

What's on in a Church of England School



2018

Christian Festivals

St David's Day: 1st March

Mothering Sunday: 11th March

St Patrick's Day: 17th March

Palm Sunday 25th March

Good Friday 30th March

Easter Monday 2nd April

The Annunciation - this year will be on April 9th

Other Festivals and Awareness Days

World Book Day - 1st March

Sport Relief 17 - 21st March

First Day of Spring - 20th March

International Day of Happiness - 20th March

World Poetry Day - 21 March

World Water Day 22nd March

National Skipping Day 23rd March

Marie Curie Cancer Care month

1st March - St David's Day

Find out all about St David on

<http://sucs.org/~rhys/stdavid.html>

St David's Day is celebrated in Wales and by Welsh people throughout the world on 1 March. To help you celebrate with your children and learn about Wales and Welsh customs, there is a fun collection of ideas and activities including colouring pages, puzzles, jigsaws, pintables and much more.

Lots of ideas for crafts and activities on 'St David's Day for Kids'

<http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/st%20david%20day.htm>



11th March - Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday is on the fourth Sunday of Lent. It is often called Mother's Day in Britain - however it has no connection with the American festival which is also known by the same name. **In our Church schools we like to keep 'Mothering Sunday' as a traditional name and celebration.**

On this day children often give their mothers gifts and cards as a way of saying thank you for their hard work. In church, prayers are said for mothers at a special service.

In the past girls who worked as domestic servants were given the day off work to visit their mothers. They often took a simnel cake as a present. Simnel cake is especially associated with Mothering Sunday. It is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste. On top there are eleven balls of marzipan, one for each faithful disciple, Judas not being included as he betrayed Jesus. Here is a recipe for Simnel Cake...maybe you could ask a mum to bake one for the schoolto show the children. It is a Mary Berry version - so it must be good.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/easter_simnel_cake_82449



Why not

Have a special Mothering Sunday Service in School - invite all the mums.

Make posies out of spring flowers.

Or buy some local primulas for the children to give. Primulas are a particularly good idea for a present because mums can put them in their garden where they will flower for years to come. Some schools sell primulas during the week running up to Mothering Sunday. You will probably have a local nursery near to you who will do a deal!

Make Simnel cake - or have a simnel cake making competition for the parents

Send home a recipe for simnel cake and explain the significance of it.



Make cards. Children love to make cards - make sure they say 'Mothering Sunday' on them so that the children learn the correct name for the festival!

Get the children to write Mothering Sunday prayers to be read out by the minister in Church.

Have a special Mothering Sunday coffee morning in school on the Friday.

It's worth mentioning here that sometimes schools have to take care with Mothering Sunday - and be aware of those children who have lost their mother, or who have suffered an abusive mother, or who have multiple mothers. It can indeed be a hornet's nest..... so keep it simple and try to avoid making it too 'sugary'!

If you are interested in this element, read this good article by Maggi Dawn
<http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/14466>

17th March - St Patrick's Day

Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated each year on March 17th. In Ireland, Saint Patrick's Day is both a holy day and a national holiday.

Saint Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland as he was the one who brought Christianity to the Irish.



According to legend, Saint Patrick used a shamrock to explain about God. The shamrock, which looks like clover, has three leaves on each stem.

Saint Patrick told the people that the shamrock was like the idea of the Trinity - that in the one God there are three divine beings: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The shamrock was sacred to the Druids, so Saint Patrick's use of it in explaining the trinity was very wise.



Why not have an Irish Theme day? St Patrick's day is now widely celebrated in England and around the world.

For more information and craft ideas go to

<http://www.activityvillage.co.uk/st-patricks-day>



25th March - Palm Sunday

In the Christian calendar, Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter, sixth and last Sunday in Lent, and the first day of Holy Week. It recalls the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem riding upon an ass, when his followers shouted "Hosanna" and scattered palms in his path.



Why not

Ask the minister to order palms for all the children and have a special service at Church or at school. Think how the children could be involved.

There are lots of Palm Sunday Hymns - 'Hosanna, Hosanna. '

'We have a King who rides a donkey.'

and from 'Out of the Ark' 'Songs for Every Easter' - Hosanna - a lovely two part song to impress mums and dads with !

