



ST MARY STAR OF THE SEA

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Friday 26th June 2026 - NEWSLETTER

THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

O give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been another busy, if rather hot week. I am delighted to congratulate our Year 5 and Year 6 rounders teams, who achieved outstanding results. Year 6 won 1st place and Year 5 came 2nd place at the Deanery Rounders Tournament last week. We are incredibly proud of their teamwork, determination and sportsmanship. A full write-up will be included in our termly achievement newsletter.

Thank you also to all parents and carers for your generous cake donations and support for last Friday's bake sale. We are thrilled to share that we raised £185.97, which will go towards future school projects and enrichment opportunities for our children.

It was unfortunate that we needed to postpone Sports Day this week due to the extreme heat. We appreciate how disappointing this was for everyone. We are hopeful that our reserve date of 7th July will bring more manageable weather conditions so we can enjoy the event together.

Well done to Year 1 for their fantastic assembly this week. We hope the parents enjoyed it as much as we did.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to both parents and staff for your support during this recent heatwave. Your efforts in helping to keep the children safe, cool and well-hydrated have been greatly appreciated.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Mrs O'Rourke



Fear Not



Gospel Worship

How does it feel to know that God loves and cares for you?

God knows everything about us, because He made us each one of us! Jesus tells His disciples about this fact. He reminds them that God takes care of all of His creation. We, His people, are even more precious and valuable in His eyes.

The disciples had a lot to fear, people were not kind to them because they believed in God. But Jesus' words tell us the truth, God's love is always with us, even when we face troubles or difficulties.

Because of God's love and care, we do not have to fear. We can place our trust in God who is good to us.

My God, I believe in you,

I trust in you,

I love you above all things,

with all my heart and mind and strength.

Week beginning 15th June 2026

Attendance target for 2025-2026 is 96%

Year Group	Attendance	Punctuality
Reception	95.65%	99.57%
Year 1	97.12%	99.64%
Year 2	97.96%	100%
Year 3	97.78%	99.63%
Year 4	98%	99.67%
Year 5	96.67%	99.67%
Year 6	94.84%	99.68%
Whole School Average	96.87%	

Well done to **Year 4** for the highest attendance this week.

Excellent effort from **Year 2** for outstanding punctuality.

Week beginning 22nd June 2026

Attendance target for 2025-2026 is 96%

Year Group	Attendance	Punctuality
Reception	88.7%	100%
Year 1	97.85%	99.64%
Year 2	97.28%	99.32%
Year 3	96.67%	99.63%
Year 4	95.33%	100%
Year 5	95.67%	99.33%
Year 6	95.13%	100%
Whole School Average	95.41%	

Well done to **Year** for the highest attendance this week.

Excellent effort from **Year** for outstanding punctuality.

Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs O'Rourke

Deputy Designated Safeguarding : Mr Beaney & Miss Basson

St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School
Magdalen Road, St Leonards on Sea, TN37 6EU

Tel: 01424 427801

www.st-mary-star.e-sussex.sch.uk

Learning from across the school

In **Reception** Class, we have been learning that everyone is a friend of Jesus. We have looked at early religious art work from Ethiopia and have made our own replicas of these special moments in Jesus' life. We have continued our learning about Africa and we have been comparing African animals with animals from UK. We have made some screen prints of African animal patterns. In Maths we have been recapping language linked to prepositions, mass and capacity.



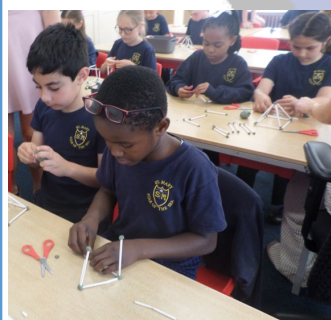
Year 1 have had a wonderful few weeks, highlighted by our exciting trip to Knockhatch Adventure Park. The children thoroughly enjoyed exploring the farm area, where they saw a range of animals and learned about how they are cared for. A particular highlight was the owl sanctuary display, where the children were fascinated to see the owls up close and learn interesting facts about them. They also loved visiting the small animal area, where they were able to observe and talk about different animals and their habitats. The Quadapillar ride was another favourite, bringing lots of smiles and laughter as the children travelled around together. It was a fantastic day and a lovely opportunity to bring our learning to life. In PE, we have been continuing to practise our athletics skills in preparation for Sports Day, focusing on running, jumping and throwing. In Maths, we have been learning about money, including coins and notes, and are beginning to understand their value. In Geography, we have been learning about the seven continents and five oceans of the world, as well as identifying human and physical features. In RE, we have been learning about the Church as a worldwide community and exploring how we can support others across the world. The children have been reflecting on ways we can show kindness, care and generosity to those in need.



