



St Mary's Catholic College

NEWSLETTER

Work together, Succeed together



Holy Family
Catholic Trust

Multi
Academy
Trust

Autumn Term | 2025

CHRISTMAS AT ST MARY'S

Whole School Mass & the Jubilee Icon

On Monday 8th December, our College community came together to celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception with a beautiful Mass at the heart of our school, celebrated by Father Mike.

This feast day is especially important for us at St Mary's as it honours Mary, chosen and prepared by God in a unique way so that she could one day carry Jesus. The Immaculate Conception reminds us of Mary's openness to God and her willingness to say "yes," and it invites us to reflect on how we too can say yes in faith, hope and service. Marking this feast strengthens our school's mission and identity, reminding us that Mary walks with us as our guide and model of discipleship.

This year's Mass was made even more special as we welcomed pupils from St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, who brought with them the Diocesan Icon that is travelling around schools in celebration of the Jubilee Year, 'Pilgrims of Hope.' The icon, a stained-glass window from Shrewsbury Cathedral, depicts the Visitation, the moment Mary visits Elizabeth to share the Good News that she is carrying the Son of God. This powerful image connects deeply with our feast day, reminding us of Mary's faith, courage, and joy as she became the bearer of hope for the world.

The celebration was a joyful occasion for our whole community. Our pupils took part in many ways, working alongside the primary pupils, reading, serving, singing in the choir, and filling the hall with their voices as everyone joined together to sing "O Come All Ye Faithful" at the end. It was a moment of unity, anticipation, and excitement as we look towards Christmas and the message of hope it brings.

Following the Mass, the icon was displayed in our chapel for pupils to visit quietly throughout the day. Many took time to reflect on how the image made them feel during this season of Advent, a time when, like Mary, we prepare our hearts to welcome Jesus. Pupils were also invited to contribute to the Icon Book, sharing their own thoughts, prayers, and reflections. Their responses showed a deep sense of gratitude, hope, and awareness of the significance of this journey of faith.



HFCMAT CAROL CONCERT

On Tuesday 16th December, our school choir had the privilege of performing in the annual HFCMAT Christmas Carol Concert at the Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, a truly magical setting that elevated the entire occasion. This special event brought together students from across our Multi-Academy Trust, uniting families, teachers and peers in a joyful celebration of music, community and the festive season.

Our choir rose to the occasion with confidence and warmth, delivering a beautifully polished programme that showcased both their hard work and their passion for singing. Their repertoire included Noel, Carol of the Bells, Somewhere in My Memory, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing and Joy to the World, each performed with musicality, expression and a real sense of togetherness. The cathedral's breathtaking acoustics added an extra layer of magic to their sound, allowing every harmony and every dynamic to resonate throughout the vast space.

Performing alongside other schools in the HFCMAT gave our students a powerful sense of belonging and pride, as they contributed to a shared celebration that highlighted the talent and dedication present across our Trust. For many of our pupils, this was a highlight of the academic year, an opportunity to shine, to connect with others through music, and to experience the joy of performing in such an iconic venue.

We are immensely proud of our students and grateful to the music department for their tireless preparation and commitment. This year's concert was not only a festive triumph but also a wonderful reminder of the community spirit and creativity that make our college so special.



ST MARY'S GOES TO THE BALL

Cinderella Christmas Panto steals the show

St Mary's Youth Theatre's inaugural pantomime of Cinderella lit up the stage this December with a joyful blend of humour, music, and outstanding student talent. The production, which has been rehearsing during lunchtimes and after school since early autumn, saw students from Year 7 to 11 take centre stage to bring Cancellton to life.

Students have been inundated in praise for their performance from parents and staff saying how lovely it was to see students in a new light and well and truly enjoying themselves.

For some students it was their first production with us and for others one of their last but they all performed with professionalism and made Miss Paterson and the Performing Arts Faculty so proud. Thank you to both cast and crew for this remarkable effort!





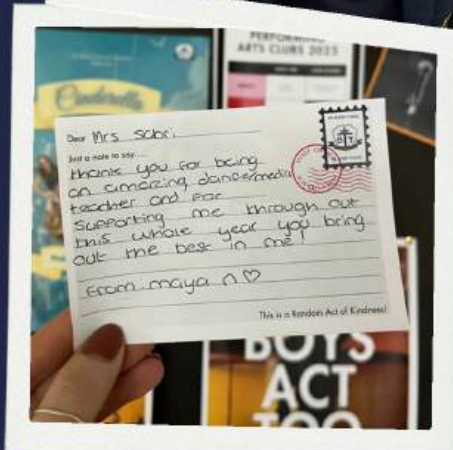
RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS WEEK

In the final week of term, the St Mary's community came together to celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Week, an initiative linked to our Inspire programme.

During the week, students took part in thoughtful and generous activities for their peers and teachers, including making form group Christmas cards and sending messages of thanks to staff. Some students also visited our local community to offer Christmas cards and decorations to passers-by in the neighbourhood.

Our staff got involved too! Teachers took part in a week-long Secret Santa of Kindness, beautifully organised by Ms Cullen. Participating staff left secret gifts or carried out small acts of kindness for one another to spread joy throughout the week.

This was a fabulous initiative that truly brought festive cheer to our college community!



Anti Bullying week

Our school marked Anti-Bullying Week 2025 with the theme "Power for Good," spending the week exploring how kindness, courage, and speaking up can turn us from bystanders into upstanders. Classes took part in discussions, activities, and role-play to understand the impact of bullying and the importance of supporting one another, while our assembly highlighted how even small acts of kindness can make a big difference. Students shared thoughtful reflections such as "Being an upstander means helping someone even when it's hard," and "Kindness makes our school feel safer," while one teacher said, "The real power for good is when we look out for each other every day." We finished the week with Odd Socks Day, celebrating individuality with a colourful display of mismatched socks that reminded us that our differences make us unique and should always be embraced. Together, we end the week with a shared promise to continue choosing kindness and ensuring our school remains a safe and welcoming place for all.



