



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

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

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Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

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.

September is dedicated to Mary.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'Dignity of the Human Person'

Our virtues for this half term are: - Eloquent and Truthful



Dear Parents and Carers,

12th September 2025

At St. Mary's, each week begins with a whole-school Gospel assembly where we introduce a theme rooted in our prayer life. This theme is then explored further in classrooms and during dedicated prayer time throughout the week. In honour of Education Sunday, our upcoming theme will focus on Education and Hope—a timely opportunity to reflect on the gift of learning and the role it plays in shaping our future.

As we consider the right to education, I invite our entire school community to join in prayer for educators across the world. Teaching is not merely a profession—it is a vocation, and those called to serve in schools do so with dedication, compassion, and purpose.

Yesterday, we were blessed to welcome Fr. Hilary into school, where he offered blessings over our classrooms, staff, and children. We pray that the Lord continues to watch over our St. Mary's family throughout this academic year, guiding us to live out our mission and walk faithfully in His light.

This week has also marked an exciting time for our pupils, as many have been campaigning to take on leadership roles within the school. Elections are underway for our School Council, Spiritual Council, CAFOD Club, RRSA representatives, Play Leaders, Prefects, and Head Boy and Head Girl. We are proud of the children's enthusiasm and commitment to making a positive impact within our school community.

As we settle into the new academic year, I would like to remind all parents and carers of the importance of car safety around the school site. Our gates remain closed between 8:00am and 5:00pm to ensure the safety of children moving between buildings and attending after-school clubs. During these hours, please use the pedestrian gate and avoid driving onto the premises. We kindly ask that you park responsibly when dropping off or collecting your child, and refrain from attempting to access the site by car during school hours.

Finally, we love celebrating the achievements of our pupils beyond the classroom—whether they're excelling in competitions, earning medals, or experiencing something truly special. If your child has a personal achievement you'd like us to recognise, please email us via the school's enquiry address. We would be delighted to include a special mention in our newsletter.

Wishing you and your families a peaceful and joyful weekend.

Warm regards,

Mrs Yorke, Headteacher

CATHOLIC LIFE

This week's Reading

Luke 14:30

"The man began to build and was not able to finish!"

Reflecting on this week's reading, we learn: –

- God's love is the firm foundation that we need to love Him and share His love with others.
- We love and serve God when we fully focus on what is important.
- With God's love as our foundation we can truly live life to the full.



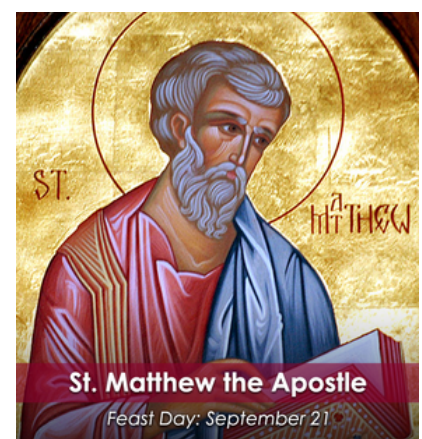
This week's Mass – Whole School Mass – Nativity of our Lady

This week, Years 1–6 joined together for our first Whole-school Mass of the academic year. We celebrated our Patron – St. Mary by honouring her birthday and Holy Name. Staff led the Mass and the children showed reverence: – joining in with the responses and singing / signing to the hymns.



Our next Mass – Year 2 Mass – Votive Mass for St. Matthew

Our next Mass in Church will be on Wednesday 17th September 2025, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 1 children will also be in attendance at this Mass and all parents are welcome to attend.



Perpetual Pilgrims

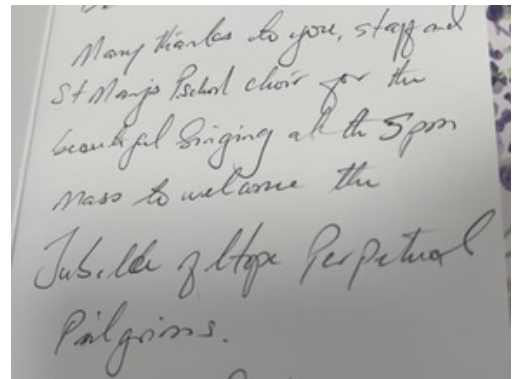
Pilgrimage of Hope – A Joyful Encounter at St. Mary's

As part of the Catholic Church's preparations for the 2025 Jubilee Year, Pope Francis called us to become "Pilgrims of Hope." In response, a nationwide walking pilgrimage took place across England and Wales, reviving the ancient tradition of pilgrimage as a sacred journey of prayer, reflection, and community.

