



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Learning and Living Through Faith

Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter

Edition 4



Edition 4-

Christmas Special!

As we approach the festive season, we know that Christmas can be a time of great joy – full of light, love, and togetherness – but it can also bring challenges for many families. At St Mary's, our focus continues to be on supporting the wellbeing of our whole school community – both children and parents – especially during this busy and emotional time of year. Christmas can be a wonderful opportunity to reconnect, reflect, and celebrate the blessings in our lives. However, it's also important to recognise that the season can feel overwhelming for some. Routines change, expectations rise, and emotions can run high. Taking time to care for your mental health, and that of your children, helps everyone enjoy the season in a calm and balanced way. In this edition, we share advice, activities, and gentle reminders to help you and your family nurture wellbeing and find peace this festive season.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you." John 14:27



Why some children struggle more at Christmas

Understanding these challenges helps us support children with empathy and calm, helping them feel safe and secure.

- Changes in routine:** The structure of school disappears, which can increase anxiety and tiredness.
- Family stress or conflict:** Financial pressures or tension at home can affect children's sense of security.
- Social comparison:** Seeing "perfect Christmases" on TV or social media can make children feel left out or different.
- Loneliness or loss :** Christmas can remind children of loved ones who are no longer here.
- Sensory overload:** Bright lights, noise, and busy environments can feel overwhelming, especially for neurodivergent children.
- Less access to help:** Teachers, pastoral staff, and counsellors may not be available during the break.

Looking After Yourself!

"You can't pour from an empty cup."

Parents' wellbeing matters at Christmas — caring for yourself helps keep your family happy and allows you to stay calm, strong, and present for your children.

- 1. Take moments of quiet**, even five minutes with a cup of tea, a walk, or a prayer can help.
- 2. Don't aim for perfection**, children remember laughter and love, not how tidy the house was.
- 3. Ask for help if you need it**, talk to a friend, family member, or professional support.
- Sleep, rest, and nourishment are essential, **not optional**.

If you ever feel your mental health is declining, please reach out. Seeking help early can make all the difference.

Supporting Children's Mental Health Over Christmas

Keeping a gentle routine
Maintain familiar mealtimes and bedtimes where possible.

Reducing pressure
Focus on togetherness over perfection.

Providing calm spaces
Give children somewhere quiet to reset.

Staying connected
Encourage friendships and open conversations.

Talking about feelings
Let children know it's okay to feel a mix of emotions.

Returning To School After Christmas
The transition back to school can bring mixed feelings, excitement, nervousness, or tiredness.

You can help by:
Reintroducing routines a few days early like regular bedtimes and school-day rhythms make mornings easier.

- Talking positively about school and what they're looking forward to.
- Acknowledging worries and offering reassurance that it's okay to take time to settle.
- Encouraging rest and balanced routines in the first week back.
- Staying in touch with teachers if your child finds the adjustment tricky..



Here are some websites to support you with topics surrounding children's mental health:

<https://www.selfa.org.uk/christmas-support-children-mental-health-festive-holidays/>

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/tips-and-support-for-the-holidays/>