

Our Well-Being Newsletter

Newsletter for pupils, parents & staff
Issue 58 – July 2026

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Welcome to our July Well-Being Newsletter!

It has been another great year for well-being at St Michael's. Research consistently shows that a student's emotional well-being is linked to higher learning outcomes, better concentration, and fewer behavioural challenges in the classroom. St Michael's has a whole school approach to mental health and well-being, which means that all parts of our school work together and are committed to support pupils' and staff's well-being. There is a strong partnership working between senior leaders, teachers and all school staff, as well as parents, carers and the wider community.

The 6-week summer break is around the corner for most of us. It will hopefully be an opportunity to rest, to enjoy activities we may not have had time to do during the school year and to increase our self-care. However, as always, if you are struggling emotionally, it is important to reach out to someone you trust, i.e. a family member, a friend, your GP or the numerous organisations which support people's mental health, at any time of the year (please refer to page 8 for a list of those organisations).

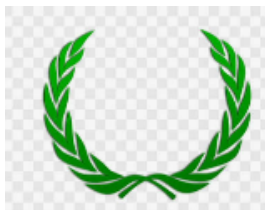
What's on this month:



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The LPESSN (London PE & School Sports Network) Annual Awards



The LPESSN (London PE & School Sports Network) Annual Awards are a premier end-of-year celebration in Southwark, recognizing outstanding student-athletes, coaches, and PE coordinators across primary and secondary schools.

We are celebrating, this year, the amazing achievements of:



Mary O.: Best female athlete



Best Girls' Sport Provider - St Michael's

Team of the year: U14 Girls' Basketball Team



In the words of Mr Laribi, St Michael's Sports Coordinator: "Sport is a vehicle to impact young people". Sport significantly impacts us by boosting physical health, mental well-being, and social connections. It lowers the risk of chronic diseases (like heart disease) and releases endorphins to reduce stress. Mentally, it builds confidence, while socially, it teaches teamwork, leadership, and a sense of belonging in one's community.



Parents' Page

Simple tips and advice for making the most of the school holidays with your children.

With the cost-of-living crisis, there may be some family rituals and routines that will not be possible this year. It is ok to talk to our children about this and to manage their expectations about treats, outings and gifts.

Talk to them about their favourite things about holidays. Sharing memories will help you get in touch with what makes time together as a family feel special. You might be surprised that your children may value the simple things, such as just spending time with you, and not only the big days out or expensive treats.

Be creative -

Being at home over the holidays could be an opportunity to find a new creative outlet. Being creative is a great way for children and adults to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas, as well as being fun! You could get creative through cooking, art, junk modelling, dance, or any activities that make you and your children feel good.

Get out and about -

Fresh air, natural light and exercise can have a positive effect on our mental health. Plan some family time outside – daily, if possible. This could be a walk, going out on bikes or a trip to a park. A simple change in scenery can help improve your mood and can also serve as a valuable break from screen time.

Resist the pressure to entertain your children 24/7 -

It can be very difficult to hear “I’m bored!” from your children time and again during the holidays. However, when they say this, don’t feel the need to immediately organise something to help keep them entertained. Whilst you can help your children think about what they might do to change the situation (such as arrange to see a friend), they need to learn to tolerate their full range of emotions, including feeling bored from time to time. Occasional boredom may even spark some creativity in your children!

Take time to reflect -

Holidays are a great time to reflect. It can be comforting to try and find positives, no matter how small, and celebrate them with your children. Why not have a go at making a display of photos or drawings of your family’s highlights from the past year or school term, and stick it on the fridge door?

Need extra support? -

If you or your children are struggling, it’s important to talk to someone – a friend, family member, staff member at your children’s school or your GP. You can also find details of organisations that offer support, such as:

- **Shout:** free 24/7 mental health support: Text 85258.
- **Kooth:** Free online emotional support for young people: ‘Kooth.com’.

More support helplines, for parents and young people, on page 8.





Free and fun activities for young people this summer term

Make the most of summer with free and low-cost activities, local days out and simple ideas to keep your children busy.

Some fun holiday programmes (In Southwark, Lambeth and Tower Hamlets):

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/public-health-and-safety/health-and-wellbeing/staying-healthy/healthy-eating-children-and-O>

<https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/lambeths-digital-family-hub/activities-children-young-people/holiday-activities-food-programme-haf>

[https://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/localoffer/Holiday%20Activities%20and%20Food%20Provision%20\(HAF\)](https://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/localoffer/Holiday%20Activities%20and%20Food%20Provision%20(HAF))

A free gym/swim membership:

Southwark residents can use swimming and gym facilities for free in all of the council leisure centres:

www.southwark.gov.uk/leisure-and-sport/free-swim-and-gym

Eat for less:

Many restaurants offer free or discounted meals for children during the school holidays:

<https://moneytothemasses.com/quick-savings/tips/how-to-save-money-on-eating-out-with-children-this-school-holiday>

Easy crafts for rainy days:

www.hobbycraft.co.uk/ideas/easy-crafts-for-kids-to-do-at-home.html

And also.....

- **London Museums (most of them are free):**
 - The British Museum;
 - The Museum of London;
 - The London Dockland Museum;
 - The Natural History Museum;
 - The Science Museum;
 - The National Maritime Museum;
 - The V&A Museum of Childhood.
- **Southwark and Tower Hamlets libraries** are opened throughout the summer break.
- **London parks:** every London park offers a place of tranquility and beauty.
- **City Farms, such as Surrey Dock's Farm, Mudchute Farm or Vauxhall City Farm, all free of charge.**



Reading Well Booklist

Where to find these books:

Visit your local library website to borrow any books.

