St Martin of Porres Catholic Primary School

Dove News
4th September 2026
Issue 1

Growing in Knowledge and the love of Jesus

Dear Parents, Carers, and Children,

Welcome Back!

What a wonderful return to school. It has been so great to see everyone again and to have the school full of happy faces, excited chatter and lots of stories from the summer holidays. I have really missed everyone.

It has been a pleasure walking around our schools and seeing the children back in action. Classrooms are once again filled with curious minds, busy hands and enthusiastic learners. We have loved seeing children getting to know their new teachers, making their beginning-of-year introductions and getting stuck into their first tasks and learning experiences.

Our first assembly was all about belonging and how important it is to feel that you are part of a community, know you are loved, you are important and that you can be yourself! As a Catholic school, our faith reminds us that we are called to care for one another. It was a lovely message to start the new school year with — we all belong, and we all have an important part to play.

We also talked about pupil leadership and all the different roles and opportunities that will be available to our children this year. We want every child to have the chance to get involved, share their ideas, take on responsibility and make a difference to our school community.

Have a super weekend everyone and enjoy the slow start back into the school routine - see you on Monday!

Andrea Smith
Headteacher



Siewca (Anioł Pański, Przed siewem),
Painting by Marian Zarembski (1860–1918)

Marian Zarembski's 1888 painting The Sower shows a father praying with his daughter in a freshly ploughed field. As he prepares to sow seeds into the earth, he also sows the "seed of faith" in his daughter's heart. The painting reminds us that faith is often passed on through simple actions, such as praying together, attending Mass, or supporting others. We are all called to sow faith in others.

Dates for your diary

Mon 7th Sep	
Tue 8th Sep	PE LESSONS FOR ALL PUPILS – CHANGE FROM MONDAYS Multi Sports Club/Football (Years 1 – 4) 3.30 – 4.30pm
Wed 9th Sep	Karate Club: 3.30 - 4.30pm (Years 1 – 6)
Thu 10th Sep	
Fri 11th Sep	**Roald Dahl Day:** to celebrate Roald Dahl's birthday, the children are invited to dress up as their favourite Roald Dahl character or wear something 'yellow' - Roald Dahl's favourite colour Celebration Assembly 2.45pm

Reminders

Dear Parents and Carers,

This year we will be focusing on **attendance and punctuality and school uniform**. This is part of our wider commitment to raising standards and strengthening the partnership between home and school.

Attendance

We are closely monitoring attendance and punctuality on a regular basis. Where concerns arise, follow-ups will take place promptly with parents and carers, including meetings and support plans if needed.

Please use either the greenhouse app or Arbor to message the school about pupil absence in the first instance. You can also leave a message on the school answerphone. The school should be notified before **9.30am on the day of absence and all subsequent days.**

Please do not book any school holidays during the school term. This will almost always be marked down as unauthorised absence.

Please, as much as possible, try to book appointments for doctors and dentists outside of school hours as this also affects a child's attendance.

Punctuality

Children should NOT arrive at school before 8.45am unless enrolled in Breakfast Club or attending pre-arranged extra curricular lessons. The school gates will open at 8.45am and will be closed at 8.55am.

All children should be sitting at their desk ready for a 9.00am start.

Arriving late is recorded on our online system in the Reception, on the register and on the child's annual report.

School Uniform

Please check the website for the correct school uniform.

https://www.stmartinofporres.co.uk/School-Uniform/

From September we will be enforcing all uniform rules with checks each day.

All children should be wearing black school shoes – trainers and boots are not school uniform.

As always, if any families have any financial issues or need support please let the office know.

Please label your children's uniform and possessions before the start of term.

Name Tags

Please go to My NameTags website https://www.mynametags.com/ to order labels for your children's clothes and possessions (including water bottles). All clothing should be clearly labelled. Too much time is spent with staff looking for children's possessions each day without much success!

School Uniform

As we prepare for the **new academic year starting September 2025**, we are introducing a renewed focus on **smart uniform and school pride** to support our wider plan of raising standards and strengthening the partnership between home and school.

Key Expectations from September

Uniform checks will be carried out regularly to ensure all children are correctly and smartly dressed for the school day **and for PE**.

Only three branded items <u>are compulsory</u>:

1. A sweatshirt, cardigan, or fleece with the school logo.
2. A PE t-shirt with the school logo
3. An age appropriate school bag with the school logo

Proper school shoes **(not boots or trainers)** should be worn. Winter coats should be black or blue.