Teach the children how to make a palm cross. For instructions go to

<http://www.kingofpeace.org/palmcrosses/>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Palm-Frond-Cross>



or on YouTube

<http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&sqi=2&ved=0CC0QtwIwAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DoT-OZ6YSJoU&ei=E3nFUpfWJJSqhQfOwIH4AQ&usq=AFQjCNHLORFnMY7LmaC6gPNrDciBgHhqmQ>

Here is a poem by Ron Klug - you can read it to the children at Christmas or at Easter - it's very moving! It's called 'Joseph's Lullaby'

Sleep now little one
I will watch while you and your mother sleep.
I wish I could do more.
This straw is not good enough for you.
Back in Nazareth I'll make a proper bed for you
Of seasoned wood, smooth, strong, well pegged.
A bed fit for a carpenter's son.

Just wait till we get back to Nazareth.
I'll teach you everything I know.
You'll learn to use the cedarwood, eucalyptus and fir.
You'll learn to use the drawshave, axe and saw.
Your arms will grow strong, your hands rough - like these.
You will bear the pungent smell of new wood.
And wear shavings and sawdust in your hair.
You'll be a man whose life centres
On hammer and nails and wood.
But for now,
Sleep, little Jesus, sleep.

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday: 29th March

Good Friday: 30th March

Easter Sunday: 1st April

Easter Monday: 2nd April

Easter is the most important festival in the Christian calendar. It is the commemoration of Jesus' death and his rising from the dead, also known as the resurrection. It comes at the end of Lent. The week leading up to it is called Holy Week.

On Maundy Thursday Christians remember when Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples, breaking bread and drinking wine, which is now known as the Last Supper. Since then this meal has been symbolically re-enacted by many Christians as a way of drawing closer to God. This is called the Eucharist, which means 'thanksgiving'.

It is a reminder that Jesus sacrificed his life for mankind. The Bible tells us that, later that night, Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot. After his arrest, Jesus was brought before the Jewish high priests who found him guilty of blasphemy because he called himself the Son of God. They handed him over to the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate.

As was the custom at the time of the Feast of Passover, Pilate gave the crowds the choice as to which of the two prisoners should be freed:

Jesus, or Barabbas, a notorious criminal.

Ironically, the same crowd who had welcomed

Jesus with palm branches a few days earlier now chose Barabbas to be released, and Pilate condemned Jesus to death by crucifixion.



On Good Friday, many churches hold services meditating on the events leading up to Christ's death: his interrogation, flogging, the mocking by the Roman soldiers, and his journey with the cross to Golgotha, the place of his death. Finally he was stripped naked and nailed to the cross, where he hung in agony for hours, jeered at by the crowds, before he died. This is the day when people traditionally eat hot cross buns, because the cross on the bun is a reminder of

the cross Jesus died on, and a reminder of the Christian belief that Jesus died to save us all.

Easter Sunday marks Jesus' resurrection. The Bible tells us that Mary Magdalene went to the tomb, followed later by some of Jesus' disciples. They discovered Jesus' body had gone and that the tomb was empty. Jesus then appeared to Mary and many of his disciples, speaking with them on separate occasions during the following forty days. As he left them for the last time, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit so the disciples would know God would never leave them. He then ascended into heaven. The Church celebrates this on Ascension day.



Play the children excerpts from 'The Messiah' by Handel – it's a beautiful piece of music with many sections. The most famous being 'The Alleluia Chorus' – children love it.

Here it is on Youtube sung by the Royal Choral Society in The Albert Hall

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUZEtVbJT5c>

And here is the music with words

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FogxYqTNKmU>

and some children singing it

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tDCBnTudLwI>

and some silent monks doing it

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRhjWdr-LAA>

Play it in Assembly for the whole school – it is one of the most famous pieces of music on the planet. Written by George Frideric Handel in 1741.... And first performed in Dublin .Ladies were asked not to wear 'hoops' in their dresses to make space for more people!

Teacher tip – 'omnipotent' just means – has unlimited power

It is traditional that the audience stands when the choir sings the Alleluia Chorus – you needn't do it – but just to let the children know.

Why not...

Have a Passover meal with the children like the last supper. You can use bread and coke and teach the children about the Eucharist. Ask your minister for help.

Can you ask the children to find out who painted this picture - and when?

Can they find any other famous paintings of the last supper?