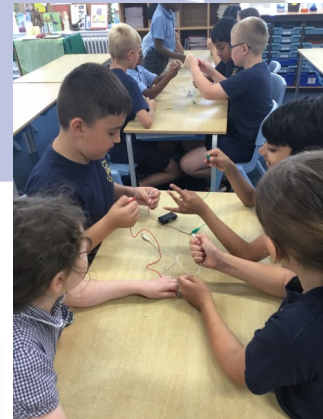
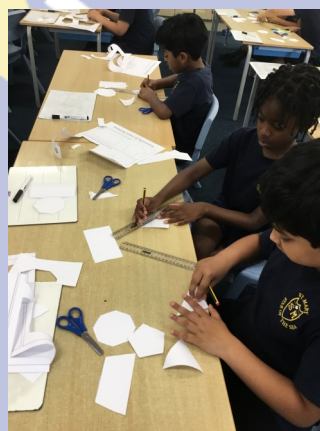
Last week, **Year 2** thoroughly enjoyed their trip to Smugglers Cave. The class walked all the way there and explored the dark caves using torches, learning all about how people smuggled goods many years ago. On the return journey, there was a walk along the seafront, linking the experience to RE learning on stewardship and encouraging reflection on how to care for God's world and contribute positively to the community. Along the way, a flat pebble was chosen and later brought back to school to decorate with a kind message or picture. These pebbles will either be given to a family member to make them smile or returned to the beach to brighten someone else's day. As part of RE, thoughtful posters were also created to show how to serve others within the community, linking this to Catholic Social Teaching, particularly the principles of stewardship and the common good, and the importance of showing kindness and care to others. In project learning, features of a seaside holiday have been identified, exploring what might be seen, smelt, heard, touched and tasted. In Science, there has been great enjoyment in learning about food chains, exploring what a food chain is and how energy is transferred between living things, before creating original food chains including a variety of animals.



Year 3 have had another exciting and busy couple of weeks! As part of our Encounter learning in RE, we have been exploring different world faiths, focusing on Judaism last week and Islam this week. The children have enjoyed discovering both the similarities and differences between these faiths, helping them to grow in understanding, respect and tolerance for others' beliefs. In Maths, we have completed our topic on shape having made 3D shapes in various forms and have now started our new Statistics unit, where pupils are learning to read and interpret tables and charts with increasing confidence. Our Geography lessons have seen us developing our map skills, using the eight-point compass and grid references. In English, we have been delving into our class texts, exploring how authors use language to create powerful effects. We were also lucky to welcome an Earth science expert, who inspired us with fascinating learning about rocks, volcanoes and earthquakes! This even linked to our DT work, where the children created their own volcano pencil pots. To round off our learning, we have been investigating how Hastings has changed over time, both historically and geographically.



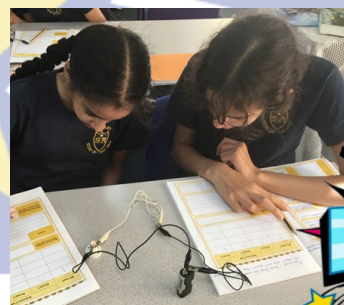
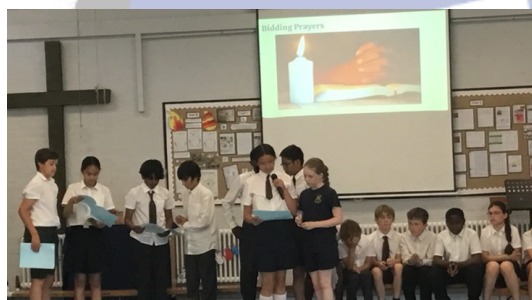
Over the past couple of weeks, **Year 4** have been exploring the incredible journey of Ernest Shackleton and his ship, Endurance. The children have been fascinated by the challenges faced when the ship became trapped and eventually sank, and they have been inspired by Shackleton's determination and leadership as he worked tirelessly to rescue his crew, leading to an astonishing journey across the Drake Passage. In Maths, we have been learning about angles as turns. We have been identifying and describing different types of angles, including acute and obtuse angles, as well as comparing and ordering angles. We have continued with our fluency practice in Maths, playing games to outwit partners and we have also been identifying lines of symmetry by cutting and folding 2D shapes. Our science has been very exciting, building circuits with just a handful of components. We had to work together, fitting and fixing wires, bulbs and cells into a complete closed loop in order for the electricity to flow and light a bulb. We experimented with adding more bulbs and other component parts to observe the effect, then recorded our observations with drawings and written explanations using key scientific vocabulary. During enrichment, we have been developing our orienteering skills around the playground, learning how to follow maps and locate different points accurately. In Art, we have been studying Inuit life and the work of artist Kenojuak Ashevak. We have explored her distinctive style and created their own images inspired by her work. As it's been incredibly hot, we took a break in the shade on the trim trail. We played whole-class games, then explored the area ourselves, keeping cool. We are very proud of the children's enthusiasm and engagement across all areas of learning.



