

St Wilfrid's Catholic School

Autumn Term 2020 Newsletter



Welcome!

Dear Parents/Carers

It only feels like yesterday that we began in September but so much has happened since then.

There was a lot of anxiety at the beginning of term, largely centred around returning to the full opening of school which for many students, parents, carers and staff alike seemed daunting after so much disruption since March.

To be honest, there were some sleepless nights as we approached our first day back but I needn't have worried as the attitude from students, as well as the support from yourselves, has meant that not only did we start back well but that things have just got better as we have worked our way to now. Yes, we have been impacted by the virus and yes there are limitations on what we can do but I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you on behalf of all the staff for your ongoing support.

Your sons and daughters have really risen to the challenge, they have shown high standards of maturity and have taken responsibility.

This has always been a great place to be but this has been exemplified throughout the term as everyone has sought to do their very best despite often trying circumstances. I hope this newsletter gives you a flavour of what life has been like at St Wilfrid's this term.

As we look towards the start of next term, we will be welcoming Mr Ashleigh-Morris who joins us in January as Director of VI Form with Mr Gardner reverting to his previous role of Assistant Director of VI Form.

I sincerely hope that you and your families are able to celebrate a happy and holy Christmas whilst being able to stay safe and well.

I wish you every success for the coming year and look forward to the new term in January.

Yours sincerely



Mr Michael Ferry
Headteacher



Message from our Head Students

On behalf of the student leadership team here at St Wilfrid's, we wish you a safe and a joyous five days of festivities and a happy new year.

The start to this year has been one of many struggles and we hope that all the new members of staff and students who have become a part of the school community still feel they have joined a family at St Wilfrid's, even with all the new measures in place to protect us. With all the uncertainty regarding the Year 11 and 13's upcoming exams in the Spring/Summer terms we have tried our best to remain positive and are advocating for the most successful outcome. As a community we are so proud to say we have overcome many struggles COVID-19 has presented us with, one of them being open mass that occurs every Friday for all our students and staff. We now continue to run these masses in our school bubble system to ensure the heart and soul of St Wilfrid's is still present throughout our academic lives.

Although it has been initially difficult to hold the usual charity fundraising events, we have been fortunate enough to be able to provide donations for Crawley Open House and as a whole school we are taking part in Sleep Out At Home with donations for Crawley Open house, more details follow on the Fundraising Page. We hope our fundraising efforts can return in the new year, as holding charitable events has always been a part of our community at St Wilfrid's.

We remember those who have lost loved ones this last year, we hope everyone continues to be cautious in the near future. St Wilfrid's is pleased to have stayed open and provide normality in a very abnormal year. Finally, from all us Head Students we wish you a merry Christmas and a very happy new year!

Hattie Burrows	Zuzanna Chojacka	Harriet Cosh	Thomas Draddy	Genevieve Delve	Grace Graham	Madelaine Hartney	Sophie Laver	Tia Porter	Niall O'Mara	Holly Scott	Keira Sharp
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A Message from Bishop Richard

Dear Parents,

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support for our schools.

These last months, encompassing much of the spring, summer and autumn terms, have been a particular challenge for all our school communities and I am sure you would wish to join me in a fulsome expression of thanks for all that has been done by our Headteachers and all of our school staffs to ensure the best possible learning environment during difficult times.



Our schools are a vital part of the life and mission of the Diocese and offer high standards of education to all our young people, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding and preparing them to take up their responsibilities as members of society who bring the values of the Gospel to all they do.

I know you will continue in your support of our schools in the coming months and, we pray, a time when we are free of the constraints imposed by the present pandemic.

With every Blessing for the Feast of Christmas,

+Richard

Drama News

A theatrical experience all from the comfort of our studio!

Drama students in Years 11,12 and 13 enjoyed a live screened performance in September of *Romantics Anonymous*, directed by Emma Rice, which was performed live at the Bristol Old Vic and streamed around the country. As we all know, theatres have been closed since March, which has devastated the industry up and down the country, but a number of theatres have come up with ingenious ways of sharing their work to try and generate revenue.

As Zoom calls and Microsoft Teams meetings have become part of our everyday method of communicating with people we cannot see face to face, this way of watching live theatre was – and will be for some time to come – the closest we can achieve to watching professional actors performing in real time, which only added to the excitement!

The evening was not without the inevitable technical hiccoughs; the theatre company kept everyone waiting for a nerve-racking 30 minutes while it sorted out a technical glitch, but once things were restored, drama students and staff were treated to an evening of music, singing, fine acting and chocolate!



