



# September Newsletter 2024

Welcome to the first newsletter of this academic year.

We hope that everyone has had an enjoyable summer and are now ready to start the term with renewed energy!

We would also like to give a very warm welcome to our new families joining us this September.

As we begin the year, we take the opportunity to review our school Mission, Values and Philosophy. Each week, we discuss the importance of these as they help shape the ethos and culture of our school. They are referred to within assemblies and day-to-day through our teaching and positive behaviour systems. Our reward system will continue this year as it was positively received by all children when completing our surveys at the end of last term.

Below, I have outlined our Mission, Values and Philosophy so that you can talk to your child about them and why they are important - ask to hear the song and actions!!

**Our School Mission - Building Bright Futures on Firm Foundations**

**Our School Values - Courage, Kindness, Curiosity**

**Philosophy - Dream big, Act now, Never give up - You're Amazing!**

To build on the above, we will continue to present weekly awards during our celebration assembly including lunchtime supervisor, Golden Writing and Marvellous Maths awards. We finish each celebration assembly with the 'prestigious' Headteacher's Award. Photos are posted each week on our social media for you to see.

Our extended clubs provision will continue this term. We are delighted to announce that we have been able to secure a coach from Saints Southwest for the Autumn term. They will be running both a lunchtime and after school club. All clubs will begin the **week commencing 9th September**. We usually have a waiting list for our clubs so we kindly ask that if your child signs up to a club, they attend each week.

As we move forward into the Autumn term, it is always good to reflect on previous experiences and events. We are extremely proud of our Year 6 children who completed their SATs in May. Every child showed courage, kindness to each other and fantastic knowledge across all areas! Our results are yet to be published officially but we can say that we are very pleased with our children's outcomes this year!

As our Year 6 children had worked so hard to achieve their best, we decided that their end of term treat would be something a little special! We would like to say a **huge Thank You to Fryer Tucks** for providing our Barn Owls class with a delicious lunch on the beach. We had a fantastic day and created another memory that the children will keep for ever.

### **Attendance**

As you will be aware following our previous newsletter, new legislation has now come into force. Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with the new information in the article below. If you have any concerns or would like any support with attendance, please let me know.

We already have lots of events planned for the Autumn term - please see the dates below. We have lots of exciting plans this year...watch this space for details!

Mrs King

## Attendance - Important Changes

### **IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE LAW REGARDING PENALTY NOTICES FOR UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

A new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, is being introduced following changes to the law. These new Government regulations will come into effect from 19 August 2024 and will affect when penalty notices are issued in Cornwall.

#### **What are the changes?**

1. There will be a new national threshold of 10 unauthorised sessions for any reason (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period for when a penalty notice must be considered.
2. The new rules mean you will no longer be able to take your child out of school for one week's holiday without the consideration of a penalty notice being issued.

3. There will be an increase in the penalty fine from £60 to £80 if paid in 21 days. If the fine is not paid by the first 21 days, it will rise to £160 if paid within 28 days of being issued.

4. If a second penalty fine is issued to the same parent for the same child within a 3-year rolling period, the fine will automatically rise to £160 with no option to pay the lower rate of £80.

5. If a parent then commits a third offence in a 3-year rolling period, the local authority will need to consider other enforcement options available to them. This could include prosecution.

Please see FAQs below with more information about how the new rules may affect you.

We would like to thank parents and carers for their support in making sure that children do not miss any valuable learning time.

#### **FAQs**

**If I have been issued with a penalty notice before 19 August 2024, will this be counted if I am issued with another penalty notice from September onwards?**

No, the new limits come into effect from 19 August 2024.

**If I have already booked a holiday for next year, could I receive a penalty fine at the new higher rate?**

Yes, if the absence has not been authorised by the Head Teacher of your child's school. Remember, only a Head Teacher can agree whether an absence can be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

**Who can be issued with a penalty notice?**

- Each parent can receive a fine for each child who has had unauthorised absence from school.
- In education law, anyone who lives with a child and who has day-to-day care of the child is also considered to be a parent whether they are the biological parent or not. This will include step-parents and partners.

