

OLSM Newsletter

September 19 / 19 Medi 25.

We live, we love, we learn, we grow in Jesus.



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March for Africa

Last week we were asked if the school would like to participate in the March for Africa which is part of the Abergavenny Food Festival Celebrations, this Saturday 20th September.

Obviously, the short notice of our invite this year, has meant that we have not been able to prepare as we would like. However, we have told the organisers that we will do our best and share some of the songs that are sung on the march with the upper phase children.

Attendance at the march is entirely optional, but if children attend then children will be able to have their faces painted at the Castle Street Methodist Church between 12.00 -1.00 pm and organisers do have free tickets available to participants' families to attend the food festival.

We ask that those who attend wear colourful clothes. Mr Evans will attend the march to accompany any children that wish to take part, and he will be at the Methodist Church from 12.30 pm.

Please see below for further information.

The Love Africa musical march is an integral element to the festival. Children from primary schools come together to bring African songs, colourful costumes and drumming to the streets of Abergavenny. This fund-raising event raises awareness of global poverty, resilience and survival, particularly food security and fairtrade. The march through town lasts about an hour (1-2pm on Saturday), starting and finishing at Castle Street Methodist Church, with a short song and dance session on stage at the Castle.

Year 4 swimming

The year 4 class swimming lessons continue, next Tuesday. The leisure centre recommend that children bring the following items to their swimming lesson.

- One-piece Swimming costume or Swimming shorts (must be above the knee)
- Towel
- Hair band or swimming hat (long hair must be tied back)
- Goggles (if they choose)

Children must remove all jewellery before they swim, i.e. watches, stud earrings.

Additional information has been sent to class families today, via email

Curriculum newsletters

Thank you to those parents and carers that attended this week's Meet the Teacher sessions. Curriculum newsletters for this term have been sent via email.

Saint Albans High School Assistant Head teacher year 6 visit

We have arranged for Mr Kevin Davies, assistant headteacher of Saint Albans RC High School, to visit the school on Tuesday 30th September at 3.30 pm, to talk to year 6 parents/carers about applying to Saint Albans for Year 7. He will talk about the school, explain the application process and be available to directly answer any questions children or family members may have. Information on applying to Saint Albans accompanies this newsletter.

KHS 4-19 Open evening and morning for year 6 families.

Attached with the newsletter this week is information on an upcoming KHS open evening which is on Thursday 25th September 6pm to 8pm. The attached letter also informs families of an open morning which needs to be booked in advance on Friday 26th September.

Class assemblies for the autumn term.

All class assemblies occur on a Thursday at 10.20 am. Family members of each class are welcome to attend.

Year 2 – Thursday 2nd October at 10.20 am.

Year 3 – Thursday 9th October at 10.20 am.

Year 4 – Thursday 16th October at 10.20 am.

Year 1 – Thursday 23rd October at 10.20 am.

Year 6 – Thursday 6th November at 10.20 am.

Reception – Thursday 13th November at 10.20 am.

Year 5 – Thursday 20th November at 10.20 am.

Class Masses for the autumn term.

Year 6 – Tuesday 23rd September 10.00 am at OLSM church.

Year 5 – Tuesday 14th October at 10.00 am at OLSM church.

Year 4 – Tuesday 4th November at 10.00 am at OLSM church.

Year 3 – Tuesday 11th November at 10.00 am at OLSM church.

All class family members are welcome to attend these Masses.

Advent Penitential service - Tuesday December 2nd at 2.00 pm at OLSM church.

Lunch bookings

Please can we remind all families that even though all children are now able to have universal free school meals, parents/carers must still book a meal for their child/children to receive the free school meal. From this week we will no longer be able to select meals on behalf of families. Those families who have not booked their child's meal, will be contacted by the school and asked to make their bookings.

Applications for schools in Monmouthshire

For your information, this week, we have attached information from MCC on applying for school places for primary and secondary schools.

Year 5 Dragon rugby

The year 5 will take part in the dragon rugby sessions starting today, Friday 12th September. The sessions are fortnightly. The next session will be Friday 26th September 2025. The year 5 PE sessions occur on Friday so please ensure your child brings PE kit on these days.

Autumn term dates for your diary.

Whole school welcome Mass – next week.

Friday 26th September 2025 at 10.00 am at OLSM Church.

All school family members are welcome to attend if they are able.

Family Harvest Mass –

Sunday 5th October at 10.00 am at OLSM Church.