Over the past two weeks, **Year 5** have completed their project work on South America and the Amazon Rainforest. This has been a fantastic topic, with the children engaging enthusiastically in research, creating detailed infographics, and carrying out country studies. In Maths, we have been focusing on converting units of measure. In English, our text Journey to the River Sea continues to unfold in exciting ways, inspiring rich discussion and developing the children's descriptive writing. We have also written letters to our incoming Reception buddies, sharing information about our school and helping them feel excited and welcomed for September. In PE, when the weather has been too warm to be outside, the children have enjoyed a range of team-building challenges in the hall, developing cooperation and communication. It has been a busy and productive fortnight, and we are very proud of all that the children have achieved and how they have dealt with the changes to routines during the heatwave.



Over the past two weeks, **Year 6** have begun an exciting new Maths project, Futures. We have been learning key vocabulary linked to jobs and pay, including salary, income tax and take-home pay, and exploring how earnings are calculated. They have also applied their knowledge of the four operations, percentages and fractions to real-life contexts such as budgeting and understanding housing costs. Alongside this, our wider learning has been closely linked: in our project work, we have been discussing deforestation and the effects of global warming, which connects thoughtfully with our RE topic on caring for our world and Catholic Social Teaching, encouraging respect for people and the environment. We also enjoyed a visit from St Richard's RE department, where the children took part in a variety of activities including acting, singing and writing prayers. Our Spiritual Council representatives also attended their annual visit to Worth Abbey (The Good Shepherd), proudly representing our school. In science, we have started our new topic on Electricity, posing questions and conducting experiments, while in PE, the children have been enjoying athletics and making great progress in swimming. Some children from our class also proudly represented the school in the Deanery Rounders Tournament, where they achieved first place. It has been a busy and rewarding few weeks, with the children demonstrating enthusiasm, responsibility and pride in all areas of their learning, and they are now looking forward to their transition week at their secondary schools.



Dates for your Diary!

W/C 29th June - Transition week for Year 6 (see details further down the newsletter)

Tuesday 30th June - Year 4 Trip to Bedgebury

Thursday 2nd July - Year 1 Beach Trip

Tuesday 7th July - Sports Day (Rescheduled date) - KS2 AM, EYFS/KS1 PM @ Horntye

Wednesday 8th July - Year 6 Trip to Knockhatch

Friday 10th July - Year 6 Leavers Disco 4:30pm - 6pm

Wednesday 15th July - Reception assembly to parents @ 9:10am

Thursday 16th July - Year 6 Leavers assembly to parents @ 9:30am

Friday 17th July - Whole School Mass - Year 6 Leavers @ 10am St Thomas's

Friday 17th July - LAST DAY OF TERM - **SCHOOL CLOSSES AT 1:30PM**

Wednesday 2nd September - First day of Term 1 2026/27 for years 1-6

Please note that there has been a change to the previously published INSET days for 2026/27.

Friday 23 October will no longer be an INSET day and will now be a normal school day.

Our INSET day will instead take place on Monday 22 February.

Year 6 Leavers events

As we are entering the final Term of your child's time at St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, we would like to inform you of the events we have planned for your children to celebrate their time at our school. We hope that you can come and support your children during these events and that they will enjoy all the activities during their final term.

