

# Partnership Press

## Spring 2



### Partnership Press: Spring Term

As we reach the end of what has been a very short eleven-week term, it is wonderful to look back on the wide range of learning experiences, trips, and visits that have taken place across both of our schools. This week our Easter Services have given us a valuable moment to pause together as school communities and reflect on the Easter story. Its themes of hope, new beginnings, compassion, and renewal are ones that resonate strongly within our schools, reminding us of the importance of kindness, resilience, and looking forward with optimism. Our staff teams have also continued to work closely, sharing expertise, planning together, and supporting one another with a commitment that truly embodies the spirit of partnership. There is something very special about seeing two schools with their own identities moving forward with a shared purpose. Together, we create an environment where hope is encouraged, new ideas are welcomed, and every member of our community feels valued.



As we now begin the Easter holiday, we all look ahead to some hopefully drier and sunnier weather and to returning refreshed for the start of our Summer Term. We wish all families, pupils, and staff a peaceful and joyful Easter. Thank you for being such an important part of our shared school family. Here is to hope, positivity, and the continued growth of our partnership.



### Building a sense of Belonging and Community

St Mary's will be introducing a new routine after Easter in which parents and carers are welcomed onto the site to drop children directly at their classroom doors and collect them in the same way. This change is designed not only to support smoother transitions but also to deepen the sense of

community and belonging across the school. By enabling families and staff to connect more naturally at the beginning and end of each day, the new approach aims to strengthen relationships, encourage positive communication, and help children feel settled and supported from the moment they arrive. This is already such a lovely feature of the start and end of the day at Limsfield which is very much valued by the parents and school staff.

We have carefully considered the impact on shared families and there is very little change to Infant drop-offs, and older Junior pupils will still be able to meet parents at the gate if preferred. While we recognise the challenges of managing two school runs, we do not expect these changes to create any significant difficulty for families who attend both schools. If there are any issues, please do let us know and we will work to address these to ensure this new approach works smoothly.

These adjustments form part of a wider review across the partnership as we work together to ensure that daily routines best support children, staff, and parents in both settings.

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## Attendance Policy – In place and ready for Summer Term



Since September, our schools have been sharing more information with families about our Attendance Policy and the statutory expectation that all children attend school as regularly as possible. Good attendance is essential for children's learning, wellbeing, and long-term success, and we work in close partnership with families to support strong attendance habits.



The full Attendance Policy, which has been ratified by both Governing Bodies and checked by the Surrey Country Council Attendance team, will be shared alongside this communication and is always available on both school websites.

### Why Attendance Matters

- Every school day provides important learning, social development, and routine.
- Missing school, even occasionally, can affect progress and confidence.
- Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to make sure their child attends school regularly and punctually.
- Our shared aim is to help every child benefit from the full school experience.

### Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Some absences are unavoidable, such as illness or medical appointments. These may be authorised if the school is informed appropriately. Absences that are not considered reasonable, such as holidays in term time, shopping trips, late mornings, or days off for birthdays, will be recorded as unauthorised. The Headteacher is the only person who can authorise an absence.

### Leave of Absence in Term Time

Government legislation states that Headteachers may only approve term-time leave in exceptional circumstances. These situations are very rare. Holidays are not considered exceptional and will be unauthorised.

**When leave is taken without authorisation, this may lead to a Penalty Notice.**

### Penalty Notices (Important Update from After the Easter Holiday)



From after the Easter break, the updated national regulations around Penalty Notices will be fully in place. These regulations apply to all schools and all families.

### A Penalty Notice may be issued when:

- A child has 10 or more unauthorised sessions (5 school days) within the previous 10 school weeks
- A family takes unauthorised term-time leave (including holidays), totalling 10 sessions or more
- A child is persistently late after the register closes
- A child is found to be absent without good reason during a truancy patrol

### National Penalty Notice Amounts (from August 2024)

- **£160 per parent per child if paid within 28 days**
- **Reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days** (only if no previous Penalty Notice has been issued for that child since 19 August 2024)

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If a parent has already received a Penalty Notice for the same child since 19 August 2024, the charge will be **£160 with no reduced rate**.

If two Penalty Notices have already been issued for the child, the Local Authority is required to consider prosecution instead of issuing a third notice.

### How we will work with you...

Our approach is always supportive. We monitor attendance closely and intervene early to help families overcome any barriers to regular attendance. This may include:

- Conversations with your child's class teacher
- Meetings with school leaders
- Support with routines, wellbeing, or anxiety
- Partnership work with the Local Authority when needed
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Families will always be kept fully informed if attendance becomes a concern.



## Road Safety and Considerate Parking

We would like to remind all parents and carers of the importance of safe, respectful, and lawful parking around our school sites. The safety of our pupils and families is our highest priority, and the behaviour of drivers near the schools has a direct impact on this.

Please remember that it is illegal to stop or park on double yellow lines, even for a very short time. These restrictions exist to protect pedestrians, maintain clear sightlines, and ensure that emergency vehicles have full access when required.

We also ask that everyone shows consideration for our neighbours by avoiding the obstruction of driveways or access points. Blocking a resident's drive, even briefly, causes significant inconvenience and can strain the positive relationships we work hard to maintain within the community.

With the arrival of warmer weather, we strongly encourage families to consider a 'park and stride' approach. Parking a short distance away from school and walking the final part of the journey offers many benefits:

- It reduces congestion immediately outside the school gates, creating a safer environment for children.
- It improves local air quality, supporting the health and wellbeing of the whole school community.
- It promotes good habits for pupils, demonstrating respectful and responsible behaviour.
- It often results in a calmer and quicker start and end to the school day.

Thoughtful, safe, and considerate parking ensures that our community remains welcoming, respectful, and safe for everyone. Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.

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Dates for 2026 / 2027 Academic Year



Key Dates for next academic year (2026-2027):

<b>Autumn Term (2026):</b>	
Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2026	INSET Day – No children in school
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September.	<b>All Children in School</b> (Reception Children start dates TBC)
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> October	Last day of Autumn 1 ( <b>2-week half term</b> )
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November	First day of Autumn 2 – <b>all children back to school</b>
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Last Day of Autumn 2 / Break Up for Christmas
<b>Spring Term (2027):</b>	
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January	First day of Spring Term – <b>all children back to school</b>
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Last day of Spring 1 ( <b>1-week half term</b> )
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February	First day of Spring 2 – <b>all children back to school</b>
Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2027	Last Day of Spring 2 / Break Up for Easter
<b>Summer Term (2027):</b>	
Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> April	First day of Summer Term – <b>all children back to school</b>
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	Last day of Summer 1 ( <b>1-week half term</b> )
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> June	First day of Summer 2 – <b>all children back to school</b>
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July	Last Day of Summer 2 / Break Up for Christmas
<i>Please note we have just 1 further INSET day to plan as we are using the others to align our school term dates with other local schools and will confirm the date of this early in the New Year.</i>	