All other uniform items (e.g. shirt, trousers, skirts, PE kit) can be bought anywhere but must still meet our standard requirements regardless of brand such as colour.

A full list of approved uniform, guidance on acceptable items, and supplier details can be found here: https://www.stmartinofporres.co.uk/School-Uniform/

Our uniform expectations will help create a consistent, respectful environment and support our strong school community. <u>If acquiring any of these items presents a financial challenge, **please contact the school office -** we are here to support all families.</u>

We hope these uniform standards not only promote school pride and consistency—but also lays the groundwork for introducing more positive changes in the near future. Thank you for helping us make these first steps count!

If you have any questions about the uniform policy, need help purchasing items, or would like to enquire about second-hand options, **please don't hesitate to contact** to the school office.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Together, we continue to build a school we can all be proud of.

Mrs Smith
Head of School

Supporting the School Office

Lunches

Lunches must be booked by parents before children come to school. If there is no booking, your child will receive a sandwich. Please make sure you have the correct login, available from the Office, as soon as possible. Lunch menus and information is available at - https://www.stmartinofporres.co.uk/Parents/School-Lunch/

Arbor

Parents will be expected to be able to either access Arbor online or through the Arbor mobile app.

Full instructions and support are being offered at all times to parents who require it through the school office. Please come to the Office if you need help or support.

Please make sure you have updated all your contact information on Arbor as your child returns to school this September.

To help support families and help the school office run more efficiently, we will be encouraging use of the Arbor Parent Portal for tasks such as:

- Updating contact information
- All communications
- Giving consent for trips
- Paying for trips, clubs and all other expenses

Encouraging Parent Engagement

We want to make it easier for you to get involved in school life. Whether through classroom visits, parent feedback sessions, or volunteering at school events—we hope to see more of you involved and sharing in our school's success.

We would also encourage parents to take part in surveys and feedback to us when requested as it will ultimately benefit all our pupils.

Mrs Smith
Head of School

Free School Meals/Pupil Premium

Last year the Mayor's office announced that all primary school children who attend state schools will receive free school meals starting in September 2023.

Those pupils who previously would have been entitled to free school meals and had applied for them meant that the school would have received a pupil premium worth £1,455 per year per child. This is extra money for the school for enrichment activities, teacher development and targeted support for your child.

As all children receive free school meals those who would have applied may not have done so and so the school loses the £1,455 per year.

All parents will receive the following email today -

Please could we ask all parents/ guardians to check if your child is eligible to receive free school meals. Not only does this grant your child a free meal in the canteen daily and supermarket vouchers over holidays, but the school receives an extra £1455 annually which will be used to support your child's education.

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Universal Credit

To apply and for more information, use the following link and enter your postcode. This will take you to your local boroughs website, which you can then apply through.

https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals

Please note that this is separate from the London lunch scheme. If your child is on the London lunch scheme, please also apply to free school meals as the school receives extra funding.

Thank you for your support,

Andrea Smith
Head of School

After School Club

After School Club

- Our After School Club offers a warm, welcoming, and enriching environment where children can relax, play, and continue learning beyond the school day. We understand how important it is for families to have a safe and supportive space for their children, and we take pride in creating a setting that feels like a home away from home.
- At St Martin's, our club is more than just childcare—it's a place where friendships grow, creativity thrives, and every child feels valued. Children are encouraged to explore a wide range of activities, from arts and crafts to outdoor play, games, and quiet reading time. Whether they want to burn off energy or unwind after a busy day, there's something for everyone.
- Our dedicated and caring staff ensure that each child is supported, included, and encouraged to develop confidence and independence. We promote positive behaviour, teamwork, and respect, reflecting the core values of our school community.
- We also provide a healthy snack each day, giving children the energy they need to stay active and engaged throughout the afternoon.

What we offer:

- A safe, secure, and nurturing environment
- A variety of fun and stimulating activities
- Opportunities for social development and teamwork
- Time for relaxation and quiet play
- Healthy snacks provided daily
- Experienced, friendly staff who know and care for every child
- Our After School Club is designed to give parents peace of mind and children something to look forward to at the end of each school day.

Come and be part of our vibrant after-school community!

Times: **Monday to Thursday 3.20 – 6.00pm Fridays 3.20 – 4.30pm only**

Cost: **£6 for 3.20pm – 4.30pm £7 for 4.30 pm – 6.00pm £13 for 3.20pm – 6.00pm**

Fees are payable using the Arbor app or by Childcare Vouchers

You may be able to save 20% through the government scheme of tax free childcare – please check the link to check eligibility and how to use this service.

https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/how-to-use-tax-free-childcare/

Once you have opened your account please share your TFC reference with adminstmartins@stpm.org.uk

We can also accept tax free childcare from the providers such as

- Sodexo/Pluxee
- Computershare

If you still hold accounts with any of these please link your account with our school.