**Do the new rules only apply to holidays during term time?**

- No, it applies to all unauthorised absence from school including holidays. Unauthorised absence includes other absence that has not been agreed such as truancy, arriving late after the register has closed and failing to provide reasons for absence.

**How do I request for my child to have leave granted during term time?**

- You must submit an Exceptional Circumstances / Absence Request form before the proposed absence (see your school's policy for the expectation of the number of days before the proposed leave date by which school must have received the form). It will be for your child's Head Teacher to make a decision as to whether there are exceptional circumstances that will allow them to grant the time off. Do not assume that the absence will be granted until you have received confirmation from the school.

**Do the 10 sessions of unauthorised absence have to be taken all at the same time before a penalty fine is issued?**

No, a penalty fine can be issued for any combination of absences over a 10-week rolling period. They can be consecutive or non-consecutive and can span over two terms (including between academic years).

**What happens if I am issued with a penalty fine and I don't pay it?**

Unauthorised absence from school is an offence under S444 of the Education Act 1996. A penalty fine is an opportunity for you to settle out of court. If you don't take this opportunity, you can be prosecuted for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance.

**What should I do if I am worried about my child's attendance?**

In the first instance you should contact your child's school (Mrs King) and ask for advice on how they can support you to improve the situation.

## School Uniform

Below is a brief reminder of our school uniform expectations. Please can you support your child by ensuring they are in the correct uniform every day.

**Please note that from January 2024, our policy will state 'plain socks' (no logos) for the reasons stated below.**

Our policy is based on the notion that a school uniform:

- promotes a sense of pride in the school
- engenders a feeling of community and belonging;
- is practical and smart
- identifies the children with the school
- is not distracting in class
- makes children feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance
- is regarded as suitable, and good value for money, by most parents
- has been designed with health and safety in mind

**School Uniform:**

- Red school jumper, a red cardigan or red school fleece (available from the school office)
- White polo shirt
- Suitable outdoor coat or anorak
- During the summer months, please ensure your child attends school with a suitable summer hat. It is recommended, to avoid sunstroke, that they wear one with a back neck cover.
- Jewellery and visible body piercing are not permitted in school for reasons of loss, damage and safety. One pair of earrings, which are small studs and a wristwatch, may be worn.
- We ask that all hair that can be, is appropriately tied back and natural looking (no extreme colours or styles). We ask that novelty hair accessories are kept for non-school uniform days and all headbands are flat and in the school colours (black, red or white please).
- No make up is allowed in school.
- No skinny trousers or black jeans may be worn
- Footwear - Black sensible functional shoes - No flashing lights. All black shoes/boots or all black trainers with black laces and soles (toes must be covered for health and safety reasons)
- **Socks/tights** must be **plain** and **black, grey or white in colour** (red tights are also permissible)
- Black or grey trousers/culottes/skirts/dresses/shorts (just above the knee)
- Red/white summer dresses (just above the knee)

**All children may wear their school PE kit on for the whole day when they have a PE lesson or an after school PE club.**

- The school black PE shirt (available from the school office) or a plain white t-shirt
- A pair of black shorts and, during the winter months all black trousers/tracksuit bottoms can be worn.
- A pair of trainers (not plimsolls)

Pre-loved quality uniform is available to parents via the office and every Friday via our FOSMS pre-loved uniform shop.

## Arts Week and Arts Night 2024 - Highlights!

I think that you will agree that our Arts Night performance at the end of the summer term was an absolute success. The children performed brilliantly, and each class had clearly worked exceptionally hard on their individual performances. The artwork that the children produced was beautiful and I'm sure will be treasured at home for years to come. We would like to thank everyone who helped to make this event such a success and we look forward to working with you as we enjoy many more community events this year.

Mrs Golay



## Sporting News



We are looking forward to a busy term of sporting events for our children. We start this with an events for the Year 5 and 6 boys called 'Boys Active' on **Monday 23rd September**, and then on **Tuesday 24th September** will be 'Our Girls Can' for our Year 5 and 6 girls.

We are starting this academic year with a fantastic offer of clubs for our young people ranging from sports to choir to gardening. Lots of choice for the children and all free of charge! We kindly ask that if you sign your child up for a club, that they attend every week please.