Congratulations to all of the students who were invited and keep up the hard work ethic.

Physics Students Research Project Published

Last year, our Year 12 Physics class were involved in an extra curricular project with UCL and Mullard Space Laboratory. This was part of the ORBYTS project, an education programme in which Secondary school students work on original research projects under the tuition of PhD students.

ORBYTS has 25 partner schools and it provides a fantastic opportunity for students to engage directly with cutting edge research, to challenge their misconceptions about who can do Science and what science is. We were partnered with Ryan French, a PhD at UCL's Mullard Space Laboratory.

The students in the published article continued their research with Ryan after the Covid lockdown in the summer. Students analysed data of previously unstudied observations of a solar active region from the Hinode Satellite. They used python code to pick a spectral line, producing a fit template and fitting Gaussian curves to each pixel. From here, they graphically produced maps of intensity, Doppler velocity and non-thermal velocity. This project deepened the students understanding of solar physics as part of their A Level curriculum and has further encouraged some of the students to apply for Physics and Astrophysics degree courses.

You can read the article by clicking [here](#)



Chaplaincy



Sacramental life of the School:

Welcome Masses: The very first thing we do with Year 7 when they start at St Wilfrid's is gather together in prayer. For us this tradition is hugely symbolic of the fact that God is always with us on our journey and is the foundation of our school and very being. It must have been strange for the Year 7s to suddenly find themselves in the hall with 180 other students after so long apart from others. One Year 7 remarked "This is the most normal I have felt in the last six months". As I stood in front of our Year 7s and had the privilege of facilitating this time of prayer I thought of those words and thanked God that our school was beginning to fill up with young people and feel normal again.

Year 7 Retreats: Each tutor group in Year 7 had a whole day off timetable this term for a "Community Day". The day was rooted in theme of the scriptural passage of 1 Corinthians 12-31, "one body with many parts". The aim of the day was to have fun, cement friendships and develop personal faith. The retreats were a great success and feedback from the students was very encouraging. For me it was a real highlight of my term to be able to spend more time with them in a relaxed environment and get to know our enthusiastic Year 7s better. There have been some really funny moments on this day and I nearly spoilt the ambiance of the meditation with giggles myself the first time I noticed a student using a face mask as an eye mask. I've got used to this very "2020" sight now!



It is fair to say that these retreat days have had a different feel this year. Our current Year 7s come to us after a very different Year 6 and they are some how more reflective, more determined to work as a team and more grateful for the opportunities that they have. I've been deeply moved by their approach and have high hopes for this cohort of children as they move through the school.

The Community days have been very well supported by the Priests of The Friary. Where possible they have celebrated Mass with us as part of the day. During the second lockdown when we could no longer celebrate public Mass we set time aside for the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Adoration. Feedback from the Year 7s always highlights Mass and Adoration as some of the best parts of the day and it is clear from their comments that like the rest of us, these young people have really missed regular Masses and have a real desire for more Eucharistic spirituality in their lives.

Prayer Life

Our prayerrequest@stwilfrids.com email continues to remain popular and staff meet every Monday and Friday to pray for your intentions.

October, Our Lady of the Rosary

Each Friday through the month the prayer group offered a decade of the Rosary for your intentions. Many students joined in their Tutor groups, making Rosaries from pipe cleaners, string and beads.



November, the Month of Remembrance

Throughout the month the school community have been able contribute names of people that they would like to remember at this time. All of these names were written down and displayed on our Remembrance table in the Chapel. Staff and students who are members of uniformed organisations were invited to wear their uniforms on 11th November and a memorial service was held at break time. I'm sure many of you have noticed the wreaths they laid at the feet of our silhouetted soldiers. A short film capturing this mark of respect can be viewed on our school YouTube channel <https://youtu.be/MLBdO8wHYx8>



December Advent Adoration

As we were not permitted under the new lockdown rules to have the celebration of the Mass as part of the Year 7 Community Days we instead used the time in Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and prayed that this form of Eucharistic Worship would deepen and strengthen our relationship with the Lord. After experiencing the power of this form of prayer staff decided to make time for Adoration during December and there are plans afoot to facilitate times of Adorations with all Year groups this year