Can you make a last supper image - in paint or as a **dramatic scene**?

(get the children each to be a person in the scene and make a group study) Take photos



Make some hot cross buns.

<http://www.deliaonline.com/recipes/type-of-dish/sweet/hot-cross-buns.html>

For Christians, Easter eggs symbolise new life. We believe that, through his resurrection,

Jesus defeated death and sin and offers people the promise of eternal life if they follow his teachings. This is why there is a tradition for Christians to be baptised at Easter, which celebrates new life in God.



However, the festival of Easter stretches back to pre-Christian times, too. It gets its name and some symbols, including the Easter Bunny, from the Pagan Spring Equinox festival, which is a celebration of Spring and also of new life.



Where are the accounts of Easter in the Bible?

The account of the Easter story can be read in Mark, Chapters 14 to 16, or Luke, Chapters 22 to 24, and elements of it can be found in the other gospels

too. Many of the events in the Easter story are foretold in the Old Testament in Isaiah chapter 53.

Why not...

Have an Easter Parade ... with home-made hats. Try an egg rolling competition.

How about an 'eggsibition' - with the children and parents making real eggs into all sorts of things.



A **Fabergé** is one of a limited number of jeweled eggs created by Peter Carl Fabergé and his company from 1885 to 1917. The most famous of the eggs are the ones made for the Russian Tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II as Easter gifts for their wives and mothers, often called the 'Imperial' Fabergé eggs. About 50 eggs were made, and 42 have survived. Another two were planned for Easter 1918, but because of the Russian Revolution were not delivered.

After the Revolution, the Fabergé family left Russia. The Fabergé trademark has been sold several times since, and several companies have retailed egg-related merchandise using the Fabergé name. The trademark is now owned by Fabergé Limited, which makes egg-themed jewellery.



Then there is the traditional Easter garden - maybe in Church. Some children would love to make one to put in the school entrance or in the church.

There is endless music for the children to sing, but some particularly good songs in 'Songs for Every Easter' - Out of the Ark Music



www.outoftheark.com

Everything you ever wanted to know about Easter eggs is on www.holidays.net/easter/eggs.htm a child-based site with lots of craft ideas.

Ideas for Easter activities in the classroom

Some great sites with endless ideas for classroom activities, teaching ideas, lesson plans etc.

<http://www.pinterest.com/keh9/school-ideas-easter/> (A very good site with great ideas - you will need to sign up, but it's free and well worth the effort)

<http://www.kidspot.com.au/subsection+162+Easter-Easter-crafts.htm>

<http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/easter-fun/>

Easter Worship Ideas

http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=5&cad=rja&ved=0CEgQtwIwBA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bbc.co.uk%2Fschoolradio%2Fsubjects%2Fcollectiveworship%2Fcollectiveworship_stories%2Ffestivals%2Ffeaster&ei=iIXFUpyePIaw7Qap4oHoBQ&usg=AFQjCNGXQvsh-I7PCOPjrbLaX28m2f9DrQ

<http://ministry-to-children.com/easter-worship-ideas-for-kids-church/>

<http://www.familyworship.org.uk/seasons/easter/>

<http://www.assemblies.org.uk/>

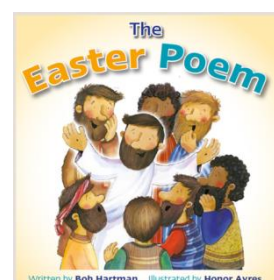
<http://assemblyideas.wordpress.com/2010/02/23/easter-school-service-idea-with-plastic-easter-eggs/>

AND AFTER THE RESURRECTION - WHAT THEN ??

And when we come back to school after Easter - what then - is it all over - or is there more??

Show the children this lovely 'all age' illustrated poem from the Bible Society - written in 2016 by Bob

Hartman. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NF7ERI2_3IQ



Other Faiths

February 28th to 1st March - Purim

It's a Jewish tradition to dress up or disguise oneself at Purim, as with this Orthodox Jewish man at the Moscow Jewish Community Centre. Purim celebrates the events told in the Book of Esther in the Hebrew Bible.



The Jewish heroine Esther, wife of King Ahasuerus, persuaded her husband to prevent a Persian nobleman, Haman, from massacring Jews in his kingdom. Purim is a time of praise and thanksgiving, and almsgiving is an important Purim tradition. The Book of Esther is read aloud in the synagogue and the congregation use rattles, cymbals and boos to drown out Haman's name whenever it appears. Purim is one of the most entertaining Jewish holidays.



