

OLSM Newsletter

Tachwedd 21 / 21 November 25

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



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We need you!

The closing date for nominations for the parent governor role is Monday 24th November 2025.

Please see the attached information if you are interested.

All parents/carers of children that currently attend the school are eligible to apply and if we have more than one person, then a secret ballot will take place.

The successful candidate would be expected to attend 2 meetings a term, that take place in the school on a Tuesday evening at 5.00pm. Meetings usually last around 1 ½ to 2 hours maximum. If you have any questions about the role, please talk to Mr Evans.

No pupil booked lunch-parents and carers will be asked to bring in a packed lunch

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.

If a child has not had a lunch booked, then the office will request that the child's family bring in a packed lunch on the day.

To avoid this situation occurring, we ask that families book their child's lunch choices for the week, on a Sunday.

Please support us to resolve this ongoing situation.

Lateness and child absence

Remember school starts at 9.00 am. As mentioned previously, 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 and always provide as much detail as possible for the reason for an absence.

Attendance really does matter, so please help us to make the most of your child's learning opportunity.

Year 3 swimming

The year 3 class swimming lessons are unfortunately cancelled until the end of November due to storm damage suffered at the leisure centre last week.

Use of social media

We appreciate that many of our school families find the class WhatsApp groups very useful for supporting the sharing of class information. However please be mindful not to use this form of social media for negative purposes.

Recently we have been made aware that a great number of older pupils are using WhatsApp in inappropriate ways. Any information shared between 2 individuals may be classed as being in the public domain which could result in possible legal issues occurring.

The recommended age for WhatsApp, since April 2024, is 13 years old.

Class Masses for the autumn term.

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

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.

Applications for OLSM

If your child's date of birth is between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022, they are eligible to start Reception in September 2026. The Admissions process for children due to start primary school (reception) for September 2026 has already started-

- **Closing date for applications: 15th January 2026 at 4pm**
- Offer date: 16th April 2026

Please ensure that you complete and return your application prior to the published closing date, as failure to do so will result in your application being determined as late which will reduce the chances of you obtaining a place at our school.

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-next week!

Thursday 27th November Lower phase 3.45-4.45 pm and Upper phase 5.00-6.00 pm. (Please see the attached information sheet)

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 6.30 pm in OLSM Church.

School clubs

Monday 3.30-4.30 Football club has ended for his term. Restart after Feb half term.

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

Thursday 3.30-4.30 pm Choir (Paid club)

Class PE days

Reception class Wednesday.

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

Year 4 – Wednesday-Note change of day Year 5 – Friday. Year 6 – Wednesday.

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

Dogs on the school site

We would like to remind all our school families that dogs are not permitted on the school grounds unless the dog is a registered guide dog. Family members may walk their dogs to the main school car park but please do not bring them onto the school site.

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.

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.

PTA

The friends of OLSM PTA group are seeking your support this year to make up some hampers for the Christmas school fayre. Please see the attached information sheet for further information.

Additionally, our easy fundraising app can be used for any online purchases anytime of the year. Using this App allows you to buy whatever you want online and still support the school.

Just sign up, download the easyfundraising app and use that to do your online shopping, and the school receives donations that cost you nothing.

Search: easyfundraising in your app store and raise money for the school just by doing your online shopping.

You can find our **easyfundraising** page at

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/friendsofolsm/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=pmc&utm_content=gs-email1

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 Pugh- PughT97@monmouthshireschools.wales

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

OLSM Mini-Vinnies Christmas request.

Our Mini-Vinnies group is a school group that works in a similar way to the church SVP or Saint Vincent de Paul society. The SVP organisation aims to 'To love our neighbour as ourselves.'

At a recent meeting of our pupil group, the pupils wrote to staff suggesting that they felt it was more appropriate to suggest to school families, that if a gift or card was going to be given to a staff member, instead a local charity could benefit. (Of course, staff DO NOT EXPECT A GIFT OR A CARD AT ALL)
All school staff whole heartedly thought this was a wonderful idea.

Therefore, if families were so inclined, the Mini-Vinnie's would like to inform you that gratitude to staff could be shown by supporting the MCC Christmas wishes appeal in lieu of a staff gift this year. Please see the attached information sheet for further information. Families that do this could then email staff members that a donation has been offered.

Of course there is NO expectation of this.

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-
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. Christmas cards from the charity, *Aid to the Church in Need*, are also available at the back of Church.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION COURSE – The 2nd Session for those children enrolled on the course is this Sunday, 14th December at 9am in St. Michaels Centre, followed by the 10am Sunday mass.

CAR PARK – Parents/carers are reminded not to use the parking bays reserved for taxis'. The 6 spaces along the side of St. Michael centre; all these spaces are needed for taxis' both at the beginning and at the end of the school day.

PARISH/SCHOOLS CAROL SERVICE – Monday 8th December 6.30pm, with students from our own parish school and St. Albans Schools. The online booking system is now closed; a waiting list is in operation - please contact Fr. Matthew.

FUNERAL ON THURSDAY 27TH NOVEMBER – A funeral is taking place in Church next Thursday. There will be no car parking available from 9.30am-12noon, please do not use the car park during this time.

PARISH CHRISTMAS LUNCH – On Sunday 14th December following the 10am Mass that day in the centre. £18 per person for a two-course dinner, please sign up on the sheet at the back of Church.

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. 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

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.