Secondary School Transition Week

Your child's allocated Secondary Schools should be contacting you directly regarding their arrangements for transitions, however here are the dates below.

St Richard's Catholic College Transition days – 1st, 2nd and 3rd July

Mulberry Academy St Leonards Transition days – 30th June, 1st and 2nd July

Ark Alexander Transitions Days – 29th June (SEND Transition), 1st July

**PLEASE NOTE ALL CHILDREN ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND THESE DATES
WEARING THEIR SMSS SCHOOL UNIFORM (NO LEAVERS HOODIES TO BE WORN)**

Year 6 Trip to Knockhatch

On **Wednesday 8th July**, we will be taking Year 6 to Knockhatch, for a fun and celebratory day out. They will be travelling there by coach, and will require a packed lunch to take with them. Further details of this trip and how to pay will be sent home with children on Monday.

Year 6 Leavers Pizza and Disco

On **Friday 10th July** we are hosting our Year 6 Leavers Disco! This will be in the School Hall from **4:30pm till 6pm**. There will be a sit-down feast of Pizza to start with, followed by a disco dance.

This will be a ticketed event at **£5.00** per ticket. Tickets will be on sale afterschool on **Friday 26th June**.

Year 6 Leavers Assembly

On **Thursday 16th July** we will be holding our Year 6 Leavers assembly to parents and the rest of the school. The children will be performing their end of year production. Then we'll take a trip down memory lane to celebrate your children's success throughout their time at SMSS! Parents should arrive at **9:30am**.

Whole School Mass

On **Friday 17th July** there will be a whole school Mass dedicated to Year 6. We would like to invite our Year 6 parents to come along. This will be at **10am** at St Thomas'.

Last Day of School

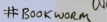
The last day of Term is **Friday 17th July 2026**. Please be reminded that school closes at **1:30pm** on this day.

**CLASS OF
2026**

My recommendation this week is:

By Charlie Mackesy

A fantastic beautifully illustrated book.



Well done to the following children for receiving achievement certificates for either fantastic work effort or demonstrating our Gospel Values.

ST ANDREW'S



10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

STAYING SAFE IN HOT WEATHER

As temperatures rise, it's essential to take proactive steps to ensure children and young people stay safe and healthy. Hot weather can pose serious risks such as dehydration, heatstroke and sunburn. This guide provides practical tips for parents and teachers to protect children during sunnier spells, helping them enjoy the summer safely.

1 STAY HYDRATED

Ensure children drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if they don't feel thirsty. Encourage them to carry water bottles and take regular sips. It's better to drink small amounts to counteract the effects of sweating. Even if children replenish lost fluids with equal amounts of water, they may still be dehydrated due to salt lost from the body. Avoid sugary drinks and caffeine, which can contribute to dehydration.

2 APPLY SUNSCREEN

Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 30 on all exposed skin and reapply every two hours or after swimming. Don't forget often-missed spots like the ears, back of the neck and tops of feet. Sunscreen needs around 20 to 30 minutes to be absorbed by the skin, so make sure you leave plenty of time to apply it.

3 WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Dress children in light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing made from breathable fabrics like cotton. Ideally clothing should cover as much skin as possible. Shoulders should always be covered as they can easily burn. Wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses with UV protection are also essential to shield them from the sun. Be sure to check your school's dress policy, as uniform rules may be relaxed during amber or red Heat Health Alerts (HHAs).

4 SEEK SHADE

Covering up and seeking shade are the most important sun protection measures. Encourage children to play in shaded areas, especially during peak sun intensity between the hours of 11 a.m. and 3 pm. Use umbrellas or canopies if natural shade is unavailable.

5 AVOID STRENUOUS ACTIVITIES

Children shouldn't take part in vigorous physical activities in very hot weather. Limit these during the warmest parts of the day. Schedule any outdoor games or sports for early morning or late afternoon when it's slightly cooler.

6 KEEP COOL INDOORS

If it's safe and appropriate, open windows early in the morning to allow stored heat to escape from the building. Use fans or air conditioning to maintain a cool indoor environment. Close curtains or blinds to block direct sunlight. Switch off electrical equipment like computers, monitors and printers when not in use; don't leave them in 'standby mode' as this still generates heat.