Wellbeing through creativity

A group of pupils have been creating beautiful ceramic angels as part of a wellbeing initiative run by Ms Corrigan, our Head of Art, where they meet to talk, reflect, and support one another through difficult times such as illness or bereavement.

The angels they have crafted will be sold to raise funds for Macmillan Nurses, a charity close to many of our hearts. This thoughtful project has given pupils both a creative outlet and a meaningful way to help others.

Year 7 Pupils Delight in Floral Pavilion Pantomime

Our Year 7 pupils had a fantastic time at the Floral Pavilion Theatre in New Brighton, watching the pantomime *Sleeping Beauty*.

The students were captivated by the performance, laughing, cheering, and enjoying every moment. It was wonderful to see them so engaged and excited by the magic of live theatre.

The trip was not only a fun experience but also a fantastic opportunity for the pupils to experience a traditional pantomime and gain a deeper appreciation for theatre and performing arts.

Everyone returned to college buzzing with excitement and stories from the show—it was truly a morning to remember!



SUSTAINABILITY AT ST MARY'S

Creating a greener future, today

This term has been an inspiring and action-packed one for sustainability at St Mary's, with pupils from across the school taking part in a range of projects, presentations and environmental initiatives.

A group of our students proudly represented St Mary's at COP30, held at St John Plessington, where they delivered a thoughtful presentation on energy waste in schools. Their research highlighted how everyday habits contribute to unnecessary energy loss and proposed practical strategies for improvement. Their confidence, teamwork and ambition shone through, and they sparked meaningful discussions with staff and students from across the Trust.

Alongside this, our dedicated Changemakers have begun an exciting long-term biodiversity project in collaboration with students from St John Plessington. Throughout the year, they will be working closely with the sustainability team at Chester Zoo, meeting experts, carrying out research and developing a practical strategy to help support and enhance biodiversity within our local community. This incredible opportunity will allow them to gain hands-on experience, learn from conservation professionals and ultimately design a plan that could lead to real, lasting environmental impact. We look forward to sharing more as this project evolves.

Our commitment to sustainability was also celebrated during a special HFCMAT Takeover Day at Chester Zoo. St Mary's students joined others from across the Trust to engage the public on environmental issues, focusing on carbon footprints and the small changes individuals can make to reduce their impact. The day helped pupils strengthen their confidence in public speaking, teamwork and research, while enjoying the inspiring surroundings of the zoo.

The event also featured a Sustainable Art Exhibition, where our papier-mâché hot air balloons — created by pupils of all ages during Experience Week — hung proudly from the exhibition hall ceiling. Featuring miniature cut-outs of staff and students, the installation drew admiration from visitors and was a true highlight of the exhibition.

Congratulations to all our students for their creativity, passion and commitment to making a difference. Sustainability at St Mary's continues to grow stronger each year, and we are excited to see where these projects lead next.





Harry Potter Day

Following Scholastic Book's set theme of Friends and Foes, this year's Harry Potter Book Day was as magical as ever!

Miss Cullen took students to visit Dolores Umbridge's office, where they designed their own cat plates (with prizes awarded to the best ones). They also battled dementors and a death eater, as well as played games - such as pinning the nose on Voldemort. Pupils had the opportunity to eat various wizarding world-inspired foods too, like Quidditch Hoops and Golden Snitches, and they socialised and competed in their respective houses.

Every witch and wizard who attended was given a Harry Potter themed party bag from the SMCC library's very own Honeydukes shop. Each bag contained a chocolate frog with a collectible card, a bookmark, a fortune teller and a bag of Fizzing Whizbees!



A strike for St Mary's!

This term, two of our students proudly represented the school at the Youth National Bowling Competition in Dunstable last weekend. Calvin and Bobby both competed in the singles events as well as the team games, demonstrating impressive skill, determination and sportsmanship throughout the tournament.

It was a fantastic achievement for both pupils to compete at a national level, and they should be incredibly proud of their performances. We are delighted to share photos from the event, capturing a memorable weekend for these talented young bowlers.



Empire Theatre Dynamic Drawing Workshop

In October, a group of our Year 10 Art & Textiles students enjoyed an exciting and inspiring day out in Liverpool at the Liverpool Empire Theatre. While there, pupils took part in the English National Ballet's Dynamic Drawing Workshop, exploring the fascinating link between art and dance.

Following a guided session with a professional artist, students observed ballet dancers in rehearsal and used these live sessions to develop their observational drawing skills. It was wonderful to see so many pupils experimenting with new techniques and approaches to capturing movement and the human form, producing some truly creative and thoughtful work.

We were delighted to offer this enriching educational experience and thank everyone who supported the trip.



CHAPLAINCY IN ST. MARY'S



Our college poppy wreath



Cleaning the church



St Mary's creative response to the Jubilee Icon



Remembrance



The Jubilee Icon



Our Street Nativity 2025



Baking cross bread



The choir singing Christmas carols



SUBJECT FOCUS:

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Year 11

Congratulations to all our students for their outstanding hard work and dedication throughout the first school term in RE. We are especially proud of our Year 11 cohort, who have just completed their mock exams. We hope this experience has been both valuable and insightful, helping them to recognise that consistent effort and thoughtful revision truly pay off when you achieve the grade you deserve. Well done to everyone—your commitment has not gone unnoticed.