Spiritual and Pastoral Support

In September we offered a community crisis response programme called "Silver Linings" in order to support all our young people in the wake of the pandemic. Your child's tutor facilitated this in the PSHE slot up until October half term. This time also served as a "triage" and tutors were able to refer individual students to me and the pastoral team for further support. The Silver Linings Programme was created to provide support for children by Rainbows Bereavement Support GB, a national charity that has a proven, positive impact on the lives of young people grieving a significant and often devastating loss in their lives. We have run the Rainbows programme for some years at St Wilfrid's as part of our support to young people experiencing loss. As such, we are very familiar with both the resources and the successes of this programme. We encourage you to ask your child about their experiences while participating in the Silver Linings

Diocesan News & Events

Lourdes Pilgrimage

The Diocese of Arundel & Brighton's new website contains lots of information and videos about the annual Lourdes pilgrimage and is well worth a visit. Applications are available in the New Year and the Pilgrimage office is hopeful that by the summer of 2021 the Pilgrimage will be able to go ahead. If you are interested please come and have a chat with me and I will put your name down on the "interested" list.

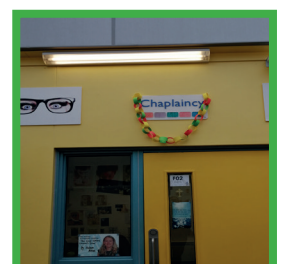
New Website

If you haven't done so already please do take a look at the new Diocesan website <https://abdiocese.org.uk/>. There are lots of resources on this site to support you in your prayer life which you may find especially useful at this time when physically getting to Mass and other liturgical events remains difficult. If you also have Primary age children you may enjoy the Advent Journey.

Christmas Liturgy

As I write filming for the liturgy is well underway. Here at St Wilfrid's we bring the story and message of Christmas to life through, music, drama, dance and technology. Huge student participation really makes these liturgies something to remember and their fresh and modern interpretations of the message of Christmas helps the whole of our community to understand the message of Christ's Birth in new ways. This year's liturgy premiered on our YouTube channel at 9am on Thursday 17th December and can be viewed [here](#) and the theme is "Christ-mess"! Well, what else could it be after the year we've had? To say you don't need me to tell you that things are different this year. To say 2020 has been a bit of a mess is an understatement and no doubt for some of us this Christmas there'll be mess with bells on. I hope this liturgy helps you to remember, reflect and pray on what Christmas is all about because even in the mess that's come out of 2020, we have a mess-age of hope. Because some 2000 years ago a baby was born in the mess – yes the first Christmas was also a really messy one! Jesus was born in the mess for our mess. God came down to the front line, to put in a perfect shift that would make us whole. He came to offer us a vaccine that if we want it, means that we will never be socially distanced from God. This is at the very heart of our liturgy. I hope it helps.

And the mess doesn't stop here, students will have the chance to respond to the liturgy by creating prayer paper chains. They'll cut up strips of festive coloured paper, and write prayers and hopes on them, then stick them together to form a chain. These chains will go up outside tutor bases. The aim is to get the chains to join up where they can so that we can join all our prayers and hopes for the coming year together and literally surround our school community with them. Here's one I made earlier...



St Wilfrid's Spotlight Fundraising



Every year St Wilfrid's chooses a different cause for our fundraising focus. This year we have decided to fundraise for our five house charities Crawley Open House, Friends of Embark, St Catherine's Hospice, The Mark Lay Foundation and Chestnut Tree House.

Augustine: Crawley Open House

Crawley Open House provides support and services for those suffering the effects of homelessness, unemployment, loneliness, discrimination, or other forms of social exclusion. Our support is available to anyone in need.



Benedict: Friends of Embark

Friends of Embark was born out of the need to provide quality, stable homes and work experience for Adults with learning difficulties, who wish to live more independent lives. Friends of Embark enable such adults to experience life to their best ability, not only by enabling them to live more independently in secure and stable homes but also by supporting projects and providing work experience. This support and development gives individuals a sense of purpose and achievement and provides them with opportunities to integrate with the local and wider community.



Catherine: St Catherine's Hospice

St Catherine's Hospice is there for people in Sussex and East Surrey, with expert hospice care, when and where they are needed the most. Their skilled teams are on hand to support people living with terminal illness in their homes, at our Day Hospice and on our wards. This care is only possible thanks to the generosity of the local community who donate and volunteer.



Dominic: The Mark Lay Foundation

The Mark Lay Foundation supports families who are affected by cancer by providing a financial grant to those who cannot afford to take a holiday or a short break. Their grant schemes provide eligible families financial support if they cannot afford to take a break from the gruelling day to day life of cancer and have not had the chance to create lasting memories together. They aim to give this opportunity to other families who find themselves in this life shattering position by providing a grant that will go towards a holiday or short break.



