

WORK TOGETHER; SUCCEED TOGETHER

Respect | Courage | Pride | Determination | Compassion



**St Mary's
Catholic College**
Wallasey
A Voluntary Aided Academy

Dear Families,

As we come to the end of the summer term and academic year, our theme of the week has been "See the Good." It is a fitting theme as we reflect on one of the highlights of our school year, Experience Week.

Throughout this week, our students have immersed themselves in a remarkable range of activities, opportunities and experiences. Whether developing new skills, exploring the outdoors, taking on leadership opportunities or simply stepping beyond their comfort zones, they have embraced everything that Experience Week represents. These experiences are not simply enjoyable activities; they are a vital part of our mission as a Catholic school to develop the whole person; academically, socially, spiritually and morally. Watching the year 7 circus skills was a particular highlight of mine.

In Sunday's Gospel, Jesus tells the Parable of the Sower, reminding us that God generously scatters seeds, but it is the quality of the soil that determines whether those seeds take root and bear fruit. Experience Week has provided countless opportunities to sow those seeds. Every friendship strengthened, every new challenge embraced, and every new experience has planted something good in the lives of our young people.

Our theme, "See the Good," invites us to recognise those seeds of goodness, not only in ourselves, but also in one another. It encourages us to notice the acts of kindness that often go unseen, the courage shown in trying something new, the determination to keep going when things are difficult and the compassion shown to those around us. When we choose to see the good, we begin to recognise God's work in our school community and the many ways His love is reflected in the people around us.

My hope is that the experiences of this week become more than just happy memories. Instead, they become the fertile soil from which our values of Respect, Courage, Pride, Determination and Compassion continue to grow long after the summer holidays have begun. May we leave this week committed to seeing the good in others, bringing out the best in one another and continuing to bear the fruit of the Gospel in our daily lives.

Update on the Summer term

It has been another busy year with much to celebrate. For a full round up of this term's activities please see our Summer term newsletter [here](#).

General updates

As always, there are some important updates to share for September. To make it easier to find what you need, I've included a summary of key topics covered in this letter:

- Ofsted Success
- Parent Survey Feedback
- Updated Uniform and Equipment Standards
- Yondr Pouches
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Summer Results Days
- Pastoral Team Updates
- Staffing Changes

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- End of Term and Start of Term Arrangements
- Summer Activities and Support
- Catering update
- Final Note

Ofsted Success

This time last year, I wrote to you to share the positive outcome of our Ofsted monitoring visit, which effectively served as a health check on the progress the school was making. Fast forward twelve months and, following our full graded inspection in January, I am once again delighted to discuss the positive Ofsted news!

I know I have already shared the report, but it is important to recognise that many of the judgements and comments within it are the strongest the school has received for a considerable number of years. This is a direct result of us all working together and succeeding together, and I would like to thank every member of our school community for the part they have played in that journey.

The inspectors had many complimentary things to say about St Mary's. Whilst there are, of course, areas that we will continue to develop as part of our commitment to continuous improvement, the overall feedback was both positive and encouraging. This achievement belongs to the whole school community, and it provides a strong foundation as we continue our improvement journey together. The full Ofsted report can be found [here](#).

Parent/Carer Survey

Thank you to all the parents and carers who completed our recent Parent Survey. We received another excellent response, and I am delighted that satisfaction has improved across a number of key areas.

Compared with last year, more parents told us that their children are happy and feel safe at school. We also saw improvements in views on behaviour, expectations for learning and communication about what children are learning. I am particularly pleased because these improvements directly reflect the actions we committed to following the last survey, including the introduction of our Form Tutor Evening and increased communication about the curriculum.

Whilst we are proud of this progress, we remain committed to improving further. Next year, we will continue to strengthen our partnership with parents, including through our Monday Morning SLT Drop-ins, where parents can meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team between 9:00am and 10:30am to discuss any questions, concerns or suggestions.

Thank you once again for your continued support and constructive feedback.

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By working together, we can continue to ensure that every child flourishes at St Mary's.

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Uniform and Equipment Standards

As I shared earlier this year, there are national changes to school uniform requirements. As you prepare for September, I would encourage you to familiarise yourself with these changes. A full overview can be found in the letter shared earlier in the year, which is linked [here](#).