All school family members are welcome to attend if they are able. If you are a regular attendee at OLSM church or another church or do not attend a church at all, you would be very welcome to attend.

Refreshments in the St Michael's centre afterwards.

Parental consultations for the autumn term -

Wednesday 15th October and Thursday 16th October 2023 from 3.45 - 6.00 pm.

Information on how to book, will be sent out nearer the date.

Lower phase Nativity-

Tuesday December 9th at 2.00 pm and Wednesday December 10th at 2.00 pm.

In the school hall.

Upper phase carol concert with St Alban's High School and Abergavenny Town Band.

Monday 8th December in OLSM Church. (Time to be confirmed)

Breakfast club

Breakfast club runs from 8.00 am until 8.45.

The childcare element runs from 8.00 until 8.25 am and costs £2.

The free breakfast runs from 8.25 until 8.35 am.

Families dropping off their children for breakfast club are able to use the school car park until 8.35 am.

The club is free for those who have been informed by MCC that they would have been eligible for Free School Meals.

Nasal Flu immunisation

Our annual pupil flu immunisation session will take place on Thursday 20th November. Attached to this week's newsletter is an information form with a QR code that can be scanned for parents/carers to give consent. Last year we had nearly 90% of the school vaccinated which dramatically reduced any absences related to flu for everyone in our school community. Please support us once again with this initiative.

School/Parish car park

We are very grateful to our school families for continuing to follow the processes that have been established to make our school car park safe.

As last year the car park is permit only between 8.35-9.05 am and 2.45-3.45 pm.

Permits are only given for specific reasons and families are requested to apply to Fr Matthew if they feel they have a valid reason for a permit.

Class PE days

Reception class Wednesday.

Year 1 class – Tuesday. Year 2 – Tuesday. Year 3 – Friday.

Year 4 – Tuesday. Year 5 – Friday. Year 6 – Wednesday.

Pupils may attend school in their PE kit; on the day their class have PE.

Dogs in school

As last year, dogs are only permitted in the parish/school car park, unless a Guide Dog. Dogs are not allowed on the school playground or fields at any time.

School clubs

From next week-

Monday 3.30-4.30 pm football club for Year 5 and 6. 20 places only.

Tuesday 3.30-4.40 pm netball club for year 4, 5 and 6. 25 places only

Are you having financial difficulties?

Many of us are having to find additional money to pay for our basic needs currently. If you are having difficulties financially, you may want to contact Mr Evans who could help you to identify what support may be available. It is always better to ask for help than to feel alone and helpless.

Please remember potential help is always only an email or a phone call away.

Mr Evans can be contacted by phone weekdays from 9.00-3.30 on 01873735080 or via email, (see below)

Alternatively, Monmouthshire County Council has useful information and links on the cost of living. The appropriate webpage may be accessed via-

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/money-matters/>

Additionally, please remember our New2You area in the school reception where many items are available free of charge.

Finally, the school is also a referral agent for the Abergavenny Foodbank, so if you find yourself in an unexpected financial emergency, we are able to ensure families can gain a 3-day emergency food parcel from the foodbank.

Healthy eating school

Our school is a healthy eating school. Therefore, please can you ensure that children only bring in water in their drink bottles. Likewise, only fruit or vegetables must be brought in for morning snacks or alternatively use the fruit tuck options available within the school. (see below)

Accompanying this week's newsletter we have also included an information sheet on examples of healthy packed lunches.

Contacting teachers

There will be times when you need to pass information on to teachers. Messages can be passed on via the school office but below you will also find a list of teacher email addresses. Please beware that teachers will only respond to emails during school-working hours 8.30-5.00pm Monday – Friday and then only when not teaching. If a message is urgent, please always contact the school office.

Reception class. Mrs Elias- EliasS5@Hwbcymru.net

Year 1 class. Mrs Dunlop- dunlopa14@Hwbcymru.net

Year 2 class. Mrs Flynn- flynnj41@hwbcymru.net

Year 3 class. Miss Farr- FarrR12@Hwbcymru.net

Year 4 class Mrs Rose- RoseM10@Hwbcymru.net

Year 5 class Mr Anderson- AndersonP33@Hwbcymru.net

Year 6 class. Mr Fuchs- fuchss6@hwbcymru.net

Mr Evans- evansv36@monmouthshireschools.wales

Additional Needs Co-ordinator - Miss Everett- EverettJ11@Hwbcymru.net

Fruit tuck

As a healthy school we only allow fruit for the morning break. If you have a child in the lower phase (R, Yr1, Y2) the school provides milk and fruit. We ask for a small fee, payable via Parent Pay to cover the fruit cost. Upper phase children (Yr. 3, 4, 5, 6) may bring in 20p daily to purchase their own fruit tuck.

