



# ST CATHERINE'S NEWS UPDATE

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

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Head Teacher—Hazel Leslie, Deputy Head—Andrew Carless

## **News from the Head.....**

Welcome back and we wish you happy New Year! I do hope you all managed a restful break.

### **Emergency procedures**

All schools have an 'Emergency Plan' which is updated annually. To help, please ensure that all contact details are up to date. These can be checked on the Arbor portal.

**IF** there is an emergency, weather based or otherwise, **please wait for the school to contact you** rather than ringing in. We absolutely understand that parents may be worried if they hear something through social media, but we have 2 phone lines, and an influx of calls from parents will impede our ability to contact emergency services. Informing parents will be a priority for us. Likewise, ill-informed social media/ WhatsApp group information is unreliable and unhelpful and increases the number of calls to the school from worried parents.

### **Severe weather**

It will be a priority for the school to contact parents in case of severe weather resulting in school closure. Please ensure you have alternative child care arrangements in case of any such event. And again, it is helpful if school have all up to date contact details.

### **Big Book Swap**

On **Friday 23rd January 2025 at 3pm** we are holding our Big Book Swap and children may bring any good quality books they no longer want and pass them to their Teacher to exchange for a token to use at the book swap. They children can have up to a maximum of 10 tokens. We are particularly looking for books for older children.

**Nursery and Reception will have their book swap at 8.30am in the classroom**—parents/carers are welcome to come and help their child choose a book.

**Please bring in your books to be swapped on Thursday 22nd January.**



### **Change to menu—BURGER DAY—Thursday 15th January:**

#### **MAIN MENU**

**Beef Burger**

**Plant Grill Burger (Ve)**

**Jacket Potato with Various Toppings**

#### **SERVED WITH**

**Baked Potato Wedges, Sweetcorn and**

**Coleslaw**

#### **DESSERT**

**Golden Krispie Cake**

### **Smartphones on site**

In line with many other local primary schools, St Catherine's aims to be 'smartphone free'. Please try, where possible, to put your smartphone away when you are on the school site. Thank you.

### **PE Kits**

Lots of children are coming to the office to borrow PE kits every week. Can we please remind you that children need to have their PE kit in school **every day**—sometimes lessons change days or extra activities are organised. We have limited spares and few sizes.

We are no longer able to lend PE kits or trainers for clubs, as our kits are getting very dirty and quite often not returned. If your child has a club during or after school, please ensure they have suitable clothing and footwear or they may be unable to take part. Thank you

### **KS1 Grandparents Coffee morning**

Year 1 and 2 children should have brought home a letter regarding the Grandparents coffee morning on Friday 13th February at 10am.

Please return the slip to the class Teacher or school office as soon as possible.

### **Nursery Applications—30 hours free childcare funding**

St Catherine's is offering funded places to Nursery children from September 2026, giving:

- Flexible, longer days from 7.45am to 5.30pm.
- Morning and afternoon sessions led by qualified teachers.
- Wrap around care available before and after care sessions (breakfast and after school club).

Admissions are now open. Please contact the school office for an application form or to arrange a visit.

### **Reception Applications for September 2026**

Reception applications for September 2026 open on 1st November **until 15th January 2026**. You should receive a leaflet directly from Hertfordshire County Council admissions. Children in Nursery are not automatically allocated a Reception place and will need to apply through School Admissions. For more information please visit: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/school-admissions/primary-junior-and-middle-schools/primary-junior-and-middle-school-places.aspx](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/school-admissions/primary-junior-and-middle-schools/primary-junior-and-middle-school-places.aspx)

### **Foundation Stage Tours**

If there are families looking for Nursery/Reception places for September 2026 (ie born between 01.09.22 and 31.08.23 for Nursery and between 01.09.21 and 31.08.22 for Reception), the school is running tours for prospective parents.

### **Year 1 and 2 Reading**

On Thursday 15th January, Friday 27th February and Thursday 26th March 2026, Year 1 and 2 parents are invited to come and read with their children in the classrooms at 8.25am until 8.40am.