Mrs Cooper

## Talents outside of school...

Not only do we see our children's amazing talents in school, we also love hearing about their achievements outside of school!

At the end of last term, Ezme and Amber received medals for their excellent contribution to the football team. Ezme also won the coaches 'Player of the Year' which is an amazing accolade!

Well done girls...we look forward to the next season starting!



## FOSMS News

The school year ended with the fantastic **Arts Night** which raised **£1192.70**, once again thank you to everyone who donated, helped and attended.

We are really pleased to announce that over the holidays we heard that **we won the Tesco blue token scheme!** We will share on Facebook what outdoor provisions have been purchased soon. Massive thank you to everyone who selected us when shopping.

Before the end of term we already started making plans for this first half term and we can't wait to share the details with you all real soon, please keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates.

### **Welcome to the new school year:**

If you are new we would like to take this opportunity to introduce FOSMS.

Friends of St Merryn School (FOSMS) is a group of volunteer parents, teachers, anyone with a connection to the school, we raise extra funds through a wide range of fun and creative initiatives, events, and much, much more to enrich the school environment for our children and to provide the extras.

**Everyone is welcome to come along to our monthly meetings**, we would love to see some fresh faces, also any extra hands at our events would be greatly appreciated.

### Have you joined the school lottery?

You can support us by joining our school lottery. Winners are drawn every week with the opportunity to be entered into the big draw where you can win up to £25,000! For details, please ask one of the FOSMS team or see our facebook page.

Our **uniform shop** is still available and open to all. If you require anything then please see Vicky in the office or Sarah Hodson who will be more than willing to help.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to a successful year.

The FOSMS team

## Outdoor Learning - Wild Tribe



Outdoor learning is really important to us at St Merryn School and we are continually improving our outdoor curriculum for our pupils.

This year, Children will be having **weekly Wild Tribe Sessions** with their classes. Their learning will cover outdoor forest school type skills which are linked to the National Curriculum. They may be outside learning maths, art, design and technology, science, Religious education, history, geography or literacy. As part of the children's learning during Wild Tribe sessions, they will be accessing our wider curriculum through activities such as; making fires, cooking, mud sculptures, tree climbing, using tools to whittle wood and saw wood to make objects. Just as for PE sessions, it is vital that children have the correct clothing to do these activities. As we move forward into the colder wetter months of the year, it's really important children have appropriate clothing to enable our outdoor activities. On your child's 'Wild Tribe Day, they will need to come to school in their school uniform, however they will need to bring long leggings/trousers, long sleeved tops and either wellies or old trainers depending on weather to put on over their uniform or change into. Please be aware these clothes are likely to get dirty and smoky as well as potentially accidentally damaged during activities. In wet/cold weather, children will need



waterproof jackets, warm layers and wellies that they can bring to school. If you are unsure about any clothing requirements, please see you child's class teacher or myself.

**Wild Tribe Days for Autumn Term:**

**Robins - Tuesday**

**Wagtails - Thursday**

**Starlings - Monday**

**Kestrels - Friday**

**Barn Owls - Wednesday**

Mrs Muller





## Music Provision



At the end of term, **Dave from St Merryn Ukes kindly donated £100** to our music department to buy new percussion instruments for our performances and music curriculum. It was such a wonderful surprise to receive the end of year gift! We thank all involved in raising these funds and kindly thinking of our school.

Music and performance is an integral part of our curriculum here at St Merryn School. We are always looking for ways to improve our offer. With this in mind, we have two music based clubs on offer after

school this term (choir & music) and will be introducing 'Music Mondays' during lunchtimes. This will be run by our Year 6 music leaders and will allow further opportunities for exploring instruments, singing and dancing.

We are also in the process of arranging instrumental lessons for any children interested. We will update you once we have final details.

Mrs Muller

## School Council

As we start a new year, we will be voting for our new school council members. Children will be asked to speak to their classmates to convince them as to why they would be good school councillors for our school. Each year group has 2 representatives on the school council who have been voted for by their peers.