There are four principal pilgrimage routes—known as the "Ways"—originating from the Cathedrals in Cardiff, Leeds, Norwich, and Southwark (London). Each route dedicated to one of the Gospel writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Pilgrims walking the Matthew Way, from Cardiff to Nottingham, passed through St. Mary's Parish this past Sunday, and we were honoured to welcome them into our community.

A special Mass was celebrated in their presence, and our school choir sang beautifully to mark the occasion. It was a privilege to meet the small group of "perpetual pilgrims" who were walking the full 169-mile journey, and to share in this moment of spiritual unity and joy.

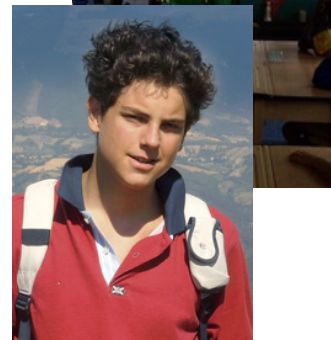
We extend heartfelt thanks to all the children, staff, and families who contributed to this celebration. Your warmth and hospitality truly embodied the spirit of hope and welcome that this pilgrimage represents.



Year 3 had a special lesson on the Sacrament of Baptism with Father Hilary this week. To bring the teaching to life, he baptised teddies using the church font—an imaginative and heartwarming way to help pupils understand the meaning and symbolism of this sacred rite.



Pupils have been learning about Saint Carlo Acutis, a remarkable young person whose deep faith and love for the Eucharist continue to inspire people around the world. Known as "God's Influencer," Carlo used his passion for technology to share the beauty of the Catholic faith, creating a website that documented Eucharistic miracles.



Father Hilary came into school for a special classroom blessing. His gentle presence and thoughtful words brought a deep sense of peace and positivity to our learning environment, setting a beautiful tone for the term ahead.



Rights Respecting School Award

Progressing Towards Silver

We are proud to share that St. Mary's has been a Rights Respecting School for the past three years, having already achieved the Bronze: Rights Committed award through UNICEF UK. This recognition reflects our deep commitment to placing children's rights at the heart of everything we do—from our curriculum and assemblies to our policies and relationships.

Our journey has been shaped by the active involvement of pupils, staff, and families, and we are now preparing to apply for the Silver: Rights Aware award. This next stage celebrates schools that not only embed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) across their practice, but also demonstrate how children are empowered to understand and exercise their rights in meaningful ways.

Our Rights Respecting Ambassadors continue to lead by example, encouraging their peers to reflect on fairness, inclusion, and global citizenship. Through ongoing projects, discussions, and advocacy, our pupils are developing a strong sense of justice and responsibility—qualities that will serve them well both within and beyond our school community.

We look forward to sharing more about our progress in the coming weeks and thank you for your continued support as we work together to build a school culture rooted in dignity, respect, and compassion.





Article 12:
Every child has the right to say what they think should happen and have their views listened to.

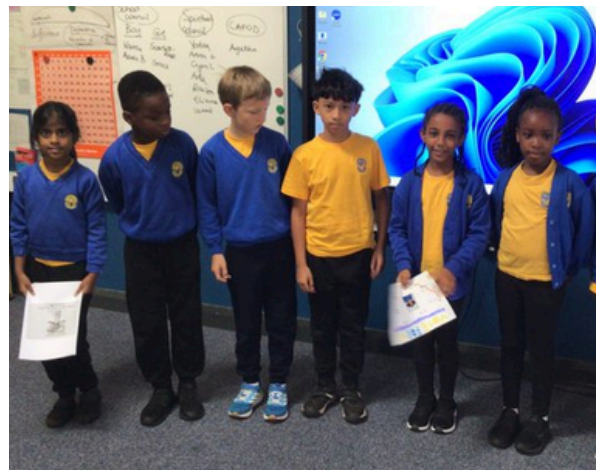
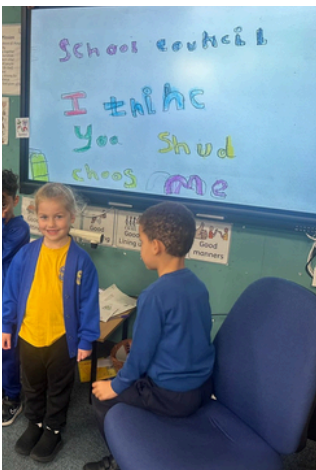




12
RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS



- I can influence and take leadership roles in my school.
- I have a voice and I can express my opinions about things.
- I have a choice in who should be in leadership roles.