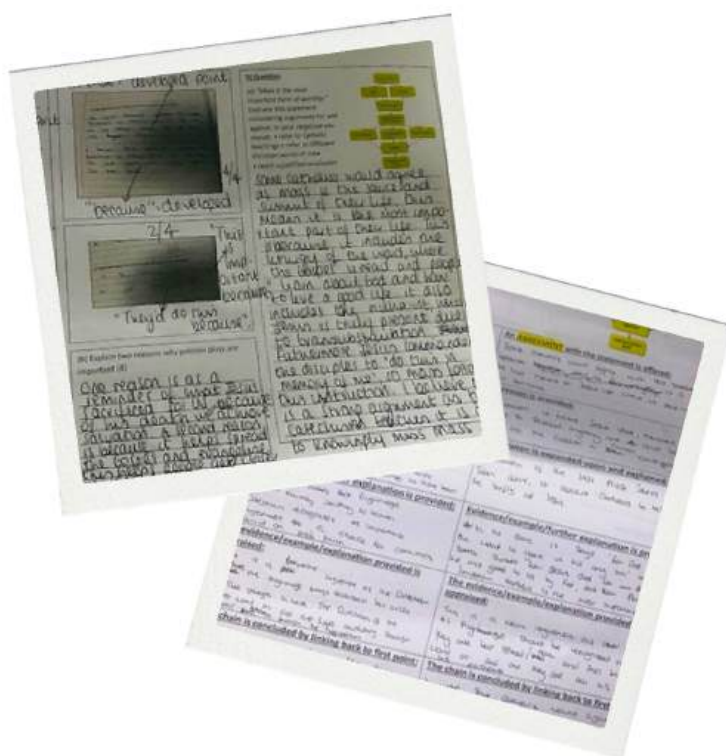
As mentioned previously, Year 11 have worked hard in preparation for their exams. We have then spent some time going through those papers and addressing any misconceptions and looking at what a good answer looks like. We have another set of Mock exams in February/March and there are revision classes available every Thursday after school in RE3 and RE4.



Year 10

Next term some of our Year 10 students have an exciting opportunity, we have invited 'God and the Big Bang' company in, the company delivers engaging workshops and resources enabling students to explore the relationship between science and faith, helping students think critically about big questions, such as the origins of the universe. We can't wait to see the results of the student's work.

We are well under way with the GCSE course with the 10s, we have recently completed a revision lesson where student made a pocket size revision square to help them revise for their upcoming assessment.



Key Stage 3

Year 9 have had a great Term 1 in RE, we began with the Creation and Covenant Unit which allowed them to explore the Catholic attitude to medical ethics, including euthanasia and genetic engineering.

These topics lend themselves really well to improving student's evaluative skills ready for GCSE. As teachers, we have been really impressed with student's maturity and effort in the lessons.

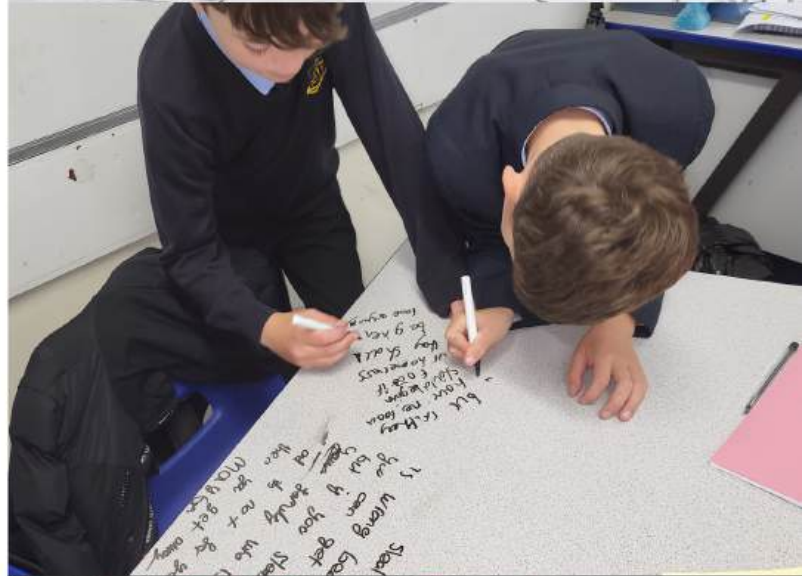
Next term, we are looking forward to a visit from Gee Walker, founder of the Anthony Walker Foundation. Gee has kindly agreed to come and talk to Year 9 about the Christian teachings of forgiveness and how this has played a huge role in her life.

Year 8 are currently studying the unit of Prophecy and Promise and the important messages of the Old Testament Prophets as well as coming up to Advent and the role of Jesus as Prophet, Priest and King. We made 'foldables' to explain the 'Three-Fold Office of the Church'.

Last half term students really enjoyed studying the life and beliefs of Pacifist Desmond Doss and how his religious upbringing had an effect on his career and actions in life.

Year 7 has continued to impress us throughout this half term in the way they have settled and taken on the challenge of Secondary RE. Students are speaking like philosophers in their lessons, using key vocabulary such as 'transcendent', 'omnipotent' and 'eternal'. We spent the first half term looking at the characteristics of God through the Genesis Creation Accounts and the different interpretations of the accounts. We are now moving on to look at the Old Testament, including how it developed and why it is so important to not only Christians but also the Jewish religion.

This term in RE we introduced knowledge organisers for the first time. These give students a really good overview of what they are going to be learning and include keywords, an overview of each lesson, links to previous learning and key sources they may use in their extended writing. Students have been using these really effectively, especially during retrieval tasks at the beginning of the lesson, they have helped students become more independent in their learning, which is fantastic.