7 TAKE COOL BATHS OR SHOWERS

Encourage children to take cool baths or showers to lower their body temperature. Alternatively, use damp cloths on their skin to provide relief from the heat. When heading out of the house, consider filling up a spray bottle to cool everyone down on the go.

8 MONITOR FOR SIGNS OF ILLNESS

If sensible precautions are taken, children are unlikely to be seriously affected by hot conditions – but teachers, assistants, school nurses and all child carers should watch for symptoms of heat exhaustion, such as heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea or fainting. If any signs are present, move the child to a cool place, make sure they drink some water, and seek medical advice if needed.

9 MAINTAIN A COOL SLEEPING ENVIRONMENT

Ensure children's bedrooms stay cool by using fans or air conditioning. Use lightweight bedding and consider letting them sleep in the coolest part of the house. Older children can have more choice over what they wear to bed. Some children may prefer to sleep without pyjamas, while some may prefer to opt for a light cotton t-shirt and shorts.

10 EDUCATE CHILDREN ON SUN SAFETY

Teach children the importance of sun safety and encourage them to take responsibility for their health. Explain the risks of sunburn and heatstroke and the value of following these safety tips.

Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is an experienced health and safety expert who is a Chartered Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. He provides services to educational settings (and other industries) to help them maintain a safe working environment.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: [staying-safe-in-hot-weather](https://nationalcollege.com/staying-safe-in-hot-weather)



HUGGG VOUCHERS HAVE ENDED



last vouchers were issued
for Free School Meal
families May Half Term



There will be no further
vouchers issued for Free School
Meal families



Support is still available for
Individual circumstances HERE:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/community/cost-of-living-support>

Exciting Update: Free School Meals Expansion for school age children...

We are delighted to share an important and positive development that will support many of our families. From September 2026, Free School Meals (FSM) will be expanded so that **more children in households receiving Universal Credit will be eligible**. This is a really welcome change and reflects a continued commitment to ensuring all children have access to healthy, nutritious meals during the school day.

What is changing? Going forward, there will be **two categories of benefits-based Free School Meals**:

- **Targeted FSM** This remains in place for families who meet the existing income threshold – households receiving Universal Credit with annual earnings of **£7,400 or less**.

Expanded FSM (new category) This new provision will support **families receiving Universal Credit who do not meet the £7,400 threshold**, meaning many more children will now be eligible.

What about current entitlements? Since April 2018, “transitional protections” have ensured that children who became eligible for free school meals have continued to receive them, even if their circumstances changed.

- These protections will **remain in place until the end of the 2025–2026 academic year**.
- From **September 2026**, families will need to meet the updated eligibility criteria each year to continue receiving free school meals.

Why this matters This expansion is fantastic news for families, helping to:

- Reduce the cost of living pressures
- Ensure children have access to healthy meals every day
- Support children’s wellbeing, concentration, and learning

What should parents do next? If your household receives Universal Credit, we **strongly encourage you to apply**, even if you haven’t been eligible before. Applications are quick and confidential, and eligibility may now be wider than you expect. Please use the link below to apply.

<https://eyeeonline.eastsussex.gov.uk/Synergy>

ST RICHARDS CATHOLIC COLLEGE
presents

WEST SIDE

WEST SIDE STORY

SCHOOL EDITION

Based on a Conception of
JEROME ROBBINS

Music by
LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Entire Original Production Directed and Choreographed by
JEROME ROBBINS

Originally Produced on Broadway by
Robert E. Griffith and Harold S. Prince
By Arrangement with Roger L. Stevens



This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI www.mtishows.co.uk

Performance Wednesday 8th Thursday 9th Friday 10th July @6.30pm
Tickets at: www.ticketsource.com/st-richards-catholic-college

Hastings Thrives is running a four-day Musical Theatre Workshop, designed to nurture confidence and foster creativity in a supportive, enjoyable atmosphere. Designed specifically to build confidence in a supportive and fun environment. This program is suitable for all abilities, including young people with high anxiety and those with SEND.

- Focus: Exploring Dance, Acting, and Singing using well-known musical theatre numbers.
- The Goal: To improve confidence and get the best out of every young person.
- Venue: White Rock Theatre Hastings, East Sussex,

We kindly ask participants to commit to the full 4 days to get the most out of the experience, though we understand if appointments get in the way.

Mini Performance: On the afternoon of Day 4, there will be a special mini performance for parents and carers from 1:30 PM – 2:00 PM.