<https://www.stmichaelscollege.org.uk/?s=reading>

Birdlands, by Anthony McGowan

McGowan has written several short, accessible but meaty novels designed to capture the hearts and minds of young adult readers. This one is no exception! The story of three birds, struggling for survival, *Birdlands*, is a highly readable page-turner but it also raises important themes about the natural world, the individual and community, and why unselfishness and supportiveness to others really matter. A Barrington Stoke dyslexia-friendly quick read.

Runaways, by E.L. Norry

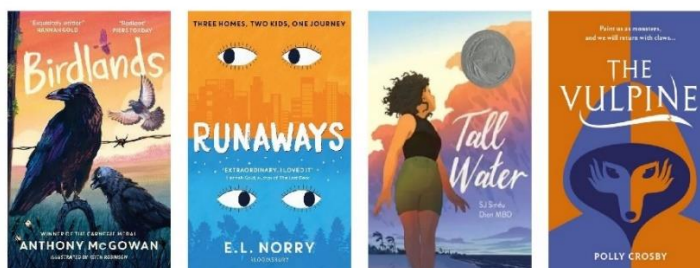
Two narrators, a boy and a girl, with very different reasons for running away and no intention of teaming up. Some parts are tense, other parts are sad, but the two characters gradually start to understand each other and everything works out in the end.

Graphic novel: Tall Water, by SJ Sindu, illustrated by Dion Mbd.

A teenager visits her mother in Sri Lanka. Tough themes – war, a tsunami, a strained relationship with her mother – beautifully depicted. LGBTQIA+ representation.

The Vulpine, by Polly Crosby

Inventive dystopia with some great twists which raises questions about disability in a KS3 friendly way.



The Voyage of Sam Singh, by Gita Ralleigh

Magic realist race-against-time to save Moon, Sam's older brother, who has been missing for years and may, or may not, be a prisoner in notorious Octopus jail.

The Last Pebble, by Alex Horne

A very sweet little book from the TaskMaster creator about an awkward boy discovering his grandfather's history.

The Nine Moons of Han Yu and Lull, by Karina Yan Glazer

Historical, magic realist novel good for Y7. Dual stories, one taking place in 1931 New York's China Town and the other in 731 in China. It is beautifully written and has won various awards in the U.S.

Graphic novel: Starfire, by Kami Garcia and Gabriel Piccolo

Part of the Teen Titans series. Kori has Ehlers Danlos Syndrome. When her uncle, CEO of a big pharmaceutical company, asks her to sign up for a clinical trial for a treatment, Kori discovers that the pull she always felt towards space has an origin she couldn't have guessed.



Hot weather tips for summer days

Here are some simple ways to enjoy the sunshine and stay cool:



Drink more water:

keep water close by and sip throughout the day. If you are feeling thirsty, you may already be dehydrated.



Keep your home cool:

close curtains or blinds when sun is strongest to keep rooms cooler. Open windows early in the morning or later in the evening



Stay out of the heat:

try to stay in the shade or indoors during the hottest part of the day, from 11am to 3pm.



Look out for each other:

if you are worried about a neighbour, a quick check-in, knock on the door or message can really help.



Make a plan:

plan your day around the hottest hours. Buses, trains and even cars (without air con) can heat up quickly, so it helps to think ahead.



Visit a cool space:

on hot days, there are indoor spaces across London where you can cool down, rest and get out of the sun.

Visit: apps.london.gov.uk/coolspaces

Feeling unwell in the heat?



Look out for signs of heat exhaustion like headaches, sweating, a rapid weak pulse, feeling very thirsty or feeling sick. If this happens, move somewhere cool, drink water and place a damp cloth on your neck or forehead.

If you are worried, call your doctor or NHS 111 for advice.

When to get urgent help:

If someone seems very unwell, has a high temperature, a rapid strong pulse, a severe headache, severe nausea or stops sweating, call 999 straight away. This could be heatstroke, which needs urgent medical help.

Find more information on:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/seasonal-health/heatwave-how-to-cope-in-hot-weather/>

† Chaplain's Prayer †

At the end of this year we ask the Lord to guide us and remind us to...

Take time to claim your strength; they are gifts of God.

Take time to have fun; it's God's way of teaching you your strengths.

Take time to grow yourself; only you can grow you.

Take time to trust yourself; God trusts you.

Take time to be self-reliant; it is better than being dependent.

Take time to share with others; they will bless you, and you will bless them.

Take time to have hope, you are a child of God.

Let's put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, and pray that God will bless us and our families during the wonderful months of summer.

May we all help make our home a place of relaxation, joy, love, peace and safety.

May we be generous and considerate, not thinking only about ourselves, but helping others enjoy the blessings of summertime.

Lord God, Creator of all things, guide our steps and strengthen our hearts, during these months of summer and holidays.

Grant us refreshment of mind and body.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen





Help and Guidance

**Services available
all year round:**



Shout 85258 is the UK's free, confidential, 24/7 text support



Free online support for young people



Free emotional support for young people



Mental health support for children and their families



Free advice and support



Free online counselling support For over 25s



www.rainbowgb.org
Bereavement Support for children



Support helpline: 0808 808 1677



The Mental Health charity offering direct advice for everyone, as well as running local support services
www.mind.org.uk



Helpline: 0345 3 30 30 30



Advocacy and casework support for LGBTQ people
<https://www.galop.org.uk/support-services>





*Wishing you all a peaceful and
restful summer break*