### **What makes a good School Councillor?**

- Have good problem solving skills
- Good speaking skills and excellent listening skills
- Enjoy teamwork
- Have an open mind to new ideas
- Be responsible
- Work hard to get things done.

### **Our school council members aim to:**

- To act as a voice for all children in the school
- To benefit the school community
- To benefit all pupils
- To contribute to decisions within the school
- To promote democracy

Projects that the school council that we will begin with are:

Choosing charities to support through fund raising events this academic year

Music education in school

Club Provision (after school and at lunchtime)

Mrs Muller

## Early Years Updates



### **New starters**

We would like to welcome all our new Reception pupils to Robins Class. We absolutely loved getting to know you all last year during transition and can't wait to see how much you will learn and grow during your time in Robins class. We know you will have a wonderful time at school and make lots of friends across the whole school.

### **Class Dojo**

This year, we will be using Class Dojo to share wonderful learning experiences for all nursery and reception children. The app is free to download and sign up. Please see myself or Mrs Williams for a link to your child's learning journal.

Mrs Muller

## Nursery



We are very excited for our Autumn term and to welcome all of our new children.

Our theme this term is 'All about me' this allows children to learn about themselves, their emotions and body as well as about the people around them. We will be making our own family tree, talking about our families, learning all about our bodies through song and dance, we will also be learning about 'Our teeth' ; how to clean and care for them independently. It's going to be a busy term!

Mrs Williams

## Reading for Pleasure

We hope that everyone enjoyed the summer holidays and had plenty of opportunities to read some exciting new books or enjoy rereading your favourites!

Before the holidays we told you about **The Summer Reading Challenge** at your local library, if you took part make sure you tell your teachers! We would love to hear all about the books you read and which ones you enjoyed the most... maybe, you could impress them with a book review! We will award the official certificates to those who took part in our celebration assembly.

We want to continue to encourage the children's enjoyment of reading at home so each class's reading scrapbook will be launching again this September. Every child will get an opportunity to take home their class reading scrapbook for a week. It is a chance for the children to be creative and tell us all about their favourite book and share it with their classmates.

We look forward to seeing all the new entries!

Miss East

“The more you **read**  
the more **things** you know.  
The more that you **learn**  
the more **places** you’ll go.”  
-Dr. Seuss

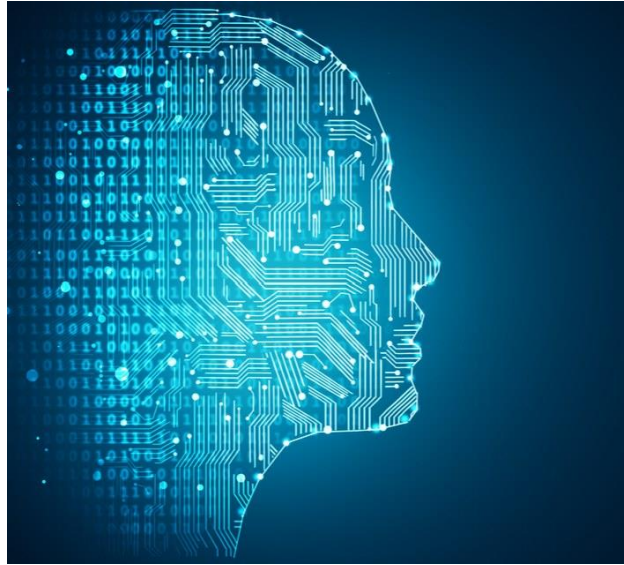
## Inclusion Update...Information for Parents

As we begin this new academic year, I (**Mrs Golay**) will be covering the role of SENCO until Mrs Bateman returns. I am really looking forward to having the opportunity to work closely with our families to support our children to achieve their full potential both in school and at home. **Miss Eke** will be supporting me in this role as our **Operational SENCO**, she will be holding a number of informal parent café sessions throughout the year where you will be able to come into school and discuss any needs or questions you might have regarding your child’s development and education – the dates for these sessions will follow. Please do not hesitate to find either of us if you would like to ask any questions or arrange a meeting.

