



Archdiocese of Birmingham
**ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

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Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



St. Mary's mission: To love God above all things by: learning together, loving ourselves, loving each other, loving all people, loving life itself and constantly striving for excellence worthy of our God-given gifts.

December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'Families and Community'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Intentional and Prophetic'



Dear parents and carers,

19th December 2025

Advent

As we enter the fourth week of Advent, we are reminded of the profound symbolism of the "Angel's Candle," representing Peace. The message of the angels — "Peace on Earth, good will to all" — invites us to pause and grow in anticipation of the peace brought to us through the birth of Christ. This final week of Advent encourages us to prepare our hearts for the joy and hope of Christmas.

Nativities

What a joy it has been to watch the children perform their nativities this week. Their enthusiasm, confidence, and delight have shone through every performance. My heartfelt thanks go to all staff involved in preparing the children, and to you, our parents and carers, for supporting them with costumes, practising lines, and joining us to watch. These moments truly capture the spirit of our school community.

Curriculum maps – Spring 1

Curriculum maps for Spring 1 have now been created and uploaded to the school website. Please do take a moment to look through what your child will be learning next term. They offer a helpful overview of the exciting learning ahead.

Spring Term dates

Over the Christmas break, I will be finalising all key dates for the Spring term. These will be shared with you on X and via email on the first day back. Our first week of term will be relatively calm, with Year 3 leading our Wednesday Mass on the theme of the Epiphany.

Reflection

As we come to the end of a joyous and incredibly busy term, I want to take a moment to reflect on everything your children have achieved. Their resilience, curiosity, kindness, and hard work have been evident in every corner of the school. I am deeply grateful to our dedicated staff and to all our families for your continued support.

I wish all the staff and families of St Mary's a blessed and peaceful Christmas. May this season bring you time with loved ones, moments of rest, and opportunities for prayer and reflection.

I look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 5th January 2026, at the normal time.

God bless, Mrs Yorke

Fourth advent candle



Peace

As we approach the fourth week of Advent, let's come together in reflection. The "Angel's Candle" signifies peace, reminding us of the angels' timeless message:

"Peace on earth, good will to all."

May the "Angel's Candle" inspire us to be ambassadors of peace, spreading goodwill in our community and beyond.

Scripture

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." –

John 14:27

Reflection

Nurturing Inner Peace

In this season of Advent, symbolising peace, let's explore the profound tranquillity that emanates from within and the Jesus that talks to us, if we allow Him to, when we are still. When we have this ourselves, we can be at one with the world and calm when presented with the challenges come our way and respect our differences with others. How can we cultivate and share this peace within ourselves and extend it to others?

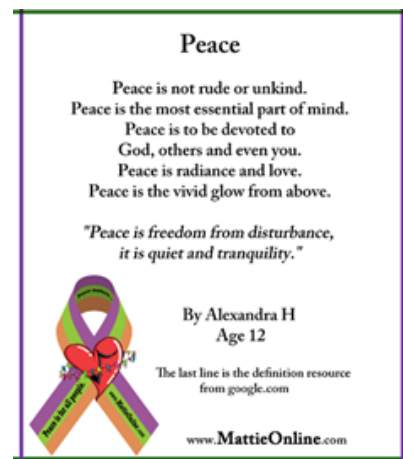
open question

In what ways can we actively contribute to creating a peaceful and harmonious atmosphere within our school community and beyond?

Task

A Creative Harmony –

Families, let your reflections flow into a creative expression of peace. It might be a peaceful poem, a visual representation, or any form that captures the essence of peace. Share your creations with us, and let the light of peace radiate throughout our community.





Catholic Life



Matthew 11:4-6

“And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

Children will understand that:

- Jesus is the Good News, He is our hope and the one we have been waiting for.
- As Pilgrims of Hope we can celebrate by sharing the Good News with others through our words and actions.



School Masses

Our next Mass: –

Year 3 Mass

Epiphany

Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 7th December 2026**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 3 will be leading this special Mass for the epiphany and Year 4 will be in attendance. All parents are very welcome to attend.



This year, there will not be a whole school Christmas Mass. We would encourage you to attend one of the Christmas Masses (and Masses over the festive period) at St Mary's – please the flyer for details.



Christmas Masses	
Christmas Eve - Wednesday 24 December	
Morning Mass – 8.30am	
"Midnight" Masses – 6.00pm & *8.30pm	
Christmas Day - Thursday 25 December	
Christmas Masses – 9.30am & *11.30am, <u>No evening Mass</u>	
All Other Masses over the Festive Period	
Friday 26 December – *Mid-day (<u>No 8.30am Mass</u>)	
Saturday 27 December – *Mid-day & 6.00pm, <u>No Confessions</u>	
Sunday 28 December – Solemnity of the Holy Family – 9.30am, *11.00am & 5.00pm	
Monday 29-Wednesday 31 December – *Mid-day (<u>No 8.30am Mass</u>)	
Thursday 1 January 2026 – Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God – *Mid-day (<u>No 8.30am Mass</u>)	
Friday 2 January – *8.30am	
Saturday 3 January – *Mid-day & 6.00pm	
Sunday 4 January – The Epiphany of the Lord – 9.30am, *11.00am & 5.00pm	

Nativities

It has been a joyous week in school. The children have enjoyed performing the nativities this week to you and we have received such lovely messages for the staff. We are glad that you enjoyed them. Thank you for the hours of support learning lines and song lyrics and helping to prepare costumes. It was all worth it!



Years 1 and 2
dazzled us with
their performance
of 'A Starry Night
in Bethlehem'

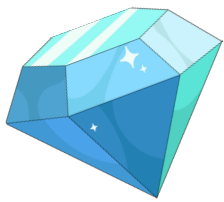


Years 3 and 4 delighted us with
their performance of "Who took the
Mary out of Christmas" – a fantastic
version of the Christmas Story told
from Mary's perspective.