Americans sometimes refer to Purim as the Jewish Mardi Gras. Purim is not subject to the restrictions on work that affect some other holidays; however, some sources indicate that Jews should not go about their ordinary business at Purim out of respect for the festival.

1st March - Holi

Holi is celebrated on the day after the full moon in the Hindu month of Phalguna (early March).

At Holi, Hindus celebrate spring and certain events in Hindu mythology. It's known as the 'Festival of Colours' due to the practice of throwing coloured water and applying coloured powder on friends and family. This ritual is said to be based on the story of Krishna and Radha. When Krishna asked his



mother why Radha was fair while he was dark, she advised him to apply colour to Radha's face to see how her complexion changed. At Holi, images of Krishna and Radha are carried through the streets.

2nd March - 4th March - Hola Mohalla

Hola Mohalla is a festival celebrated by Sikhs in the city of Anandpur Sahib in the Punjab, which is known as 'the holy City of Bliss'.

Hola Mohalla follows the Indian festival of Holi and celebrates Sikh martial skills with displays of horsemanship and mock battles. It was established by Guru Gobind Singh in 1701. The festivities are followed by music and poetry contests.



14th March - Nanakshahi New Year

This day marks the beginning of the year 549 in the Sikh Nanakshahi calendar. The Nanakshahi calendar was instituted by Sikhs in AD1999 and has been used since then to determine the dates of their feast days, replacing the Indian lunar calendar. The Nanakshahi calendar is related to significant events in Sikh history and dates from the birth of the first Guru, Guru Nanak Dev, in AD1469.

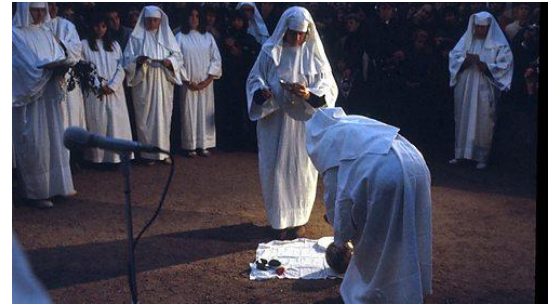


20th March - Spring Equinox

At Spring (Vernal) Equinox the days and nights are of equal length. The land begins to bloom and Pagans celebrate the rebirth of spring.

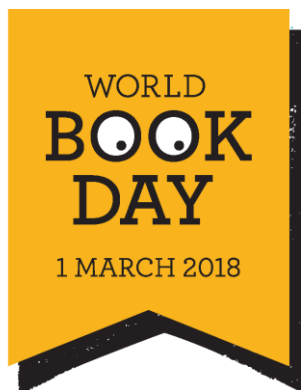
Spring Equinox is sometimes called Ostera (or Eostre) after the Anglo-Saxon goddess of fertility, whose symbols are the hare and the egg. To celebrate Spring Equinox some Pagans carry out particular rituals. A man and woman are

chosen to act out the roles of Spring God and Goddess, playing out courtship rituals and symbolically planting seeds. Egg races, egg hunts, and egg painting are also traditional activities at this time of year.



What else is on in March?

1st March - World Book Day



World Book Day - now that's an idea of the perfect awareness day! We love to read and that love is shared by people all over the planet. The main idea is to encourage children to start enjoying reading at an early age, so that they carry on this enjoyment into adulthood! What's so great about reading anyway? For a start, reading and writing are at the heart of learning and communication - essential for raising smart kids! There can be a more

serious side because we read newspapers to find out about important world affairs. Reading is not for SATs - it's for life! But we can also escape, find excitement, love, and adventure in fiction. A

good book can take us to a different place altogether, and is basically just a lot of fun! So, National Book Tokens is sponsoring the day and encouraging schools everywhere to take part! A schools' pack will be mailed out from mid- January onwards with your £1 book tokens. Bookshops all over the UK will happily accept them. <http://www.nationalbooktokens.com/home>



The pack will also contain ideas about fun events and activities you can arrange for your pupils on the day. You could suggest holding a world book day assembly in advance, so everyone is in the know about this great day! Make a huge transformation to kids' lives with your raised funds by donating them to a sponsor charity. Book Aid International sends 500,000 books to libraries in sub-

Saharan African and Palestine to make sure everyone has the same access to good quality books. World Book Day also supports [Readathon](#), the UK's national sponsored reading event, which gets children actively reading, as well as raising money to help seriously ill children, participating schools get free books from Scholastic Book Clubs.