Catholic Beliefs and Teachings

Catholic Beliefs and Teachings Lesson Checklist	
Learning Intention	Assess?
What is the Nature and Significance of the Trinity?	
What is the Biblical understanding of God as a Trinity of Persons?	
What is the significance of the Biblical Accounts of Creation?	
What does the Creation account tell us about the Nature of Humanity?	
What is the importance of the Incarnation?	
What is the Nature and Significance of Catholic beliefs in Eschatology?	
How does the belief in Salvation and Grace affect Catholic Practice?	
What is the Nature and Significance of Catholic beliefs in Eschatology?	
Catholic Beliefs and Teachings Keywords	
Trinity	The belief in God as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Omnipotent	God is all-powerful, all-knowing and all-seeing.
Omniscient	God is all-knowing, all-seeing and all-acting.
Stewardship	A duty to look after creation for future generations.
Imago Dei	Humanity as created in the image of God.
Incarnation	The belief that God became human through Jesus.
Resurrection	The belief that Jesus rose from the dead.
Salvation	Being saved from sin and death.
Grace	Unmerited favour from God.
Eschatology	Catholic beliefs in life after death and judgement.

Events of the Paschal Mystery - Catholic Beliefs - Edexcel - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - Edexcel - BOK Revision	
Trinity and the Bible	Trinity is the belief in God as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is used in worship during the sign of the cross, at the beginning and end of prayer, during Baptism and in the reciting of the Nicene Creed every Sunday during Mass. The word 'Trinity' is not in the Bible, however during Jesus' baptism all three persons are present. The Son is being baptised, the holy spirit appears as a dove and the voice of the Father comes down from heaven. It is also present in the Great Commission, where Jesus tells the disciples to 'baptise all nations in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit'.

Outside the Classroom	
Events of the Paschal Mystery - Catholic Beliefs - Edexcel - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - Edexcel - BOK Revision	

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Biblical Accounts of Creation	
The Genesis accounts teach that God is a creator. God created heaven and earth. This shows that God is:	
• Omnipotent – all-powerful	
• Omnibenevolent – all loving	
• Eternal – No beginning or end	
• Transcendent – Outside of Time and Space.	

Nature of Humanity	
Catholic believe that humans are created in the image of God. This means that they have been given dominion over the world. With this power, comes responsibility and stewardship. Pope Francis wrote an Encyclical letter to the world to promote care for creation saying we must share resources fairly.	
Incarnation	
Incarnation means 'made flesh'. God became human through Jesus. Jesus showed us how to live as a human and the incarnation led to salvation. In John 1:14 it writes 'The word became flesh'. The incarnation shows that God understands human suffering as he suffered as Jesus during his death.	
Paschal Mystery	
Paschal Mystery includes events such as the Last Supper, Garden of Gethsemane, Trials, Crucifixion, Resurrection and the Ascension. These events are important as the Last Supper is the basis for Catholics today, as Jesus said 'Do this in memory of me'. The Crucifixion is the reason we have Salvation and 'for God so loved the world he gave his only son'. Finally, the resurrection and ascension prove Jesus was the Son of God and that there is life after death.	

Eschatology	
Catholics believe that after death there are judged by God, shown in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats. After this judgement, humans can go to heaven, hell or purgatory. Purgatory is a process of purification, to cleanse their sins, this needs to happen before they can enter heaven. St Paul also taught that he believes in the resurrection and have	
Marian links to previous	
The Genesis Creation accounts show humans were made 'in the image of' and were given dominion, this is why CAFOD show all humans dignity and promote Catholic Social Teaching.	
Mystery of the Eucharist, Sacraments, such as the sacrament of reconciliation, which is where your relationship with God is repaired.	
Key Sources	
• Teaching inspired by the Holy Spirit - Bible	
• 'For God so loved the world he gave his only son' - Bible	
• 'The word became flesh' - Bible	
• 'God created man in his own image' - Bible	
• 'Do this in memory of me' - Bible	

I notice that God is Phallic
I think that Adam and God is in that painting
I wonder why God is reaching out to Adam



THE ARC

Careers Focus Edition

This term at The Arc has been all about *careers* - exploring future pathways, building confidence, and helping our SEND learners understand the opportunities waiting for them beyond school. Supporting our children to develop clear, meaningful career aspirations is central to what we do, and this term has provided some fantastic experiences that link directly to their interests and strengths.



Visit to Myerscough College, Croxteth

One of our highlights was a brilliant visit to Myerscough College in Croxteth. Our students currently study Animal Care Level 2 GCSE with us in The Arc, so this was an exciting chance to see how they could continue their learning in the future.

We were truly amazed by the wide range of courses, the excellent facilities, and of course the wonderful animals on site. Staff at Myerscough were incredibly welcoming and gave our pupils a clear picture of what further study in the animal care field could look like—from entry-level pathways right through to advanced qualifications.

For many of our children, this visit helped them imagine a real future in a career they are passionate about, and it opened their eyes to the possibilities that exist locally.



SEND Employability Conference

We also had the opportunity to attend a Kidz to Adulthood - SEND Employability Conference at the Exhibition Centre in Liverpool. This event was packed with information about the support available to our young people once they leave school, including supported internships, work placements, training opportunities, and services dedicated to helping SEND learners move confidently into the world of work.

Our students engaged brilliantly with the activities and were able to ask insightful questions about the steps involved in preparing for employment. It was a valuable day that reinforced the message that there are many routes to success, and plenty of help along the way!

Liverpool ONE Employability Scavenger Hunt

To put their new skills into practice, our pupils also took part in an employability scavenger hunt around Liverpool ONE. This activity challenged them to explore local businesses and identify the skills needed for different roles. It encouraged teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and confidence—all vital skills that will support them in their future careers.