In addition to this, we are very lucky to still have the support of our **Mental Health Practitioner – Kirsty Battison**. Kirsty is in school every Thursday afternoon and will be supporting our children by delivering small group/ whole class sessions to help the children better understand the importance of looking after their mental health; a letter with more information about these sessions will be sent out early in the Autumn term. She is also able to deliver a series of one-to-one sessions with individuals covering a range of common needs. Please let me know if you feel that this is something your child might benefit from. Kirsty will be hosting an informal parent drop-in session on **Monday 30th September 2:00pm-3:00pm**, where she will be able to discuss individual cases and share a little more about the services she can offer.

Mrs Golay

## Safeguarding - Online Safety



### **Parent's Guide: Top Tips for Navigating Generative AI Safely with Kids**

**What Is Generative AI?** Generative AI is a tool that can create text, images or even videos based on the input it receives. Some types of generative AI include:

- Large language models that can be used to create essays, poems and reports, based on specific instructions
- Chatbots and virtual assistants that can provide human-like conversations and online assistance.
- Image generators that create art work or photographic images based on a set of instructions.
- Video synthesis, where generative AI creates animations and video content.

### **What's My Role as a Parent?**

#### **Explain and Educate**

Generative AI, as with many new technologies, is here to stay and the likelihood is that your child will be using it. Spend time talking about generative AI tools with them and making sure that they understand the technology and know about the positives and negatives.

#### **Share and Explore**

Investigate generative AI with your child so that both of you know what it can do. Try out some fun tasks together. Use a large language model tool to write a funny story based on five random words. Or why not ask the model to write a poem or a song based on an unusual topic, such as chips or flying cats?

#### **Supervision**

Set ground rules for using AI, just as you would with any other online technology. Your child should know that they can only use generative AI when a trusted adult is around. It's also a good idea to check whatever content they produce before they share it with others.

## Computers Aren't Perfect

Remind your child that although computers can do some jobs quicker and more efficiently than humans and that they can be used to solve complex problems, computers aren't always right. Teach your child to question what they are told by generative AI and to double-check facts using other sources of information. Although, in this digital age, we all need to exercise a degree of caution, there is plenty of scope for children, and adults, to make use of generative AI in a safe way. Have fun exploring this new technology with your children, sharing viewpoints and discussing ideas.

For the full guide please click on the link: Parent's Guide: Top Tips for Navigating Generative AI Safely with Kids (twinkl.co.uk)<sup>1</sup>

Miss Redman

## Dates for the Diary



### September

Friday 13th - Carn to Cove Performance (St Merryn Church 2:00pm)

Thursday 19th - School photographs am - siblings and nursery children who are not in on this day can have their photos taken at 9am.

Mon 23rd-Fri 27th - Scholastic Book Fayre

Thursday 26th - Book Festival (Year 6)

Monday 23rd - Year 5 & 6 Boys Active

---

<sup>1</sup>[https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.twinkl.co.uk%2Fblog%2Fparents-guide-top-tips-for-navigating-generative-ai-safely-with-kids&data=05|02|kking%40kernowlearning.co.uk|2b70c8b7d1e34503d8b408dcc7529f2c|4069dd172dda44348f72fc516948a319|0|0|638604404868613249|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliL\\_CjBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D|0||&sdata=M3tQgj54ju4NSioL%2B5lfaerPvbCTdPfJ8vn04CMwW%2Bg%3D&reserved=0](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.twinkl.co.uk%2Fblog%2Fparents-guide-top-tips-for-navigating-generative-ai-safely-with-kids&data=05|02|kking%40kernowlearning.co.uk|2b70c8b7d1e34503d8b408dcc7529f2c|4069dd172dda44348f72fc516948a319|0|0|638604404868613249|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljojMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliL_CjBTil6lk1haWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D|0||&sdata=M3tQgj54ju4NSioL%2B5lfaerPvbCTdPfJ8vn04CMwW%2Bg%3D&reserved=0)



Tuesday 24th - Year 5 & 6 Our Girls Can

Monday 30th - Parent 'drop-in' session with Kirsty (2:00pm-3:00pm)

**October**

Friday 4th - Flu immunisations (more info to follow)