Amazing **AUTHORS** and **ILLUSTRATORS** give their **TOP TIPS** to help you create brilliant stories 



STORYCRAFT



HOW TO MAKE BRILLIANT STORIES, BY THE PEOPLE WHO DO

For all information and resources go to <http://www.worldbookday.com/>

A great time for your school book festival! How about having a 'favourite book' survey? Ask each age group what is their favourite book and make a chart! That would be fun and look great with some illustrations. You could get the older children to do an A4 version to send out to parents - they would be very interested to know the results....and it would help them when choosing books for presents etc.

Is it time to do a book audit in your classes? Are your book areas exciting, cared for and attractive to children - or are they a disaster?? Maybe have a look with fresh eyes.

17th - 21st March - Sport Relief

Order your pack now from the website and join in all the national fun

Get everything you need from the website

<http://www.sportrelief.com/>



20th March - First Day of Spring

'Vernal (or spring) equinox' happens this year on the 20th March

To find out more interesting facts about the science of why we have seasons - go to this great site.

<http://www.primaryhomeworkhelp.co.uk/time/seasons.htm>



Around March 20 or 21, the sun shines directly on the equator and the length of day and night are nearly equal in all parts of the world.

20th March - International Day of Happiness

Have a happy day and celebrate all the good things we have

<http://www.cute-calendar.com/event/international-day-of-happiness/12610-world.html>

<http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/un/happiness-day>



21st March – World Poetry Day

<http://www.teacherplanet.com/resource/worldpoetry.php>

Excellent site with lesson plans, ideas and enthusiasm!

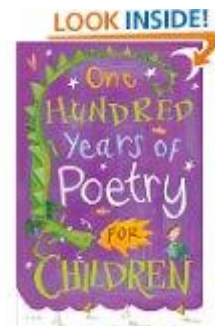
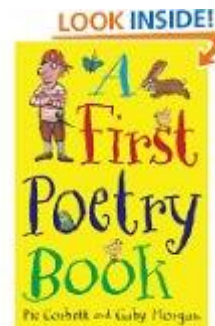
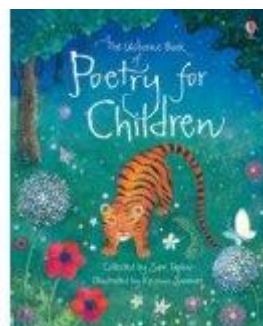
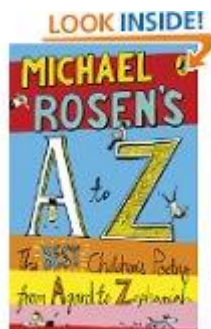
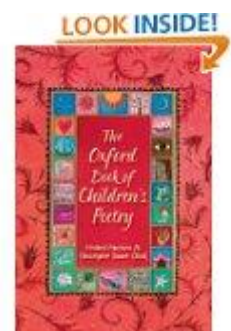
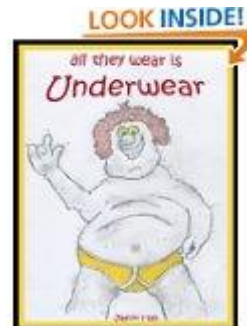
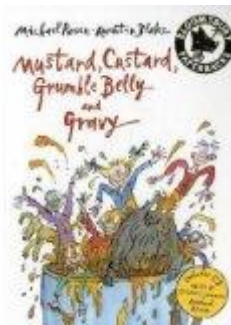
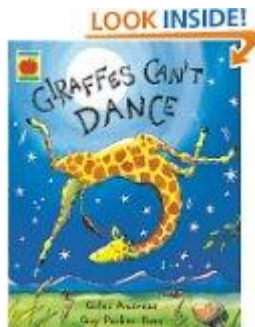
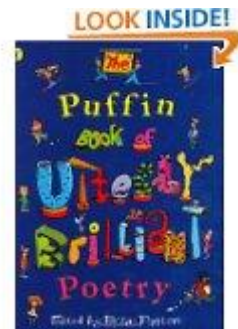
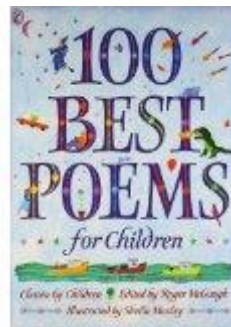
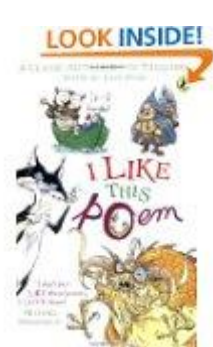