Years 5 and 6 amazed us
with "A Light in the
Darkness" retelling the
Christmas Story
accompanied by
traditional carols.





God Given Gift Assemblies: You are all Diamonds!



Even the brightest diamond starts as something very simple but when we use our gifts and let God shape us, those gifts shine brightly like a diamond! We're so proud of all the children's hard work this term, and in particular, children who received an award in this week's God Given Gifts Assemblies.





Once again, on Christmas morning at 9.30 Mass, the children will be re-telling the nativity story in place of the Gospel reading. There will be a rehearsal for all school age children who would like to be involved on **Tuesday 23 December at 12 Noon in Church** and will last about 2 hours. If you can't make it, you can still be involved on Christmas morning by coming dressed as a shepherd or an angel.



Christmas Day Gathering: No one should be alone at Christmas. Join us in the **Parish Hall** on **Wednesday 25 December, 3.00pm** for a relaxed and welcoming celebration. This is a **bring-and-share** event and **Christmas jumpers and festive attire** are warmly encouraged. All are welcome. Please add your details to the clipboard.



Notices

If you discover any school property at home over the Christmas break, please do return these items when we come back in January. In particular, we would very much appreciate if the following can be returned:



Little Wandle books
Spare uniform borrowed from school
Any other books that have been borrowed from staff
Advent prayer bags



Create Club

We are excited to announce that Create Club will be running again this Spring Term! Each session offers a wide selection of fun art and craft activities designed to inspire your child and help their creativity flow. The children get to complete a project each week to take home.

Activities include: painting, drawing, sculpture, creative challenges etc:

Club Details: KS1 on Tuesdays and KS2 on Thursday

If you would like your child to join, please follow the links below to sign up:

Infants: <https://portal.thecreationstation.franscape.io/class-overview/10028>

Juniors: <https://portal.thecreationstation.franscape.io/class-overview/10029>



Spaces are limited, so book early to avoid disappointment!

Thank you for your continued support.

Do not book holidays during term time

This is a reminder that holidays during term time are unauthorised. If you intend to take your child out of school during term time, we ask that you complete a holiday request form at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date where possible. Parents may be fined by the Local Authority for taking unauthorised leave of absence. Children need to be in school every day so please ensure holidays are only booked during school holiday time.

Good attendance, continues to be a school and government priority. Good attendance is 96% and above

Remember below 95% is a concern and below 90% is classed as persistent absence. If you have any problems with regards to getting your child to school or you are struggling to improve your child's attendance, please speak to Mrs. Yorke or Mrs. Noone.

We will announce the attendance for the previous week in this section of the newsletter each week.

Attendance and Punctuality: –

Our attendance for last week was –

Week 15/12/25-19/12/25

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	95	92	92	97	90	95	97	91	97	93	95	96	98	94
Lates	3	1	2	5	3	1	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Whole School Attendance so far this year						97.1%		School Target					97%	

Well done 6R - Our attendance champions!

This is an **Operation Encompass School**

KEEPING SAFE

We are an operation encompass school. Therefore school is working alongside the police to ensure support for any child who has been involved in or witness to domestic abuse. Please find more information about this on our website or contact the school office.

Pastoral Team

If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team

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If you have a concern that a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm, or you receive a disclosure (intentionally or unintentionally) you must contact one of the following staff members as quickly as possible:



Laura Noone
Lead DSL
DHT



Louise Yorke
Headteacher



Jade Preedy
AHT



Rachel Jones
Senior Teacher



Sharon Tame
School
Counsellor



Rachel Richards
EYFS Lead



Shania Birchenall
SENDCo

Our school nursing team offers a confidential video drop-in clinic for parents and pupils through the NHS Attend Anywhere platform. It's a great way to get advice on health, well-being, and emotional support without leaving home.

When? Every Tuesday and Thursday, 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Who can use it? Children/young people aged 5 to 19 and their parents/carers

How to join? Simply click the Attend Anywhere link provided by the school or scan the QR code.

Topics include sleep, healthy eating, emotional well-being and more. All conversations are confidential unless safeguarding concerns arise.

School Nurse Virtual Drop-in Clinic

Birmingham School Health Support Service

Every Tuesday and Thursday from 4:30-5:30pm

Your School Nurse is here to help you feel healthy, happy and safe, so you can get the best out of school life and your education.

You can chat confidentially with a School Nurse or, for parents, about your child (ages 5-19).

Just scan the QR code or visit the link below to get started.

<https://nhs.uk/BCHC/C-F/Schl-Nurse/Drop-In>



Congratulations to the following children who have shone in school over the last week:

Year RB	Halima	For being a kind friend in RB!
Year RT	Suzy	For incredible sewing in DT lessons this week!
Year IF	Libby	For living out St Mary's mission in everything she does.
Year IL	Micaiah	For writing a beautiful reflection in RE
Year 2E	Simona	For trying hard in all lessons and taking pride in all of her work
Year 2G	Nandi	For being a fabulous member of 2G!
Year 3L	Guadalupe	For being a fantastic member of 3L and always being a super role model!
Year 3T	Bronty	For having an amazing week and working really hard on her writing
Year 4J	Olivia	For being an amazing, kind member of the class!
Year 4M	Yoadan	For being exceptionally helpful in class and singing with heartfelt dedication during the Nativity.
Year SF	SF	For a wonderful carol concert. You were amazing!
Year SM	SM	For their beautiful performance in their carol concert
Year 6O	6O	For an incredible carol concert that made everyone cry with Christmas joy!
Year 6R	6R	For performing a beautiful carol concert; for beautiful singing, acting and reverence.