No non-fruit/vegetable items are allowed for mid-morning break please.

Child absence.

If your child is absent from school, for any reason, it is vital that you let the school know. Our First Response processes mean that we are required to know the reason for a child's absence by 10.00 am to ensure we safeguard our pupil's wellbeing. Please phone and leave a message on our answerphone or email the office if your child is absent.

Term dates 2025/2026

Term	Start	Half Term Starts	Half Term Ends	Term Ends
Autumn	Mon 1st Sept 2025	Mon 27th Oct 2025	Fri 31st Oct 2025	Fri 19th Dec 2025
Spring	Mon 5th Jan 2026	Mon 16th Feb 2026	Fri 20th Feb 2026	Fri 27th Mar 2026
Summer	Mon 13th Apr 2026	Mon 25th May 2026	Fri 29th May 2026	Mon 20th Jul 2026

INSET days for 25/26-
Friday 3rd October 2025, Friday 10th October, Monday January 5th 2026, Friday June 19th 2026, Monday 20th July 2026.

Parish information.

SUNDAY MASS TIMES – At 8am, 10am and 6pm in OLSM Church. Children's liturgy operates at the 10am mass. All welcome.

The Church is open every day for private visits and prayer. Resources for prayer are available in Church.

CALVARY MONUMENT – The large cross standing at the entrance to the site is a memorial of Our Lord's death on Good Friday and is also a War Memorial, the first in Abergavenny, erected in 1920. A significant restoration of the monument is being planned for later this year, the planning permission notice is displayed by the monument.

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION COURSE – The parish will be running a preparation course for the sacrament of Confirmation shortly, open to baptised young people in Year 8 or above at school. The next social gathering for all young people interested is being held on Friday 24th October in St. Michaels Centre from 7pm. For more info contact Fr. Matthew or just come along.

FOOD FESTIVAL EVENTS - As part of the 150th Celebration of The Salvation Army in Wales, Cardiff Canton Salvation Army knitters produced a display called 'God's Story, Our story, Your story'. The display contains imagery from the Bible, Church history and Salvation Army history. This will be on display at the United Reformed Church on Castle Street over this weekend, 10-4. Also, Abergavenny Salvation Army Band will be holding a Songs of Praise outside of the URC on Sunday Afternoon at 2.30pm.

SKIRRID PILGRIMAGE WALK – Sunday 28th September, on the Vigil/Eve of the Solemnity of St. Michael and All Angels, meet at 12noon in the National Trust Car Park. This is a tradition to walk up the Skirrid/St. Michael's Mount around the time of the Feast of St. Michael, going back to the 17th Century.

HOLY BAPTISM – OLSM is a Faith school of the Roman Catholic tradition, with the parish and church at the heart of everything the school does, with Baptism being the rite of initiation for the Church. If your child hasn't received the grace of baptism for whatever reason, why not approach Fr. Matthew to ask if it possible. Some conditions do apply, but he is always ready to have a discussion about it. (851051)

St. Michaels Centre - is available for booking for family events and functions, such as children's parties etc. Info available at www.stmichaelcentre.org.uk or 01873 857570. Or e-mail to saintmichaelscen@outlook.com

CWTCH ANGELS – COMMUNITY SHOP, at Hatherleigh, near Homemakers, off Union Rd West, with food items and household items for families in need. They have a lot of good food, baby equipment, clothes and other essentials all free. A small donation can be given but is not expected. No documents e.g. for benefits are required. Open weekdays 11.30 to 2.30 and on Sat and Sun between 10 and 12 tel 07982435560

LIVE-STREAMING - All services from Church continue to be live streamed on the parish website, in particular our Sunday masses at 8am, 10am and 6pm www.olsm-abergavenny.co.uk

ONLINE EVENING PRAYER – every day, apart from Saturday, at 5pm on both the parish Facebook page and the parish website - www.facebook.com/OurLadyandStMichaelChurch

CAR PARK PERMITS. - Thankyou to all parents for cooperating with the car park permit scheme introduced earlier in the year.

Could those parents who will no longer need to use the car park - whose children have left the school or whose circumstances have changed, please return the permits to Fr. Matthew or to the school office, or e-mail him at fr.matthew@live.co.uk The scheme will continue to operate for this academic year.