they are simply beamed up off the map. Naturally, players younger than the recommended age limit will want to play the game and that should be at the discretion of parents and carers.



## Top Tips For Parents

**BUYING V-BUCKS**

As mentioned, Fortnite does contain in-game purchases and microtransactions in the form of V-Bucks which can be bought with real money. If you do decide to let your young one spend money in the game, be sure to delete your card information afterwards as it can be very easy to purchase more items at the press of a few buttons. It's important to set a limit on any purchases (as mentioned they are absolutely not necessary to play the game) and a suggestion would be capping the spending at around £50 - this is the normal retail price of a game.

**GAMING WITH STRANGERS**

Fortnite Battle Royale is an online game, and as such, there is a chance that young children could come into contact with strangers who are randomly placed into their groups in a game. It's difficult to predict what another person might say or do in a game, so it's a good idea for friends playing together to be grouped together. The only real countermeasure to interacting with strangers offered by Fortnite is to turn off all mic communications, which can be done in the game's settings. Using outside chat apps, like Skype or Discord while playing, is a great way to make sure you know who you're talking to and that nobody else is listening in.

**LIMIT TIME, BUT BE FLEXIBLE**

A game of Fortnite can last up to 20 minutes, so be flexible when it's time to put it away. The approach of 'one more game' as opposed to '10 more minutes' will stop any complaints that a match is still ongoing. Better still, play with your child and take it in turns; that way you're helping control the time played and can keep an eye on what they're experiencing.

**TALK TO OTHER PARENTS / CARERS**

If you're concerned about play time or spending money in the game, talk to other parents and carers of your child's friends. If you approach as a collective, it will be easier to know when their friends are online and you don't have to worry about who they're playing with. It can also help to curb expectations on spending money on battle passes and skins if you stick together.

**CAN DEVELOP SOME IMPORTANT SKILLS**

It's often overlooked just how good gaming can be for young people. Fortnite encourages team play, quick and complex problem solving and communication; that's not to mention the lightning fast reflexes gamers can develop. While taking breaks to do other activities is of course important, there are benefits to a screen time which might not be immediately obvious.

**PLAY THE GAME YOURSELF**

There's no substitute for sitting down and playing the game yourself to learn all about it. Fortnite is available for free on almost anything you can imagine, even your smartphone, so there's never been a better time to get involved and see what all the fuss is about. You never know, you might even be able to impress your children when you show them your impressive Victory Royale tally.

### Meet our expert

Mark Foster has worked in the gaming industry for 5 years as a writer, editor and presenter. He is the current gaming editor of two of the biggest gaming news sites in the world, UNILAD Gaming and GAMINGBible. Starting gaming from a young age with his siblings, he has a passion for understanding how games and tech work, but more importantly, how to make them safe and fun.







## We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi  
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

### Office Administrator (part time, 26.5hrs)



- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Hoddesdon
- Required as soon as possible
- Closing date: 12th Nov, 3.30pm

Enquiries: [admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk)

### Breakfast Care Playworker (part time & term time only, casual contract)



- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Hoddesdon
- Closing date: 12th November

Enquiries: [admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk)

### School Finance Manager (full time)



- Based in Bishop's Stortford
- Closing date: 15th November 2021

Enquiries: [recruitment@stmarys.net](mailto:recruitment@stmarys.net)

### Admin Assistant / Receptionist (temporary until April 2022, full time)



- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Hertford
- Closing date: 17th November 2021 at 12pm

Enquiries: [denisep@stjosephs351.herts.sch.uk](mailto:denisep@stjosephs351.herts.sch.uk)

### Breakfast Club Assistant (part time & term time only, casual contract)



- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Hertford
- Closing date: 17th November 2021 at 12pm

Enquiries: [denisep@stjosephs351.herts.sch.uk](mailto:denisep@stjosephs351.herts.sch.uk)

### Exam Invigilators (casual)



- St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford
- Closing date: 30th November 2021

Enquiries: [recruitment@stmarys.net](mailto:recruitment@stmarys.net)

**WE ARE  
HIRING!**

For all enquiries, contact:

[Recruitment@stmarys.net](mailto:Recruitment@stmarys.net)