School Fund

Our School Fund is a vital source of income for our school.

It pays for the 'extras' such as Inspire workshops, curriculum resources, Christmas activities, theatre or performances as well as subsidising school trips.

These 'extras' are enjoyed by all year groups at St Mary's throughout the year.

Contribution to this fund is entirely voluntary and we are very grateful to those parents who regularly support the school in this way. However, in the last few years the amount of school fund received has dropped quite significantly. There are probably many reasons for this, but perhaps the most obvious is remembering to send in a donation every year, half term or term.

Several parents make their contribution by standing order and we are very grateful to them all. As we have been accepted as a charity for tax purposes, we can claim the tax on donations to school fund by parents who are taxpayers if those parents sign a Gift Aid Declaration. This means that for every pound you give we get an extra 28p from the Inland Revenue, helping your donation to go further. Consequently, by setting up a standing order for say, **£2 per month per family**, you will guarantee the school a monthly income on which we can reclaim tax and be able to forget your hunt for change for your usual donation.

Please consider this option seriously. If you feel unable to sign up to a monthly payment, why **not pay £20 per year by cash, again with a Gift Aid declaration.**

All we ask in this instance is that you include your donation and declaration in an envelope clearly marked with the name of your child and the value of your donation.

This is an essential bookkeeping requirement of the Inland Revenue.

A Gift Aid declaration and a standing order form, have been emailed to you alongside today's newsletter. Please complete and return them to school. Or you can come in to school for a hard copy if you prefer.

Account Name: St Marys School Fund – Gift Aid

Account

Sort Code: **30 – 19 – 14**

Account Number: **03595246**

As always, we are extremely grateful for the support that we receive from the parents at St Mary's and appreciate you helping us be able to put on these events and treats for the children, which hopefully make their time at St Mary's more fun and memorable. If you have any queries or concerns, please contact the school. We wish for you to be assured of the confidential manner in which the school will treat your details.



This Sunday, 14th September, is Education Sunday. Education Sunday is always celebrated on the second Sunday in September. This year's theme is drawn from its Gospel reading of John 3:13-17: The Son of Man must be lifted up. It takes place this year on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Ten years ago the then-Holy Father, Pope Francis, said during his Mass for this feast that a Christian **"must lower himself, as Jesus lowered himself: this is the path of humility."**



**EDUCATION
SUNDAY**

Lord. Thank you for our pupils.

May your love strengthen and nurture them through the influence and example of those who care for them.

We pray that through their time as school, they will flourish, strive for excellence, use their God-given gifts and grow in to who you have called them to be.

Amen.



Year 3 Harborne Library Visit - 21.1.25

Year 3 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.

3L will leave at 8:45am

3T will leave at 10:15am

If you are a parent who would like to attend and support walking to and from the library, please let the Year 3 staff know.



Early Reading and Phonics Workshop - 25.9.25 - 2:00pm

We will be holding a phonics / Early Reading workshop on Wednesday 25th September at 2:00pm in the school hall.

Parents of children in Reception are very much encouraged to join us but all parents with children who are learning to read using our Little Wandle Phonics scheme are welcome to attend.



A group of Year 5 pupils will attend Play Leaders Training at Bishop Challoner Secondary School, travelling to and from the venue by bus. Children should come to school in their P.E. kits and bring a packed lunch, snack, and drink. This exciting opportunity will help them build confidence and develop leadership skills. Once trained, they will take on the role of St Mary's Play Leaders, supporting games and activities during break and lunch times. Please give your permission via Gateway.



Reception parents meet the PTA and get involved -

Thursday 18th September at 3:15pm-3:45pm

in the school hall. This is an informal catch-up for you to meet other Reception parents and to get to know the PTA representatives and some of the teachers. Over tea and biscuits, you will get the opportunity to find out more about what the PTA and school does over the year. Such as events, fun days and fundraising. You can bring your child(ren) and they will be supervised in a classroom with a film or colouring.

The more the merrier for 30 minutes of your time - all our fundraising goes directly back to the children!

There are several open evenings taking place to support Secondary School choices – here are a few that have been sent to our enquiry box for your information....



discover
who you can be

Join us on Open Morning

9:30am-12pm
Saturday 13 September

Awarded triple 'Outstanding' for boarding by Ofsted, Old Swinford Hospital offers an independent school experience at a fraction of the fee; fees which are not subject to VAT. We offer Tailored Boarding, Flexi-Boarding and Day Places for boys and girls aged 11-18.