Friday 11th - Harvest Festival at the Church (2:00pm)

Friday 25th - Nursery and School Open morning for new/potential parents (Tour 9:15-9:45)

**Half Term: Monday 28th October - Friday 1st November**

**November**

Monday 4th - Inset Day

Tuesday 5th November - Children return to school



September 2024				October 2024				November 2024									
Mon	2	9	16	23	30	Mon	7	14	21	28	Mon	4	11	18	25		
Tue	3	10	17	24		Tue	1	8	15	22	29	Tue	5	12	19	26	
Wed	4	11	18	25		Wed	2	9	16	23	30	Wed	6	13	20	27	
Thu	5	12	19	26		Thu	3	10	17	24	31	Thu	7	14	21	28	
Fri	6	13	20	27		Fri	4	11	18	25		Fri	1	8	15	22	29
Sat	7	14	21	28		Sat	5	12	19	26		Sat	2	9	16	23	30
Sun	1	8	15	22	29	Sun	6	13	20	27		Sun	3	10	17	24	
December 2024				January 2025				February 2025									
Mon	2	9	16	23	30	Mon	6	13	20	27	Mon	3	10	17	24		
Tue	3	10	17	24	31	Tue	7	14	21	28	Tue	4	11	18	25		
Wed	4	11	18	25		Wed	8	15	22	29	Wed	5	12	19	26		
Thu	5	12	19	26		Thu	2	9	16	23	30	Thu	6	13	20	27	
Fri	6	13	20	27		Fri	3	10	17	24	31	Fri	7	14	21	28	
Sat	7	14	21	28		Sat	4	11	18	25		Sat	1	8	15	22	29
Sun	1	8	15	22	29	Sun	5	12	19	26		Sun	2	9	16	23	30
March 2025				April 2025				May 2025									
Mon	3	10	17	24	31	Mon	7	14	21	28	Mon	5	12	19	26		
Tue	4	11	18	25		Tue	1	8	15	22	29	Tue	6	13	20	27	
Wed	5	12	19	26		Wed	2	9	16	23	30	Wed	7	14	21	28	
Thu	6	13	20	27		Thu	3	10	17	24		Thu	1	8	15	22	29
Fri	7	14	21	28		Fri	4	11	18	25		Fri	2	9	16	23	30
Sat	1	8	15	22	29	Sat	5	12	19	26		Sat	3	10	17	24	31
Sun	2	9	16	23	30	Sun	6	13	20	27		Sun	4	11	18	25	
June 2025				July 2025				August 2025									
Mon	2	9	16	23	30	Mon	7	14	21	28	Mon	4	11	18	25		
Tue	3	10	17	24		Tue	1	8	15	22	29	Tue	5	12	19	26	
Wed	4	11	18	25		Wed	2	9	16	23	30	Wed	6	13	20	27	
Thu	5	12	19	26		Thu	3	10	17	24	31	Thu	7	14	21	28	
Fri	6	13	20	27		Fri	4	11	18	25		Fri	1	8	15	22	29
Sat	7	14	21	28		Sat	5	12	19	26		Sat	2	9	16	23	30
Sun	1	8	15	22	29	Sun	6	13	20	27		Sun	3	10	17	24	31

<b>Key:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> School Holiday</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Bank Holiday</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFFFFF; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Term Time</li> <li><span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Inset Day</li> </ul>	<b>Term dates summary:</b> Autumn Term 1: 3rd September - 25th October 2024 Autumn Term 2: 4th November - 20th December 2024 Spring Term 1: 6th January - 14th February 2025 Spring Term 2: 24th February - 4th April 2025 Summer Term 1: 22nd April - 23rd July 2025 Summer Term 2: 2nd June - 23rd July 2025 <b>TOTAL: 195</b>
-------------	--	--

Bank and Public Holidays 2024/25			
Christmas Day	25th December 2024	Easter Monday	21st April 2025
Boxing Day	26th December 2024	May Bank Holiday	5th May 2025
New Year's Day	1st January 2025	Spring Bank Holiday	26th May 2025
Good Friday	18th April 2025	Summer Bank Holiday	25th August 2025