The scavenger hunt also allowed students to gather evidence for their Employability portfolios, giving them tangible proof of the skills they are developing

Looking Ahead

It has been an inspiring term, full of opportunities that help our young people move closer to understanding their strengths and career ambitions. At The ARC, we are committed to ensuring our SEND learners are supported, empowered, and ready for whatever future they choose.

We look forward to another term of growth, exploration, and success! We are especially excited for our trip to see Matilda The Musical at Liverpool Empire Theatre this Christmas!



LIFE IN OUR LESSONS



Modern Foreign Languages

Bonjour tout le monde,

As we approach the end of term, the MFL department would like to say a huge well done to Year 11. You have worked incredibly hard and have not folded under pressure in your speaking exams – your resilience and commitment will be rewarded. Our Year 10 students have also been steadily mastering the skills needed to shine in their own speaking exams next year.

Year 7 are to be congratulated for the excellent progress they are making on the theme of school; it is wonderful to see your growing confidence in class. Year 8 and Year 9 have thoroughly enjoyed discovering the world of French music before moving on to exploring our wonderful local area and, respectively, the exciting world of new technologies.

We are also excited to announce that the department will be launching a trip to Paris next year. Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année à tous !

J. Le-Normand
Head of the MFL Department

Design Technology

It's been a wonderfully busy term in Design & Technology, with our rooms filled with the sounds of chopping, mixing, designing, and the occasional victorious shout when something finally works just right!

In Food and Nutrition, Year 7 have been cooking up a storm with their spaghetti bolognese, so don't be surprised if they start offering to cook at home. They also investigated whether a traditional Christmas dinner fits our healthy eating guidelines... happily, it does, as long as it's enjoyed in moderation.

Our Year 11 Hospitality and Catering students have impressed us throughout their GCSE practical exams, showing resilience and professionalism. Their dishes have been spectacular, from pulled pork burgers and homemade pasta carbonara to cheesecakes and ice cream. We couldn't be prouder.

Over in DT, KS3 classes have honed their CAD skills, creating templates for battery testers, clocks, and candle holders. With their designs complete, they're now ready to bring them to life in the workshop.

And it wouldn't be DT without our beloved wooden animals project! Year 7 have once again embraced it with enthusiasm, crafting characterful creatures from elephants to lions. We can't wait to share their creations in the newsletter photos.

A huge well done to all our students for their enthusiasm, creativity, and hard work this term. The DT department is incredibly proud of everything they have achieved!

E. Law
Head of DT Department



English

Once upon a time in the English department...

Our autumn term started with Year 7 beginning to develop their analytical skills by learning all about fairytale conventions and narrative theory before creating their own fabulously wicked villains and wonderful fairy tales! Now for a modern twist on Charles Dickens as we read and perform *Oliver!* in class. We hope by now all our Year 7s 'consider themselves' part of the English department family!

Year 8 have built on their great foundations in Year 7 to write some very interesting and perceptive essays about the nature of power in *Animal Farm*. They are now using some of those ideas to create their own dystopian stories and we can't wait to see what they invent! Year 9 have really impressed us with their thoughtful and mature writing and discussions about *And the Stars Were Burning Brightly*, a challenging modern novel that explores lots of really important issues affecting teenagers now.

The dedication and enthusiasm of our KS4 students has really impressed us this term. Year 10 have thrown themselves into studying *An Inspector Calls* and *A Christmas Carol* and loved their visit to the Floral Pavilion to see a musical version of Dickens' classic story about Ebenezer Scrooge. Year 11 have now completed their C2 Language and C1 Literature mocks and are eagerly awaiting the results of all of their hard work.

L. Lowe
Head of English Department

Physical Education

This term, six Year 10 students completed a Kin-Ball leadership qualification in preparation for delivering the sport to their WJEC cohort. Throughout the course, they consistently demonstrated St Mary's core values.

The students showed **determination** in developing their leadership skills and **courage** in taking on responsibility with confidence. Their **compassion** created an inclusive and supportive learning environment, while their **pride** in representing the school was evident in their conduct and attitude.

Across every session, they displayed exemplary behaviour and a positive approach, embodying the standards expected of St Mary's learners. Mr Murray highlighted how proud he was of the students and the professionalism they showed throughout the qualification. Their achievements not only reflect their individual commitment but also contribute positively to the wider school community.

J. Murray
Head of the Physical Education Department



Maths

It has been another busy and rewarding term in the Mathematics Department, with pupils across Key Stage 3 growing in confidence and curiosity as mathematicians.

Building on the White Rose curriculum, students have explored new ideas, strengthened core skills, and discovered how mathematics connects to real opportunities beyond the classroom. Year 7 have developed strong foundations through work on sequences, algebraic notation, equations and key number skills, while Year 8 have impressed with their reasoning as they tackled ratio, algebraic manipulation and straight-line graphs, beginning to see how different areas of maths link together.

Year 9, now preparing for GCSE study, have taken on more challenging concepts, including properties of number, percentages, surface area, volume and rearranging formulae. Across all year groups, Sparx Homework continues to support the development of positive study habits.

Teachers have also highlighted how these topics link to careers in engineering, digital technology, healthcare, finance and design. We are extremely proud of our pupils' enthusiasm and progress this term.