Arbor Parent Portal and App

The school uses Arbor Parent Portal (and app) for parents to access various services provided by the school.

We have set up an account for you. Please use a desktop browser or a mobile browser to set up your account. You won't be able to do this in the app.

Your username is the email address we've sent this email to. To finish creating your account you just need to set a password.

Go to https://login.arbor.sc and **click Forgot your password?** to finish setting up your account.

When you login for the first time only, it will ask you for your child's date of birth and to tick the box stating that you accept Arbor's standard terms and conditions.

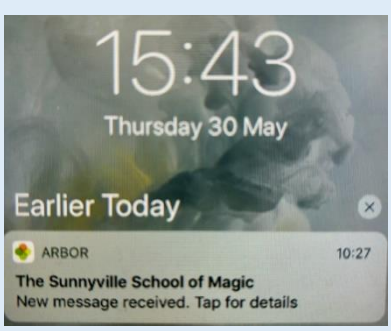
There is lots of help for parents/guardians at the **Arbor Help Centre**. We recommend having a quick look at the **quick introduction guide** in particular, especially if you have more than one child at the school.

The Parent App can be downloaded from either the Playstore for android phones or the Apple Store for iPhones.

Scan to download the Arbor Parent App for your phone from the QR codes below – you can use this to access Arbor on your mobile device, or use a browser on your computer.

Android Play Store

iOS App Store



Make sure that you allow Push Notifications for this app to receive notification of in-app messages.

If you have any queries please contact the office at adminstmartins@stpm.org.uk

- The school uses the in-app messaging system within Arbor. We no longer send text messages to your phone.
- We will be using the booking system within Arbor for parents/carers to book appointments with teachers for parent/teacher evenings.
- You will also be able to view your child/ren's attendance and merits (house points).
- We will be required to pay for trips and clubs and the school building fund through Arbor.

Instagram

We are excited to announce that we have launched our new Instagram page! This is a wonderful way to stay connected and share the amazing experiences happening within our school community.

We invite you to check out our page, like it, and share with your friends and family. Your support will help us grow our online presence and showcase all the wonderful things happening at our school!

@STMARTINOFPORRES

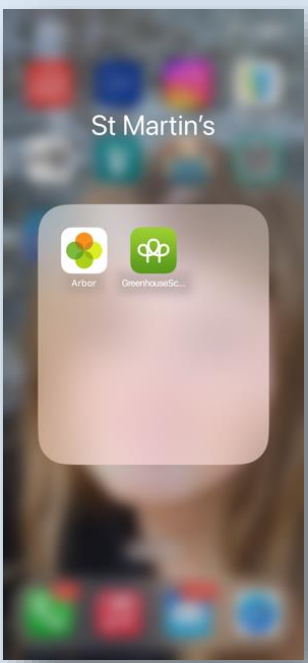
Scan the QR code to find us!

Arbor Parent Portal and App

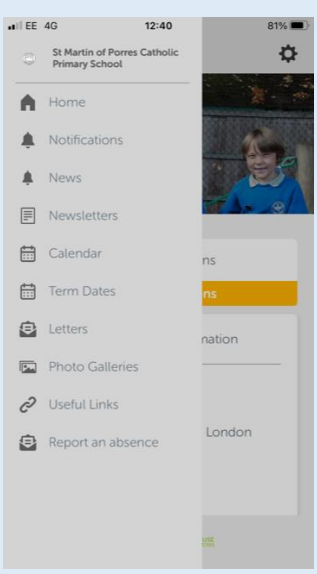
Have you logged in to the portal and then downloaded the app?

If you haven't logged in yet please go to - https://www.stmartinofporres.co.uk/Arbor-Parent-Portal-App/ for instructions.

If you have any queries/problems logging in, please contact the office at adminstmartins@stpm.org.uk or come to Reception.



After downloading both apps, it would be useful to store both apps in one 'St Martin's' container on your phone for ease of use!



School Website App

Many parents have already downloaded the School Website App available from the app store. Just in case here is a reminder on what to do.

For instructions on how to download please go to - https://www.stmartinofporres.co.uk/St-Martin-of-Porres-Catholic-Primary-School-Mobile/

Find letters home, newsletters and calendar and term dates all together in one handy place. You can also report your child's absence from the app and the website where you book your child's lunch.