The main changes are that **a branded jumper is no longer required** and **a branded school bag is no longer compulsory**. However, students are still welcome to wear their existing branded jumpers and use their St Mary's branded bags and jumpers, so there is no need to replace perfectly good items. School bags must be a plain rucksack that can hold all school equipment, including PE KIT.

Please remember that **jewellery is not permitted** in school. Any piercings must be removed before your child returns in September. A "new" piercing will not be accepted as a reason for it to remain in place. In exceptional circumstances, and only following discussion with the Head of Year, a small clear plastic retainer may be permitted for a short period. Earrings and all other visible piercings are not allowed.

Please also refer to the school website for details of approved school shoes. If you are unsure whether a particular style meets our expectations, members of the Senior Leadership Team will be available on **13th August, 20th August and 1st September** to check footwear before purchase. We are keen to help families avoid the expense of buying a second pair of shoes.

Sugary and fizzy drinks, including energy drinks, are not permitted in school and will be disposed of if brought onto site. Refillable drink bottles are encouraged.

We will continue to confiscate prohibited items.

Yondr Pouches

From September, all students will be expected to bring a **Yondr pouch** to school each day to safely store their mobile phone.

The school will provide every student with their **first pouch free of charge**, and these will be handed out on the first day when they return. If a pouch is subsequently lost or damaged, a replacement will need to be purchased from the school.

Having seen the positive impact this system has had in many other schools, we are confident it will improve learning, wellbeing and the overall school environment. We are also working closely with the **Smartphone Free Childhood** campaign to support families in promoting healthy phone use.

For full details of the Yondr system, please refer to the separate [letter sent recently](#).

Students in years 8-11 will enter school via the Sandy Lane gate in September.

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Questioning Strategies

This half term, we have launched two key classroom strategies across the school: Think, Pair, Share and our Pose, Pause, Pounce, Bounce questioning routine. These approaches are designed to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to think deeply, discuss ideas with a partner and contribute confidently to classroom learning, rather than relying on the same few volunteers. By encouraging pupils to explain, justify and build on each other's ideas, we are strengthening their communication, confidence and ability to think critically. These important oracy skills support success across the curriculum and help prepare pupils with the confidence, collaboration and communication skills they will need throughout their education and beyond. We have been delighted with the positive start and look forward to developing these approaches further across the school in September.

Attendance & Punctuality

Improving attendance remains one of our highest priorities at St Mary's. Over the past year, we have made encouraging progress, which was recognised during our recent Ofsted inspection. However, we know there is still more to do, as attendance remains below the national average.

Every day in school matters. Good attendance is vital for academic success, wellbeing and building positive relationships, and even small improvements can have a significant impact over time.

We recognise that families can sometimes face genuine barriers to attendance. Where this is the case, we encourage you to contact us as early as possible so that we can work together to provide the right support. We will also continue to meet with the parents and carers of students whose attendance is causing concern, ensuring we understand individual circumstances and agree practical steps to improve attendance together.

Summer Results Days

Year 11 and Year 13 parents will receive separate letters outlining the arrangements for Results Days. As a reminder, results can be collected from 8:30am on the following dates:

- A Level Results Day: Thursday 13 August 2026
- GCSE Results Day: Thursday 20 August 2026

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Pastoral team updates

From September, there will be some changes to the pastoral teams across the College.

Year group	Head of Year	Progress & Aspiration Coach	e-mail address
7	Miss Camden (Formally Mrs Willis)	Miss Paton-Watson	year7@stmaryswallasey.com
8	Mrs Draper	Miss Murphy	year8@stmaryswallasey.com
9	Miss Jones		year9@stmaryswallasey.com
10	Miss Schuman-Edwards		year10@stmaryswallasey.com
11	Mr Davies	Mrs Cotgrave	year11@stmaryswallasey.com
Sixth Form	Mrs Witan	Mr Cotgrave	6thform@stmaryswallasey.com

Attendance Officer	Mrs Garrigan	attendance@stmaryswallasey.com
SEND Team	Mrs Moor / Mrs Todd	Sendco@stmaryswallasey.com

Mrs Rubin will provide pastoral and attendance support across all the year groups.