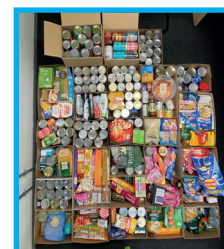
Francis: Chestnut Tree House

Chestnut Tree House is a children's charity providing hospice care services and community support for children and young people with progressive or life-shortening conditions. Their goal is to provide the best quality of life for children, young people and their families, and to offer a total package of practical, social and spiritual support throughout each child's life.



Unfortunately due to COVID-19 we have been unable to run our normal fundraising events such as Fundraising Fridays, Christmas Market & our Christmas Raffle.

A huge thank you for all the donations for Crawley Open House earlier this term. These donations really make a difference and your generosity was overwhelming.



Sleep Out at Home

As you will be aware, as part of raising awareness of homelessness in Crawley, we hold an annual Sleep Out for our Sixth Form students who sleep out for the night within the school grounds on the night before the last day of term.

So as an alternative St Wilfrid's is doing a Whole School Sleep out at Home where staff and students can spend the night anywhere at home except from the comfort of their own bed. This could be in the garden if it is safe or they can choose the kitchen floor, garage or anywhere that would work best for them. This is open to all families so please feel free to take part.



The School Sleep out at Home will take place on Thursday 17th December ideally from 1900 to 0700hrs. There should be no luxuries allowed apart from a sleeping bag and cardboard so that they experience first-hand what it is like to sleep "rough". Students can upload photos onto social media with the hashtag #stwilfridsschoolsleepoutathome2020. We know that sleeping out for one night is only a tiny glimpse of the discomfort, vulnerability, cold and sleep deprivation affecting those we try and look after day in and day out. We believe that anything which raises the profile of homelessness, and raises understanding and funds for those blighted by it is a good thing.

Crawley Open House is a local independent charity (Charity No. 1048919) who have served the homeless and disadvantaged of the area for over 25 years. For obvious reasons their donated income is down at the moment, and in order to keep providing accommodation, care and services we need to raise money in different ways. We hope that this sleep out will raise a great amount of vital funding towards their core costs at this difficult time for all charities.

We have set up a Just Giving page, St Wilfrid's Sleep Out at Home, and whilst we are not asking for students to pay to take part in the Sleep Out at Home, please feel free to make a donation via the page to support this charity. Please follow the link to donate: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/st-wilfrids-catholic-school>

Christmas Jumper Day

On Thursday 17th December, all staff and students dressed in Christmas Jumpers along with non-school uniform in support of our five house charities, Crawley Open House, Friends of Embark, St Catherine's Hospice, The Mark Lay Foundation and Chestnut House. All staff and students were asked to pay £2 to take part and so far have raised £1,634.

A huge thank you to everybody for their generosity in these difficult times.



Holocaust Beacon School

In July we announced that we had been accepted onto the Holocaust Beacon School programme that is run by the University College London Centre for Holocaust Education. Since then many colleagues have been very busy attending virtual staff training on teaching the Holocaust, including Senior Leadership Team link Mr Chris Franke, and Lead Teacher Mr Karl Hector. This has included a training course run jointly with Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Israel. Mrs Ciara Baldwin and Mr Nick Duke have undertaken training that has won us two sets of new textbooks on the Holocaust, which we will use when we teacher our brand new Holocaust module in the Summer term of Year 9.



Currently subject departments across the school are planning activities and competitions that will enable us to mark Holocaust Memorial Day on January 27th. The theme this year is 'Light up the Darkness'. The Holocaust Memorial day Trust has planned and resourced many Covid safe activities that parents can do with their children at home, such as 'Cook Together': [Holocaust Memorial Day Trust | HMD Together](#).

STEM Update

At the start of term the Science department were pleased to award Mia Philip with a prize for winning the summer STEM competition, agent E.G.G. Since then, fun and creative STEM experiment ideas have been emailed home every week for students to complete and keep them going until we can start up STEM club after school again. Next term we will again be promoting the Big Bang competition and encouraging students or groups of students to enter. Last spring we had our best results ever at the competition and we hope to replicate that next year. Entry will be online and projects can be entered between January and March 2021.