E. Daniels
Head of the Maths Department

Social Sciences

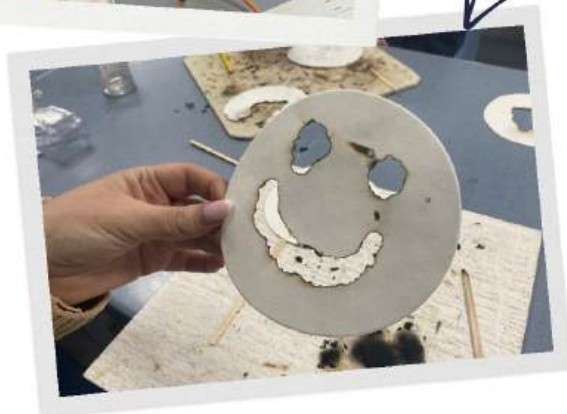
Our Year 13 Education and Early Years students have had a productive start to the year, engaging in hands-on training to plan and prepare educational activities ahead of their January assessments. They have carefully considered learning intentions, target audiences and resources before creating classroom displays that turn their ideas into visually engaging educational tools. Alongside this, weekly placements in local schools have enabled them to apply their skills in real settings, and we are incredibly proud of all they are achieving.

In Health, our Year 11 students Eibhlin and Alex have collaborated with Alder Hey and the University of Liverpool through the Alder Hey Research Ambassador scheme. They collected and analysed data on young people's attitudes to vaping, meeting with staff to discuss research methods and access to participants.

Year 12 have continued developing their Human Biology knowledge, exploring the musculoskeletal system by building balloon muscle models and constructing 3D synovial joints to understand movement.

Meanwhile, Year 10 have embraced the festive spirit by taking part in the Cards for Kindness initiative, sending Christmas cards to local care home residents to spark conversation and support those living with dementia.

L. Egerton
Head of Social Sciences Department



Science

This half term, students at St Mary's have been developing their scientific knowledge across a range of exciting topics.

Year 11 have prepared for and completed their mock exams, and have now begun new learning in ecology, forces, and organic chemistry, exploring how living systems interact, how forces affect motion, and how carbon-based compounds are formed. Year 10 students have been building their knowledge of electricity, studying circuits and electrical safety, while also learning about the periodic table and how atomic models have changed over time.

Year 9 has explored motion and pressure, investigating how speed is calculated and how forces act in fluids. Year 8 have studied how light travels and forms images, alongside practical lessons identifying acids, bases, and indicators. Year 7 have been introduced to chemical reactions, observing changes in materials, and have begun learning about cells, using microscopes to identify their main structures and functions.

V. Brown
Head of the Science Department

Performing Arts

This term has been an exciting and highly creative one across the Performing Arts Faculty, with pupils flourishing in Art, Music, Drama and Dance. Our annual pantomime, Cinderella, brought energy and laughter to the stage, showcasing the talent and teamwork of our cast, crew and musicians. Drama pupils were also treated to an unforgettable Blood Brothers workshop with former West End performers Mike Southern and Stephen Palfreman, who worked closely with Year 10 students to share professional insights, acting tips and stories from their time on stage.

In Art, pupils took part in a dynamic drawing workshop led by a professional artist, who guided them in capturing the movement, form and expression of ballerinas from the National Ballet. This inspiring session gave pupils a rare opportunity to study live performance-based drawing, and the outcomes were exceptional.

We were also thrilled to relaunch GCSE Textiles this year. Pupils have embraced their new Floral Decay project with enthusiasm, experimenting with stitch techniques, fabric manipulation and creative design processes. It has been fantastic to see the sewing machines brought back to life, and we look forward to showcasing their work in the summer.

Our school choir has also gone from strength to strength, enriched by a keen group of new Year 7 singers. They recently performed at the HFCMAT Carol Service at the Metropolitan Cathedral, delivering a beautiful set of Christmas repertoire with confidence and joy.

A. Keen
Head of Performing Arts



Humanities

To mark COP20, pupils took part in a series of inspiring activities focused on climate change, sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Workshops and discussions encouraged students to think critically about global issues, explore solutions and consider the role young people play in shaping a greener future.

Two of our Year 10 pupils also presented their findings on energy waste in schools to other HFCMAT schools and stakeholders, offering thoughtful reflections on how we could improve. From debating climate policies to designing their own eco-initiatives, students demonstrated impressive awareness and passion. The event strengthened the message that every small action contributes to meaningful change.

We are proud of our students for their efforts in promoting sustainability so far, and look forward to seeing what else unfolds in the New Year.

H. Stonely
Head of Humanities Department

SIXTH FORM

Welcome Year 12

In September we extended a very warm welcome to our Year 12 students as they officially join our St Mary's community as part of the HFC Sixth Form! This transition marks an exciting and significant step in their academic journey, bringing new opportunities for independent learning, leadership roles, and personal growth. We look forward to seeing them thrive, develop their potential, and become active, valuable members of our community over the next two years.

Recognition

As the first half-term drew to a close, we celebrated the hard work and accomplishments of our students with a fantastic end-of-term celebration. The students were invited to wear their own clothes and spend time on Inflation in recognition of their effort and achievements across all subjects. Students also made donations towards our chosen Sixth Form Charity 'Claire House'.



Remembrance

Our Sixth Form students recently demonstrated their respect and maturity by actively taking part in a meaningful Remembrance Service. The service provided a focused opportunity for them to pause and engage in thoughtful reflection on the sacrifices made by others in conflicts past and present. This participation underscores the students' commitment to understanding the significance of historical events and honouring those who served, fostering a deeper sense of citizenship and appreciation for peace within the student body.

How to save a life

At the start of December our Year 13 students all participated in first aid training, a vital part of our enrichment program designed to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to respond effectively in an emergency. They will achieve the formal qualification of a certified First Aider, empowering them to provide immediate care and crucial support to peers, staff, and members of the wider community. This initiative not only promotes a culture of safety and responsibility within our school but also furnishes the students with a valuable, lifesaving skill that will serve them well beyond their academic studies.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR 6TH FORM



View our
course guide



Apply online

THE INSPIRE PROGRAMME

We are delighted to share the latest news from our Inspire Programme this half term. It has been a busy and exciting few weeks, with our students embracing a wide range of opportunities designed to enrich their personal development and broaden their horizons.