Staffing changes

The end of an academic year inevitably brings change, and this year is no exception. At the end of this term, we will be saying goodbye to a number of valued colleagues who are moving on to new opportunities. We would like to thank Mrs Wainwright, Mrs Tolley, Mr McCann, Miss Williams, Miss Peters, Miss McDavitt, Mr Todd, Miss Clayton, Miss Duncan, Miss Brown, Mr McCann, Miss Ellis and Mrs Price for their dedication and commitment to St Mary's. We wish them every success and happiness in their new roles.

When we return in September, we will also be delighted to welcome a number of new colleagues to our school community. Mrs Burkey will be joining us as a Teaching Assistant, Mrs Gabbita will be joining the Mathematics Department, and Mrs Gladwin will be taking up a substantive post within the Design & Technology Department. We wish all of our new staff a very warm St Mary's welcome and look forward to them becoming part of our school community.

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End of Term and Start of Term arrangements

End of 2025/2026 Term arrangements

St Mary's will close to students at 12:30 on Friday 17th July, 2026. School buses will still run at the normal time, if you are not able to make alternative arrangements for your child to get home and would like them to stay in school until 15:05 please complete [this form](#)

Start of 2026/2027 term

Tuesday 1st September 2025	Staff Inset day, students do not attend
Wednesday 2nd September 2025	Year 7 and 12 students attend Year 7 start at 08:35 Year 12 start at 11:00
Thursday 3rd September 2025	Normal school day- All year groups return College day starts at 08:35 Year 7 Use the St Georges Road entrance All year 8-11 students use the Sandy Lane Gate for Yondr Introductions.
Friday 4th September 2025	Normal school day- All year groups return College day starts at 08:35 Year 7 Use the St Georges Road entrance All year 8-11 students use the Sandy Lane Gate

School will be open from 8:00am, with free breakfast available for all students.

Pedal Bikes are welcome on site. Year 7 students should enter via the St George's Road entrance, where secure cycle storage is available. Students in Years 8–13 should use the Sandy Lane entrance to access the bike storage on the main school site. For everyone's safety, all students must dismount at the school gate and walk their bicycles to the designated bike stands before securing them.

Further to this, I wish to provide notice that St Mary's will close to students at 1:45pm on Tuesday 8th September, this is to accommodate the preparation for open evening. All term dates for 2025/2026 can be found [here](#).

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Summer activities and support

I understand that any holiday period can bring its own challenges for some families, particularly the long summer break. Miss Skinner has created a list of useful contacts that may be of some use in the coming weeks, this list can be found [here](#). The St Mary's transition Summer College is running from Monday 10th August to Friday 21st August. Wirral's Holiday Activity Fund also provides enriching activities, nutritious meals, and a chance for young people to meet new friends in a safe & fun environment during the college holidays. Use the [interactive map](#) to find an activity near you.

Catering Update

Impact has confirmed that there will be some price increases from September. A letter from Impact explaining these changes can be found [here](#). Meal tariff will be increasing by 3% and Free School Meal Allowance to £2.85 from September 2026

[Tariff September 2026](#)

[Menus](#)

Final note

Thank you for your continued support throughout this year. As we look ahead to the next academic year, our focus will be on continuing to improve attendance so that we are at least in line with similar schools nationally, strengthening the quality of questioning and classroom dialogue to deepen learning, and further enhancing the overall school experience for every child.

These ambitions can only be achieved by continuing to work together, and I look forward to working with you again next year as we continue to move St Mary's forward.

For now, though, it is time to enjoy a well-earned break. I hope you and your families have a happy, safe and restful summer.

May God bless you and your families over the summer. Peace be with you all.

Mr Maddocks
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Calendar Events

To further support our communication strategy at the College I want to draw your attention to the events that are planned to take place during the next term.

Date	Event
Tuesday 8th September	Open Evening 6.00-8.30pm
Tuesday 23rd September	Open Morning 1 (9.30-11.00am)
Tuesday 6th October	Open Morning 2 (9.30 - 11.00 am)
Thursday 15th October	Year 12&13 Parents' Evening (3.30-6.45pm)
Thursday 22nd October	Y11 Parents' Evening - (3.30-6.45pm)
Friday 23rd October	Trust Inset Day - Closed to students
Monday 2nd November	Return to College for Half Term 2 - all year groups
Tuesday 3rd November	Sixth Form Open Evening
Friday 18th December	Last Day of Half-Term 2

Further Dates can be found [here](#).

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