Ticket Type	Price	Details
FREE HAF Ticket	£0	Fully funded places are available for young people eligible for benefits-related free school meals, as defined by the DfE. Funded places are also available for young people in other target cohorts, such as those with SEND or Looked After Children (LAC).
Paid Ticket	£20	For all other attendees.

This activity is funded through the Department for Education's (DfE) Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme and coordinated by East Sussex County Council.

Please Note: Eligibility for a fully funded HAF place will be confirmed as part of the booking process.

To secure your child's place, please follow the booking link here: <https://eequ.org/book/haf-summer-musical-theatre-course-with-hastings-thrives-5976>



We would like to encourage parents to use the online **Family Advice Line** linked to Family Hubs and the wider Family First approach.

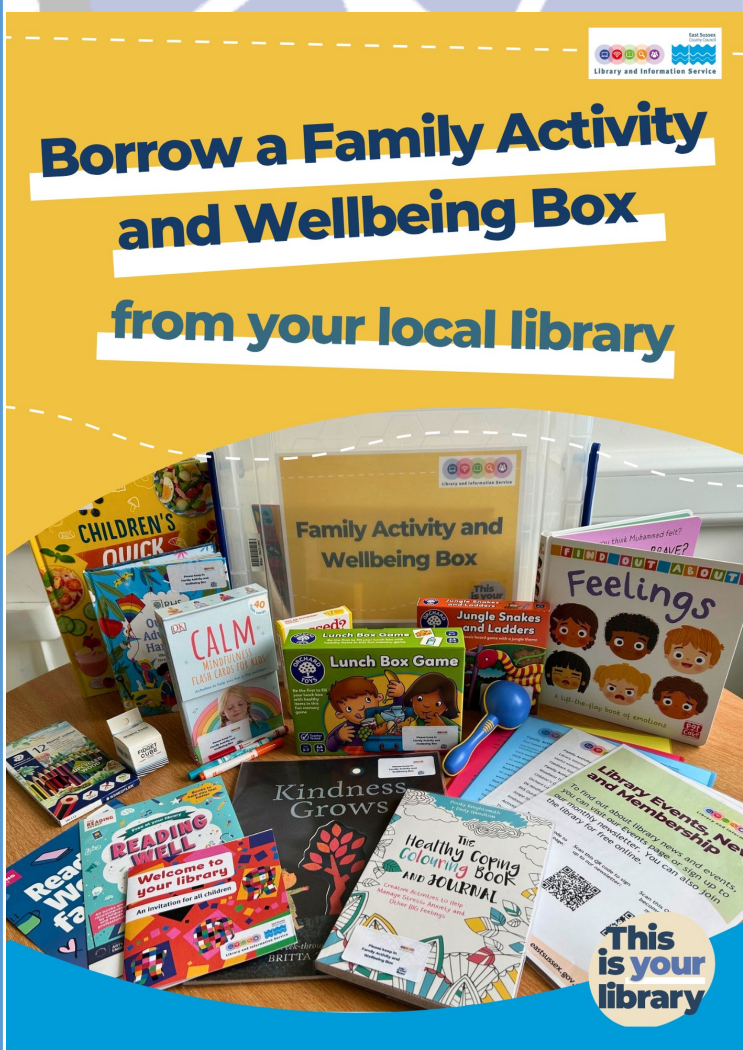
The contact details are -

- ☐ **01323 46 46 55**
- ☐ Monday–Thursday: 8.30am–5.00pm
- ☐ Friday: 8.30am–4.30pm

They can provide advice and signposting on -

- Parenting and children's behaviour
- Emotional wellbeing
- SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)
- Financial, housing and employment difficulties
- Activities and support for children and young people
- Accessing wider family support services and Family Hubs

Under East Sussex's Family First programme, families can access help earlier and be connected to more coordinated support if needed.



East Sussex Libraries
eastsussex.gov.uk/libraries



Family Activity and Wellbeing Boxes are a resource that can be borrowed by library members for free

Family Activity and Wellbeing Boxes contain a range of books, games and activities to boost the wellbeing of your family. Boxes are for families with children aged 0-11 to enjoy and share.

They can be borrowed from your library for 3 weeks.

Please be aware that some activities may not be suitable for younger children and use should be supervised by an adult.

For more information talk to a member of staff, scan the QR code or call us on:
0345 60 80 196