Extra-Curricular Launch

Our extra-curricular programme was launched with great enthusiasm, offering students more opportunities than ever before to get involved, try something new and develop their skills beyond the classroom. From clubs and sports teams to creative and academic enrichment sessions, the response from pupils has been fantastic. We look forward to seeing many of them continue to take advantage of these opportunities as the year progresses.

Year 9 Healthy Lifestyle & Safety Days

This half term, Year 9 took part in a full Healthy Lifestyle Day as part of our Inspire Programme. We aim to equip our pupils with knowledge and awareness in all areas of personal, social, health, citizenship and economic development, with a strong focus on helping them understand how to keep themselves and each other safe.

We recognise the pressures that young people may face, and these sessions were designed to empower them to make informed, positive choices that support healthier lifestyles. Across the two days, students explored a range of important themes including Crime and Consequences, the realities of Going Country, the impact of peer pressure and substance misuse through Think • Feel • Do, and personal safety through A Walk in the Park.

These workshops, facilitated by Merseyside Police, Wirral Youth Justice Service, the Compass Team, Youth Matters and Response, encouraged pupils to reflect on real-life situations, consider the impact of their decisions and learn practical strategies for staying safe.



Careers Visits

This half term, students across several year groups took part in a variety of careers-focused visits designed to broaden their understanding of the world of work. These visits gave pupils a valuable opportunity to meet professionals from a range of industries, explore different workplace environments and gain insight into potential future pathways. Whether learning about apprenticeships, university routes, or specialist careers, pupils engaged with enthusiasm and left feeling inspired about the possibilities ahead. These experiences play a vital role in helping students make informed choices about their next steps.

CAREERS NEWS

Preparing for the Future, Today

Following on from last year, the Careers Team has continued to work this term with the Department for Education (DfE) and The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) on the Equalex project, which focuses on providing students from Year 7 to Year 11 with meaningful and equitable modern experiences of work. In line with new government guidance introduced in September, schools are working towards delivering 50 hours (or ten days) of work-based experience across Key Stages 3 and 4. This includes a blend of employer visits into school, off-timetable experiences, and virtual opportunities.

As part of this work, and in collaboration with our partners at the Careers and Enterprise Company, all Year 10 students took part in an insightful careers session in November led by representatives from His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS). Four professionals, including two lawyers and two trainee lawyers, delivered a two-hour interactive presentation and Q&A. Through videos, quizzes, simulated courtroom scenarios, and personal career journeys, students gained a detailed understanding of how the British court system operates and explored a wide range of roles such as court usher, solicitor, legal advisor, clerk, administrator, interpreter, and prosecuting advocate. The session also helped to dispel the common misconception that a university degree is required for all careers in law. Students who expressed a strong interest in this sector will be offered a follow-up opportunity after the Christmas break to explore this pathway further.

Alongside these careers experiences, our Next Steps Year 11 cohort recently attended an inspiring event at Hope University, Liverpool on 18 September. Organised in partnership with the nationally acclaimed Loudspeaker Group, students participated in KickStart interactive workshops focused on Year 11 expectations and post-16 pathways. The sessions promoted positive mindset, inclusivity, self-development, and strategies for overcoming challenges and celebrating success. Further targeted support will continue throughout the year to help students achieve the best possible outcomes at the end of Year 11 and beyond.

We are also proud to share that two St. Mary's students are currently developing an exciting Change Maker project focused on biodiversity, in collaboration with pupils from St. John Plessington and Chester Zoo. As part of this sustainability initiative, they have taken on specific project roles — including Researcher, Reporter, Inventor, Teamworker, Visionary and Organiser — mirroring real-world skills used in environmental careers and workplace settings. Through researching biodiversity issues, communicating findings, generating creative solutions, and working collaboratively, students are building valuable transferable skills such as teamwork, planning, and problem-solving. This authentic project experience not only deepens their understanding of sustainability but also supports exploration of potential future pathways in science, conservation, and environmental stewardship with a leading conservation organisation.



Explore Careers in the Armed Forces

The UK Armed Forces — the British Army, Royal Air Force (RAF) and Royal Navy — protect the country and support peacekeeping and humanitarian aid around the world, while offering a wide range of exciting career paths beyond frontline roles. There are hundreds of jobs available, from engineering, logistics and medical roles to leadership and technical specialties, many of which build skills that transfer into civilian careers.

Whether you're interested in practical trades, high-tech roles, management or travel, each service provides professional training, development opportunities and real-world experience that can support future study and work.

Visit the official careers sites for the Army, RAF and Royal Navy to explore roles, find entry requirements and discover pathways into rewarding work that makes a difference.

REWARDS & RECOGNITION

Attendance Awards

Throughout December, we were delighted to celebrate students who demonstrated excellent attendance this term. Pupils were recognised with a range of special prizes to reward their commitment to coming to school each day — from a Greggs or Subway lunch, to selection boxes, and even a £100 Amazon voucher!

Rewarding good attendance in this way helps motivate pupils and acknowledges the effort they put into being present and ready to learn each day, encouraging positive attendance patterns.

We are extremely proud of all our students who achieved the standard for these awards. It was wonderful to see so many smiles as prizes were presented, and we hope this added a little extra joy to end the term.

Congratulations to everyone who received an award, well done on your outstanding attendance!



End of Term Celebration

To celebrate the end of a busy term, students (and staff!) enjoyed a fantastic day of fun, festivity and friendship in a relaxed, celebratory atmosphere. Pupils came to school ready for a range of exciting activities designed to reward their hard work.