Why not collect together all your school poetry books – make a big display.

Ask parents to send in their favorite poem..... or maybe a poetry book from home.

What about grandparents? – they love poetry too!

Have you got these books? All good exciting books All available from Amazon (other book sellers are available!)



Have a survey? What are the children's favourite poems?

The National favourite (according to The Guardian!) is The Owl and the Pussycat.

Do your children know it?





The Poetry Friendly Classroom

Why Poetry?

Lots of tips from Michael Rosen on how to make a poetry friendly classroom.

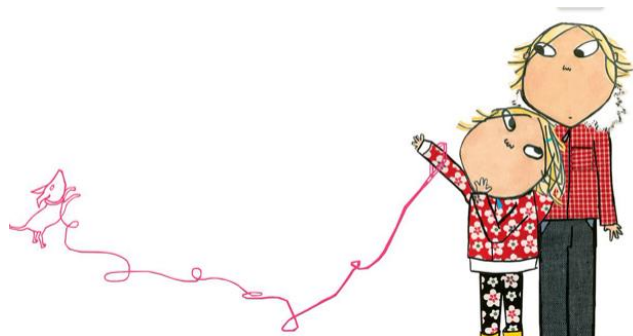
He has a really useful site which is jammed with good teacher ideas - have a look. You can't help but be inspired.

<https://www.michaelrosen.co.uk/>



WHO IS THIS?

This is Lauren Child - The current children's Poet laureate. Children's poet laureates are appointed for two years. They are outstanding poets, writers or illustrators. Lauren Child is a famous author/illustrator. Have you got her books in school?





..... and many, many more.

22nd March - World Water Day

World Water Day is observed each year on 22 March. The day, which was established by the United Nations was first celebrated in 1993 to celebrate the importance of freshwater around the globe.



Did you know that over 45% of the world's land surface is covered by river basins, and over 75% of all countries have their boundaries within shared river basins.

All around the world events will be held to celebrate freshwater and promote its sustainability, and every year there is a different theme.

From water and our future to sanitation and water scarcity, the day aims to keep us informed, and in a whole host of different ways!

Around the world there will be an array of events, from musical performances to galas, art shows and seminars.

So why not get involved? Find out all you need to know by dropping by the official website to see how you can participate.

<http://www.worldwaterday.org/>

23rd March – National Skipping Day

It's a hop, skip and a jump away! Can you show us the ropes?

<http://www.skipping-workshops.co.uk/>

Get ready for Europe's 15th National Skipping Day! Over 300,000 children have got involved over the last decade and it's time to make that number even higher! This year the organisers, Skipping Workshops hope to have the biggest ever simultaneous skipping event, with over 50,000 children taking part. But they need your help to do it!

Skipping is a great cardio activity and so much fun it won't feel like your typical work-out! And adults are welcome to join in too! We all loved skipping when we were younger and this is a fantastic excuse to relive the memory for one day.

Unlike a lot of other commemorative days, this isn't fundraising for a charity. It's just meant to be a fun and healthy day. What other reason do you need?

If you're a school that would like your pupils and staff to take part, just fill in the form at the National Skipping Day website.

Free ropes and lots of ideas on the website.



Marie Curie Cancer Care Month



The Great Daffodil Appeal is Marie Curie Cancer Care's biggest fundraising campaign which takes place each March.

Maybe help by selling daffodils or having a mini-fundraiser for this excellent charity. This year there is a 'Wear something yellow for school' campaign - sounds like fun!

Get involved by visiting their website <http://www.mariecurie.org.uk>

..... and don't forget

To order your envelopes and teaching materials for Christian Aid Week which is 13th - 19th May 2018

<http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/>