



St Monica's Catholic Primary School

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Friday, 4th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

A Wonderful First Week Back

It has been a fantastic first week back at St Monica's. The children have returned looking smart and have settled quickly into school life with positive attitudes and real enthusiasm for learning. They are a credit to you all. Our new starters have made a fantastic start. Welcome to the St Monica's family.

100 Year Celebration Mass - Sunday, St Monica's Church at 10:30am

On Sunday, there will be a special celebration for our 100th birthday in St Monica's Church. Myself and many members of staff will be there, and everybody is welcome. Father Ged sent this message:

"All families and staff are warmly invited to join our parish community for a very special Mass celebrating 100 years of St Monica's and the Feast of St Monica."

Mass will take place at 10.30am this Sunday, 6 September, at St Monica's Church and will be celebrated with Archbishop John. During the Mass, our altar servers will also be enrolled into the Guild of St Stephen.

Following Mass, our newly refurbished parish hall will be blessed, and everyone is invited to continue the celebration there over refreshments. This will be a wonderful opportunity for our parish, school and friends to come together, mark this important milestone and meet Archbishop John. We would love to see you there!"

Forest School and our Outdoor Classroom

Our Forest School area is now in use, **and we would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has supported our fundraising through the School Lottery and Summer Fayre.** A special mention must go to the Friends of St Monica's, who

fundraised tirelessly throughout the year - we do not know what we would do without you.

We want our children to make the most of the greatest classroom of all: the great outdoors. We are fortunate to have a green haven at the back of the school, which we want to develop into a vibrant space used every day.



Over the coming year, children will explore our Forest School through den building, minibeast hunts, creating trails, birdwatching and tracking, outdoor storytelling, woodland crafts and seasonal scavenger hunts. They will develop practical skills through knot-tying, using simple tools safely, planting seeds and caring for wildlife. They will also take part in relevant science lessons in the outdoor classroom. These experiences will nurture teamwork, resilience, independence and creativity.

Nut-Aware School

Please remember that school is a nut-free zone. We have children who require an EpiPen, and we take all allergies extremely seriously. We have sent allergy letters to all families and will follow up the returns with individual meetings to ensure the highest standards of allergy management.

Please ensure that packed lunches and snacks do not contain nuts or nut oils.

Banned items include:

- Nutella and other chocolate or hazelnut spreads
- Peanut butter and other nut butters
- Whole nuts or products containing pieces of nuts
- Cereal, granola or protein bars containing nuts
- Kinder Bueno, Ferrero Rocher and similar nut-containing chocolates



- Pesto, satay sauce and foods made with nut oils
- Marzipan and nut-based cakes, biscuits or pastries

This is also why children are not permitted to bring cakes, sweets or treats into school for classmates to celebrate birthdays. We cannot take any risks when ingredients or possible cross-contamination are unknown. Thank you for helping us keep every child safe.

Attendance Update - Punctuality and Gate Times

School Opening and Registration Times

- **8.30am:** School gates open for informal entry.
- **8.45am:** The school day begins, registers are taken and the gates close promptly. Please enter school from the Office.
- **9.15am:** Registers close.

Pupils arriving after the gates have closed must enter through the school office and be signed in by a parent or carer.

Children arriving from 8.45am but before 9.15am will receive a late mark. Children arriving at or after 9.15am without an authorised reason will receive Code U, which counts as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

Please ensure that your child arrives before **8.45am** and is ready to begin the school day on time.

Opening of the Marie Hulligan Prayer Garden



We held a lovely ceremony to officially open the Marie Hulligan Prayer Garden today, followed by the planting of bulbs by our Year 1 children. A special thank you must go to the staff and governors whose hard work and dedication transformed an overgrown and unused area into a beautiful, calm and spiritual space that will be enjoyed by our school family for many years to come.

The children planted the bulbs as a symbol of our hopes and prayers for the school year ahead. For a time, the bulbs will remain hidden beneath the soil, putting down strong roots before their growth becomes visible. In the same way, learning, confidence and faith grow gradually through effort, patience and God's guidance. It was a particularly meaningful way to begin our new school year.

“Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.”

- Luke 2:52

Throughout the year, we will encourage every child to grow through Faith, Aspiration, Respect and Resilience. When the flowers appear in spring, they will remind us how far our children have come, both as learners and as people, and how their talents have blossomed.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. James Gouldbourne

Headteacher

St Monica's Catholic Primary School

THE PARISH OF
ST MONICA & ST FRANCIS DE SALES



Feast of ST MONICA

A Day of Faith, Thanksgiving and Celebration

SUNDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER

10.30AM

FEAST DAY MASS AT ST MONICA'S CHURCH

- ✚ CELEBRANT: ARCHBISHOP JOHN SHERRINGTON
- ✚ BLESSING OF OUR REFURBISHED PARISH HALL
- ✚ CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF ST MONICA'S SCHOOL



BLESSING OF OUR
REFURBISHED
PARISH HALL

Giving thanks for this wonderful space that will continue to serve our parish and local community.



CELEBRATING
100 YEARS
OF ST MONICA'S SCHOOL

A century of Catholic education, faith, friendship

1926 - 2026



REFRESHMENTS
AFTER MASS

Join us in the parish hall after Mass to meet Archbishop John and celebrate together.

All are warmly invited to join our parish family for this special occasion.

A COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND HOPE