The sports hall was filled with laughter as everyone enjoyed the inflatables, bouncing their way into the Christmas break! There was something for everyone, with lively football matches, a selection of games and lots of time for socialising and teamwork.

The festivities continued with a delicious treat of pizza, chips and an ice cream parlour, which proved very popular and rounded off the day perfectly. It was a wonderful way to end the term and celebrate the school community. We wish you all a very merry Christmas!



Hot Chocolate Friday

Year 7

Harley O, Freya D, Annie A, Alfred A, Meghan W, Kyle N, Merit M, Joseph A, Lucas R, Annie May C, Finley L, Emma B, Evan T, Paul D, Mia B, Archie A, Faye T, Paigan H, Finlee J, Theo Y, Olivia T, Max C

Year 8

Rosie W, Isaac P, Jayden P, Sophie S, Delilah L, Ashley Q, Mason M, Bianca B, Oliver B, Kaitlyn S, Jo M, Lewis C

Year 9

Sheniah N, Bobby M, Michael B, Brooke B, Tilly S, Luke M, Hayden P, Matthew C, Joseph G, Orla K, Lexi W, Ellie M, Archie M, Frankie N, Helin Y, Darcie C, Oliver C, Lola N, Taylor M, Max N, Ren'Ee M, George T

Year 10

Holli R, Rhys S, Tia A, George M, Ruby L, Lucy D, Ava M, Harry C, Oscar D, Alex I, Joshua H, Olivia S, Ellis H, Freddie B, Tommy J, Lola C, Nataya A, Alex V, Aden S, Albert S, Kiera H, Callum C

Year 11

Elsie P, Ellie K, Alex W, Lily M, Erin B, Tallulah C, Mary C, Euphemia D, Charlie L, Molly C, Kazey C, Dillon L, Kayley D, Summer B, Cameron F, Annabella C, Logan G

Sixth Form

Nathan S, Lily R, Tayla S, Roisin K



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£ 2.70

COLLEGE NOTICE

Price increase to school meals from January 2026

Dear Parents/Guardians,

We are writing to inform you that Impact Foods Group will be increasing the price of our meals from £2.61 to £2.70 from January 2026. This will bring us in line with Schools in the surrounding area.

This price is for those eligible to free school meals and also includes all our meal deals. There is also a slight increase on some items to bring these in line with this change and the increased food costs. We have attached an updated tariff to reflect this.

For anyone who believes they are entitled to free school meals, please contact the School Office.

Any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kindest regards,

Bryan Lygate
Chief Operating Officer

**IMPACT
FOOD
GROUP**



TARIFF JANUARY 2026

Innovate IFG

DRINKS	PRICE	BREAKFAST	PRICE
Water 500ml	£1.15	Breakfast Roll	£1.55
Fruit Slush	£1.45	Mini Breakfast Baguette	£1.55
Capri Sun	£1.30	3 Piece Breakfast Pot	£2.20
Dalston Cans	£1.45	4 Piece Breakfast Pot	£2.40
Radnor 200ml Carton	£1.15	Toast with Butter or Jam	£0.35
Milk / Flavoured Carton	£1.15	Waffle with Topping	£1.70
HOMEBAKES		Pastries & Croissants	£1.70
Muffins	£1.35	Cereals + Milk (8oz)	£1.05
Small Cakes	£1.05	Porridge for Staff	£1.00
Cookies	£1.35	Porridge for Students	Free
Brownie	£1.35	Porridge Toppings	£0.50
HOT GRAB & GO		COLD GRAB & GO	
Bagel	£2.60	Chill Deal Roll	£1.15
Panini - Half/Whole	£1.55/ £2.70	Deli Sub Roll/Sandwich	£2.30
Toastie - Whole	£2.30	Wrap	£2.70
Korean Crispy Chicken	£2.65	Naturally - Premium Salad	£3.00
Tandoori Chicken Naan	£3.00	Basic Baguette/Premium Baguette	£2.45/ £2.70
Wrap/Twister	£2.75	Half Baguette	£1.55
Chicken Wings	£2.35	Cold Pasta Pot 16oz	£2.50
Shawarma	£2.75	Vegetable Bag	£0.75
Pizza Slice (Break Time)	£1.60	Protein Pots	£1.05
Falafel Kebab	£2.75	Salad Pots	£2.00
Hot Bowls	£2.65	Yoghurt/Jelly/Fruit Pots	£1.00
Hot Pasta Pot - Med/Lrg	£2.25/£2.50	Whole Fruit	£0.55
Jacket Potato - 1 Topping	£2.15		
ALL POWER BITES			
Range of 8oz Nutritious Rice & Noodle Dishes	£1.35		

VAT on hot food and beverages will be charged at the current rate for all staff members

Be part of their story

F⁴STER

Wirral Council



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COLLEGE KEY DATES

**CHRISTMAS BREAK: MONDAY 22ND
DECEMBER - FRIDAY 2ND JANUARY**

JANUARY

Monday 5th - Inset Day

Tuesday 6th - Students return, Holy feast day of Epiphany- Mass in chapel

Wednesday 14th - UCAS Application Deadline

Friday 16th - Parental Coffee Event

FEBRUARY

Wednesday 4th - Careers Fair

Saturday 7th - Saturday 14th - Ski Trip

Thursday 12th - Year 9 Parents' Evening

**HALF TERM BREAK: MONDAY 16TH -
FRIDAY 20TH FEBRUARY**

Monday 23rd - Students return

Wednesday 25th - Friday 27th - Year 7 Retreat Days

MARCH

Tuesday 3rd - Parental Coffee Event, Year 10 Enterprise Day

Wednesday 4th - Year 12 Enterprise Day

Thursday 12th - Year 9 Options Evening

Thursday 26th - Year 10 Parents' Evening