### STAYING SAFE ONLINE



What do parents need to know about Facebook? Check out the link below...

<https://protectyouneyes.com/apps/facebook-parental-controls/>



App Store rating 12+

### **Diary Dates**

#### **January**

- 15th KS1 Reading morning
- 15th Burger Day—menu change
- 15th Year 6 lunchtime concert at St Mary's
- 23rd Book Swap
- 26th Toy workshop visit—N-Yr 2
- 27th James Aston visit Yr5&6

#### **February**

- 2nd Year 4 lunchtime concert at St Mary's
- 2nd SATs parents info evening—school hall
- 13th KS1 Grandparents coffee morning 10-10.30am
- 13th Year 3 Royal Day
- 16th—20th half term
- 23rd INSET day—school closed to pupils
- 27th KS1 Reading morning

#### **March**

- 2nd Year 3 lunchtime concert at St Mary's
- 3rd Year 1 Learning Cafe—2.30pm \*
- 5th Year 2 Learning Cafe—2.30pm \*
- 12th Reception screening

**26th KS1 Reading morning—please note change of date**

- 27th school finishes at 1.15pm
- 30th—10th April—Easter holidays

#### **Spring Term 2025/2026**

- 5th January—27th March 2026
- 5th January—INSET Day—school closed to pupils
- Half term 16th—20th February
- 23rd February—INSET Day—school closed to pupils

#### **Summer Term 2025/2026**

- 13th April—17th July 2026
- Half term 25th—29th May
- 4th May—Bank Holiday—School closed

### **FOSC Corner**

For more information please visit <https://www.pta-events.co.uk/foscware/>  
Facebook—search for FOSC Community Corner  
Instagram—FOSCWARE

# THE DANGERS OF FROZEN WATER

## TOP TIPS TO STAY SAFE

### NEVER GO ON THE ICE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES

This includes attempting to rescue another person or animal who may have fallen through the ice.

### ONLY USE WELL LIT AREAS

Try to take walks in the daylight but if you must walk in the evening, only use well lit areas and avoid anywhere with water.

### KEEP AWAY FROM THE EDGE OF THE WATER

Never go close to the edge or lean over to touch the ice. You may overbalance or trip and fall in.

### ALWAYS WALK WITH AN ADULT OR A GROUP OF FRIENDS

Look out for each other and if someone does fall through the ice there will be others around to raise the alarm and get help

Every year children are at risk when they are tempted to play on the ice formed on open waters and adults find themselves at risk as they attempt to save them. Over 50 % of ice related drowning involved an attempted rescue of another person or a dog.

Areas with frozen waters can be beautiful to look at but they are also extremely dangerous. Here are some useful tips to help you enjoy these areas safely.

## WHAT TO DO IF YOU FALL THROUGH THE ICE

Keep calm and shout 'help'

Spread your arms across the surface of the ice in front of you

Try to kick your legs and pull yourself out of the water and on to the ice

Lie flat, spreading your weight across the surface and pull yourself to the bank. you may find it easier to roll.

If you cannot climb out, wait for help and keep as still as possible. Keep your head above the water, press your arms by your side and keep your legs together

Once you are safe, it is important that you go to hospital immediately for a check up



## WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE SOMEONE FALL THROUGH THE ICE

Shout for **'HELP'** and dial **999** or **112** if you can

**DO NOT** walk on to the ice to attempt a rescue

Shout to the person to **'KEEP STILL'** and offer reassurance.

If they are close enough, **LIE DOWN TO AVOID OVERBALANCING** and falling onto the ice, and try to reach them with a tree branch clothing tied together or anything else which can extend your reach.

If you cannot reach them, **SLIDE SOMETHING** which floats across the ice, such as a plastic bottle or a football, so that they can hold on to it to stay afloat whilst help is on the way.

If they are too far away, **WAIT FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES** and reassure the casualty from the safety of the bank.