

OLSM Newsletter

October 17 / 17 Hydref 25.

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



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Lateness and child absence

We are seeing an increasingly high number of pupils arriving to school after 9.00 am. We can offer a 5-minute period of grace but after that a child is classed as arriving late to school. Persistent lateness can mean that our education welfare officer may contact you. If your child arrives late, they are also missing the start of morning lessons or phonic teaching which will have negative consequences for their learning.

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.

Next week, all children will bring home attendance letters regarding their attendance for the first half of the autumn term. If your child has a green level letter, then their attendance is supporting their learning. Any other colour letters mean that their attendance is having a negative impact on their ability to progress. **Attendance really does matter, so please help us to make the most of your child's learning opportunity.**

Mrs Ward

I am sad to inform you that Mrs Ward will not be in school for the next 5 months after securing a secondment with the Education Welfare Team in MCC. Mrs Ward will work as a family liaison officer. I am sure you will join us in wishing Mrs Ward all the very best of luck in her new role. We will all miss her but we thank her for the commitment shown to our school and to the children in her care.

OLSM School PTA AGM

Our school PTA will hold its Annual general Meeting next Wednesday 22nd October 2025 in the school hall from 3.45 pm – 4.45 pm. Children of parents/carers that attend will be able to watch a film in one of our classrooms during the meeting. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting.

Pupil items left on the playground

I am very sorry to inform you that recently we have had 2 instances where items that have been left overnight on the playgrounds have been stolen. We ask all school family members to ensure that scooters/bikes are taken home at the end of the day. If for some reason this is not possible, please inform a member of staff who will ensure that any items are stored securely inside the school until they can be collected.

If you have a concern

There will be times when parents and carers need to speak to school staff to discuss any concerns or worries, they may have regarding their child/children. When these times occur the first point of call should always be your child's class teacher. If parents/carers still have concerns or if they feel their queries have not been fully addressed, they should then contact Mr Evans. If after attempting these first 2 processes, concerns are still present, the governors may be contacted. This process is set out in the school complaint policy which can be found on the school website.

Please, on no account should concerns every be discussed or aired via any forms of social media.

Year 7 applications.

If your child is in year 6 this year, please remember that the deadline for applying to the high school of your choice is fast approaching. Saint Alban's deadline is-Friday 31st October at 5 pm. King Henry 4-19 is also Friday 31st October but at 4 pm.

STORIES IN THE DUST- theatre opportunity in our own school!

Thank you for the wonderful turn out last Wednesday. The feedback from those that attended has been lovely and what a wonderful opportunity for our year 5 pupils. Well done to the class families for their support and a big pat on the back to the pupils and staff for all their hard work.

Year 4 swimming

The year 4 class will have their last lesson next Tuesday. The leisure centre recommend that children must remove all jewellery before they swim, i.e. watches, stud earrings. A new class will start after half term.

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 1 – Thursday 23rd October at 10.20 am.

Year 6 – Thursday 6th November at 10.20 am.

Reception – Friday 14th November at 10.20 am. (Please note the change of date)

Year 5 – Thursday 20th November at 10.20 am.

School brass lessons

Our Gwent Music brass teacher has a few spaces left for pupils who wish to learn how to play brass instruments. Parents/carers can enroll via this link:

<https://www.gwentmusic.co.uk/>

Class Masses for the autumn term.

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. We are no longer 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 OLSM and Open afternoon

As a Voluntary Aided school, we are still able to take responsibility for our own school applications for our Reception class in September 2026. Please contact the office for an application form which ensures that you have priority above those only applying via MCC.

Prospective parents/carers and their children are welcome to attend our annual open afternoon on **Friday 21st November from 2.00pm.**

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.

Autumn term dates for your diary.

School Disco

Thursday 27th November Lower phase 3.45-4.45 pm and Upper phase 5.00-6.00 pm.

Class Enterprise event/Fayre for Christmas

Tuesday 16th December 3.30-5.00 pm.

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)

School essentials grant-are you missing out?

If you are the parent or guardian of a child in education from Reception to year 11, you may be eligible for a grant to help to pay for essential school items. The official name of this grant is the school essentials grant. You may also know it as the Pupil Development grant, PDG Access or the Uniform grant.

The grant amount for the 2025-2026 school year is:

- £125 for eligible children
- £200 for children in year 7

You can use the grant to pay for:

- school uniforms, coats and footwear
- sports equipment and kit
- equipment for school activities, including musical lessons, outdoor learning and after school clubs
- classroom essentials, including pens, pencils and school bags
- equipment and materials for new subjects or courses

Eligibility

You may be eligible if you are a parent or guardian of a child in education from Reception to year 11, and you receive one of these benefits:

- Income support
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Pension Credit
- Universal Credit
- Help under Immigration and Asylum Seekers Act 1999

If you receive Universal Credit, your household earnings must be less than £7,400 a year after tax. This does not include any income from benefits.

You may be eligible if you have no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

All children in care are eligible.

Apply

You can apply from 1 July 2025 to 31 May 2026.

You will need your:

- contact information
- child's school name
- national insurance number (if available)
- bank details (if available)

You can only apply once for each child in a year.

See- [Get help with school essentials - Monmouthshire](#) for more details.

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.

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.

School clubs

For this week-

Monday 3.30-4.30 pm football club year 5 and 6.

Tuesday 3.30-4.30 pm netball club for year 4, 5 and 6.

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.

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

Half term ends

The first half term ends next Friday 24th October 2025. We will welcome the children back on Monday 3rd November 2025.

Term dates 2025/2026

INSET days for 25/26-
Monday January 5th 2026, Friday June 19th 2026, Monday 20th July 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

Parish information.

CAR PARK – Parents and all those using the car park are reminded to take the greatest care. There is a 5MPH speed limit in force, which means to only drive through the car park at “Walking pace”, especially when entering the car park from Pen Y Pound. A reminder also that a permit is required to use the car park at the beginning and end of the school day.

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.

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