
30th January 2026

Dear Parent Carers,

Weekly Update 30/01/26

I hope this update finds you well. We are looking forward to seeing families at Parent Carer Evening on Tuesday and Wednesday next week – please get in touch with your child's pastoral team if you haven't booked an appointment yet.

The main focus of this week's update is the National Year of Reading. We are excited to share that our school will be taking part in the **National Year of Reading 2026**, an initiative aimed at encouraging children and young people to enjoy reading for pleasure. Reading supports not only literacy, but also communication, wellbeing, creativity, and confidence. At St Martins School, we are embedding this across our provisions in ways that are inclusive, flexible, and enjoyable for all learners.

Over the course of the year, we will be sharing monthly reading challenges and activities that your child can engage with at school and at home. These will also be explored during English lessons at scheduled times, so all students can enjoy dedicated reading moments with staff support.

We hope that you will join us in supporting your child's reading journey this year. Reading is not only about learning skills but also about connecting, exploring, and enjoying stories in many forms.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can make this a fun and engaging Year of Reading for all our students.

Below is an outline of what you can expect each month:

January – Starting Our Reading Journey

We will introduce the school's annual reading focus and share simple ideas for supporting reading at home. Activities will include short stories, audiobooks, or shared reading, with an emphasis on enjoyment and accessibility.

February – Reading That Matters to Me

Students will explore texts connected to their own interests. This may include magazines, non-fiction, poetry, graphic novels, or audiobooks. Students will be encouraged to share what they enjoy reading.

Toni Beardmore **Headteacher**

St Martins School, The Derwent Campus, Bracknell Drive, Alvaston, Derby, DE24 0BT
Tel: 01332 571151 Email: admin@stmartins.set.org Online: www.stmartinsschoolderby.co.uk

The Shaw Education Trust Limited is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England (no 09067175) Registered address: Shaw Education Trust, Kidsgrove Secondary School, Gloucester Road, Kidsgrove, ST7 4DL. The details of our academies registered as business names can be found at www.shaweducation.org.uk.

March – Making Time to Read

A planned whole-school reading moment will take place. This is an opportunity for students to enjoy calm, focused reading in class. Families are encouraged to mirror this at home with a short reading session.

April – Adults as Reading Role Models

Staff will share their favourite texts and demonstrate how reading can be enjoyable. Students will be able to see a wide range of accessible materials being read by trusted adults.

May – Exploring Stories through Experience

Stories will be explored using sensory and experiential approaches, including objects, visuals, sounds, and movement. Families can use simple prompts to recreate these experiences at home.

June – Words, Rhythm and Sound

Students will link stories to music and rhythm, exploring song lyrics, rhyme, and sound-supported texts to enhance engagement and understanding.

July – Celebrating Reading in Our School

We will hold a relaxed reading celebration to recognise participation and enjoyment. This may include shared reading, certificates, or informal outdoor reading sessions.

August – Reading Beyond the Classroom

Students and families are invited to notice and share reading experiences beyond school. This might include reading outdoors, in unusual spaces, or with a favourite reading companion.

September – Fresh Starts and New Texts

At the start of the new term, students will re-establish reading routines and explore refreshed reading resources to continue building positive reading habits.

October – Reading Together

A whole-school reading session will take place to celebrate community and inclusion. We will highlight diverse texts that reflect different identities and experiences.

November – Home Voices in Reading

Families are invited to share meaningful texts from home. These contributions will be used to create displays and recommendation lists, helping students discover new reading material.

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December – Stories for Comfort and Reflection

We will finish the year with familiar and seasonal stories that promote calm, routine, and enjoyment, reinforcing that reading is a positive and comforting experience.

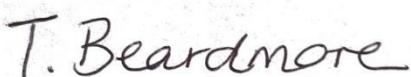
Holiday Free School Meal Voucher Update

As we approach the February half term, we wanted to let you know that this will be the final issue of Free School Meal (FSM) vouchers. This is due to the Household Support Fund coming to an end and not being renewed in its current form.

Each eligible student will receive a £12 voucher, with codes expected to be issued during the week beginning 2nd February. Unfortunately, FSM vouchers will not be available from the Easter holidays onwards.

If this change causes any concerns or if you feel you may need additional support, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the school's family support team — we're here to help.

With best wishes,



Toni Beardmore
Headteacher

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OUR READING JOURNEY BEGINS!

WE'RE KICKING OFF OUR ANNUAL READING FOCUS AT ST MARTINS!

- **January** – Starting Our Reading Journey
- **February** – Reading That Matters to Me
- **March** – Making Time to Read
- **April** – Adults as Reading Role Models
- **May** – Exploring Stories through Experience
- **June** – Words, Rhythm and Sound
- **July** – Celebrating Reading in Our School
- **August** – Reading Beyond the Classroom
- **September** – Fresh Starts and New Texts
- **October** – Reading Together
- **November** – Home Voices in Reading
- **December** – Stories for Comfort and Reflection

EVERY CHILD'S READING JOURNEY IS UNIQUE — AND THAT'S SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE



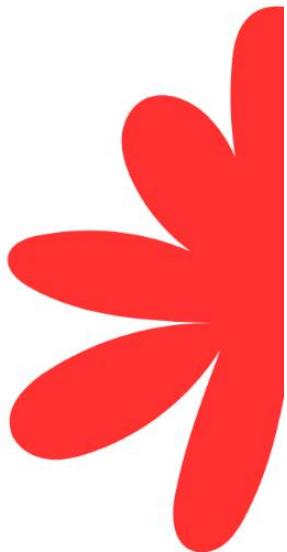
ST. MARTINS SCHOOL



JANUARY: START OUR READING JOURNEY!

HERE ARE SOME SIMPLE WAYS TO SUPPORT READING
AT HOME:

- Read together for a few minutes each day
- Chat about pictures, characters & favourite parts
- Let your child choose what they love



ST. MARTINS SCHOOL

Dates for your Diaries

Date	Event	Details
Tuesday 3 rd February from 3pm-6pm Wednesday 4 th February from 3pm-4pm	Parent Carer Evening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Stage 3 – Pastoral • Key Stage 4 – Pastoral and Subject Teachers • Key Stage 5 - Pastoral 	Letters have been sent home – please get in touch with school if you have not received a copy!

Term Dates 2025/2026

Spring Term 2026

INSET Day – Monday 5th January 2026
 School Starts Back – Tuesday 6th January
 School Breaks up for Half Term – Friday 13th February
 School Starts Back – Monday 23rd February
 School Breaks up for Easter – Friday 27th March

Summer Term 2026

School Starts Back – Monday 13th April
 INSET Day – Friday 1st May
 Bank Holiday – Monday 4th May
 School Breaks up for Half Term – Friday 22nd May
 School Starts Back – Monday 1st June
School Breaks up for Summer – Wednesday 22nd July
 INSET Day – Thursday 23rd July

St Martins follows Derby City Council's term dates. Dates for next year can be found on their website – please follow the link for these - <https://derby.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/term-holiday-dates/#>

Social Media Links

Facebook - [St. Martins School Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/stmartinsschool/) Instagram - [St. Martins School Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/st_martins_school/)

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