Mia Philip

Crawley Community Award

The Crawley Community Awards are organised by Crawley Borough Council in association with The Hawth and The Crawley Observer and supported by Headline Sponsor London Gatwick Airport. The awards recognise and reward people who live, work, volunteer or study in the Crawley District who give up their time, talents and skills to help and support others in their community and those who have trained, worked and put all their efforts into making real achievements.



Huge congratulations to Year 13 student, Katie Schollar, who won a Crawley Community Award as a Young Volunteer. She volunteers at the scouts, as a young leader and a mentor leading explorer groups, she has done this for 12 years.

Please click on the following link to view information about why each winner was recognised https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7HxDX-2zyVaN7Y_bbyv-IN69Cn8sCLHW

Wellbeing Garden

We have been lucky enough to share the School Garden with the One World Group, which started last year and means that we have access to 15 raised beds and a polytunnel!

The Wellbeing Garden came into being last September and is for students who may need some 'headspace' during their day, time out of the boundaries of a lesson, some downtime, a chance to chat with a member of staff in an informal setting or to simply learn something in a different way. We are hoping that our garden will be a beneficial tool for the students' mental health and general wellbeing from planning and digging to harvesting and working co-operatively.

We plan to grow food and then cook it together and eat together, hopefully celebrating our successes! In the drier months we plan to run some meditation and mindfulness sessions for both students and staff. So far we have enjoyed involvement from Year 8 & 9 students and we are looking forward to welcoming a lovely group of Year 7 students in the new year.

So far, we have had varying degrees of success in our polytunnel and garden, from late autumn peas and lettuce to strawberries and calendulas.

Over this term our Wellbeing students have been working hard on our Wellbeing Garden

A little peek inside our polytunnel tent shows the peas and the courgettes still doing very well despite the drop in temperatures. We have been really lucky with just how much light gets into the tent, especially at this time of year.

Our Year 8 Wellbeing students were asked to make the Christmas wreath for our Chapel and we think that you would agree that they made an absolutely marvellous job of it. In fact, it was so impressive that they were asked to make the wreath for our annual School Liturgy too. All the greenery was foraged from the school site. All the candles were foraged from the Chaplain's cupboard!

This week saw the Wellbeing Garden students perfecting their decoupage skills, making Christmas flower pots as gifts. They planted up succulents and, more traditionally, some hyacinths. They used a lot of patience and even more glue! We think that they earned their hot chocolate after that (and the chocolate Hobnobs). We would be incredibly grateful for donations of any big plant pots, spare seeds or bulbs, metal rakes, leftover bark chippings, unwanted saplings that might have taken seed in your gardens, left over shingle and any wellies that your children may have grown out of (size 3 upwards). Please contact Mrs Keynes at l.keynes@stwilfrids.com.



Safeguarding Update

After what has been an incredible difficult year for many families, we want to share some websites which offer advice and support for parents and carers:

Online safety advice:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Help with talking about difficult topics:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/talking-about-difficult-topics/>

Supporting your child's mental health:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/childrens-mental-health/depression-anxiety-mental-health/>

West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Parent & Carer Pages:

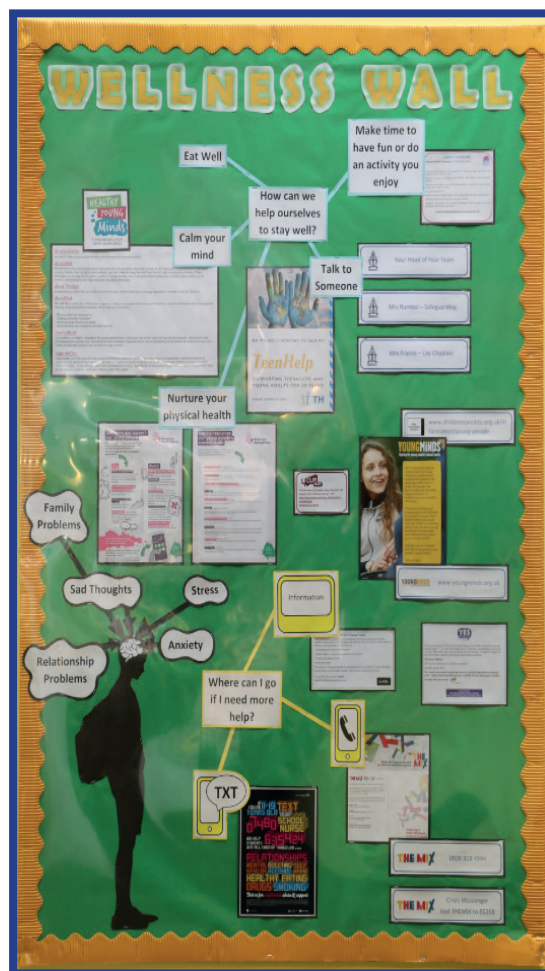
<https://www.westsussexscp.org.uk/parents-carers>

We have recently created a 'wellness wall' in school which signposts our students to where they can seek help and support.

We recently asked students to complete a survey about safeguarding in our school. The majority of students said they feel safe in school and know who to speak to if they have any worries.

We welcome feedback from parents and carers so please feel free to contact us at any time if you have any ideas or suggestions, or would like to discuss any concerns. Our Safeguarding Officer is Mrs Rumbol c.rumbol@stwilfrids.com.

With Christmas fast approaching, we are aware that many of our students will be gifted new gadgets. National Online Safety provide a variety of 'What Parents Need to Know' guides which you may find useful <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides>.



COVID-19: Track & Trace During Christmas Break

The DfE has asked all schools and colleges to make sure that students and parents/carers are aware of the following information regarding positive cases in the holidays:

- Where a student tests positive for Covid-19 having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents/Carers should instead follow contact tracing instruction provided by NHS Test & Trace.
- If a student develops symptoms of Covid-19 within 48 hours of being in school ie. Friday 17th or Saturday 19th (up to 15:30) and subsequently tests positive, please use the COVID Infection Form on the school website to report the details which can be found [here](#).
- Where reports of positive cases are reported within the 6 days since the final day, parents/carers of any student identified as close contacts will be informed and any named student will be required to self-isolate for 14 days from the date of the first contact. This applies similarly to staff.

Important Information

Reporting a Covid-19 Absence

Please be aware that we have introduced a new way to report any COVID-19 related absences, which differs from the way you would report any other absence. On our school website under [Parents > COVID infection form](#) you can complete your child's details and any information relating to their absence. You must ensure you include the correct dates so we know when they are due to return to school, as well as any other relevant information. Please contact the school reception if you have any questions.

Contact Details

Please could you make sure you update the Student Services Office with any change of address, new telephone numbers or email addresses as soon as possible to ensure we always have a method of contacting you.

Attendance

At St Wilfrid's, attendance really does matter! Our students value their school and enjoy coming here. The results of this can be seen in our ever increasing improvement in attendance. Please could you make sure that you contact school on the first day of your son or daughter's absence or if they are going to be late due to a medical appointment by calling 01293 421421 and then press 1 for students in Year 7-11 or 2 for 6th form, leaving the name of your child, tutor group and reason for absence before 9.00am where possible. You can also email absence@stwilfrids.com. **Please do not email individual staff members regarding your child's absence.**

School Policies

Our School Policies are available to download from the school website at <https://www.stwilfrids.com/page/?title=Policies&pid=32> or by request from the Clerk to Governors, Mrs James-Bailey at: clerk@stwilfrids.com

Cashless System

St Wilfrid's is a 'cashless' school. This means all payments for educational visits, school lunches, revision aids, etc will be made electronically via ParentPay which by now you are familiar with. Please contact Debra Riches via d.riches@stwilfrids.com if you have any questions regarding this or require a reminder of your ParentPay login details. If you aren't able to pay online, St Wilfrid's now accept PayPoint payments. By making PayPoint payments you can still pay in cash but there is no need for your child to carry money into school, creating a completely cashless school. You can make PayPoint payments for school by visiting any store displaying the yellow and purple PayPoint sign. To find out where you can pay click on the store locator and enter your full post code to receive a list of your nearest stores.

Important Dates.....

4 January 2021	Spring Term starts
15 January 2021	Y9 Virtual Parent Evening
25 January 2021	Y9 Options Week
4 February 2021	Y13 Virtual Parent Evening
15-19 Feb 2021	Half Term
4 March 2021	Y11 Virtual Parents Evening
11 March 2021	Y7 Virtual Parents Evening
1 April 2021	Spring Term Ends

Twitter/Facebook/Instagram

Please follow us at @StWilfridSchool <https://twitter.com/stwilfridschool> to get tweets about what is going on in school throughout the day as well as information about school trips, after school clubs and general school information. We have over 1300 followers to date which includes staff, students, parents and members of our local community!



We are also on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/StWilfridsCrawley/>



We are also on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/stwilfridschool>