Extensive sports facilities mean many teams hold regional or national titles. Our 1st XV rugby team are John Fisher State School Festival champions, and we are named in The Cricketer Schools Guide Top State Schools. Plus with 45 co-curricular clubs and 10 music ensembles; excellent STEM laboratories; and new design and technology spaces teaching kitchen and two climbing walls; and new art, drama and dance studios, there's plenty to get involved with.

Boarding is at the heart of the community where students live together, learn together and thrive. The impact on the individual is threefold: boarders develop great resilience, independence and genuine confidence; show humility alongside aspiration; and grow lifelong friendships.

As Year 7 student Maisie-Grace says "No matter who you are, you always have a place at OSH."

Old Swinford Hospital
Saturday 13th September, 9:30am – 12pm.

OPEN EVENING

Wednesday 17th September 2025
6pm - 8.30pm



To book your place visit
www.bishopchalloner.org.uk

Scan here to
book your
tickets



For admission enquiries email:
admissions@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk

For special educational needs enquiries email:
send@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk

Institute Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7EG
Tel: 0121 444 4161 Fax: 0121 441 1552 enquiry@bishopchalloner.bham.sch.uk

Bishop Challoner
Wednesday 17th September, 6pm – 8:30pm



St Paul's School for Girls



St. Paul's School for Girls
Thursday 18th September, 6pm – 8:30pm
HT talks at 5:15pm and 6:30pm

Close Popup

Called as God's family, we strive to achieve our personal best, by living and learning in Christ.



HAGLEY CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL
SEMPER FIDELIS

OPEN MORNING

Saturday 4th October 2025
9:00am-12:30pm

We will be offering personal tours of the school site, an opportunity to hear from the Principal and staff, try out some of our facilities and discover the wonderful education that is awaiting you and your child. as part of the Hagley family.

Click Here to book



Hagley Catholic High School
Saturday 4th October, 9am – 12:30pm



Coats

As the weather is changeable now, please ensure that your child comes to school with their waterproof coats.



Jewellery

To ensure the safety of all children, we will only allow children to wear small stud earrings (not dangly earrings) and a watch, on the days that they are not doing PE. On PE days we are asking that children do not wear any jewellery, so that it is not lost if they are asked to remove it for physical lessons. Thank you for supporting us with this, your child's safety is at the forefront of our uniform decisions.

End of day

Please take note of the end of day timings and where you need to stand to collect your children.

At 3:10pm, Reception parents are to gather on the left hand side in green zone (as shown by the green arrows). Your child will be released to you, and you will leave by walking up the middle of the drive way.

At 3:15pm, Year 1 and Year 2 parents are to walk down the drive on the right hand side and gather in red zone (as shown by the red arrows) Your child will be released to you, and you will leave by walking up the middle of the drive way.

At 3:20pm, siblings will be released to parents, who will walk down on the right hand side and gather in blue zone (as shown by the blue arrows). Siblings is for where your children are in different key stages i.e. one child in KS1 and one child in KS2. If your child is in the same key stage, they will come out with their class. Siblings will be released to you, and you will leave by walking up the middle of the drive way.

At 3:30pm, Year 3 and Year 4 parents are to walk down the drive on the left hand side and gather in green zone (as shown by the green arrows). Your child will be released to you, and you will leave by walking up the middle of the drive way.

At 3:30pm, Year 5 and Year 6 parents are to walk down the drive on the right hand side and gather in red zone (as shown by the red arrows) Your child will be released to you, and you will leave by walking up the middle of the drive way.

END OF DAY COLLECTION POINTS AND TIMES –



Please note: –

The school has a walking home policy that states that children should be picked up by the parents. We encourage children to only walk home by themselves in the Summer term of Year 6.

Please stay behind the 'invisible line', in your zones, at dismissal so that staff can safely hand over children and maintain privacy for any conversations you need to have with teachers. Children must not run or scoot around the car park—it's not safe and parents please do not lean on staff cars as they get scratched.

Healthy Snacks

Please may we remind all parents that only healthy snacks are permitted in school – your child may have a piece of fruit at break time. Do not send your child in with crisps, sweets or chocolate as they will not be able to consume this on site. Please also be aware that we do not allow nuts, in order to reduce the chance of children with allergies from having a reaction.



Parking

We ask for everyone's commitment to safe driving and parking around school.

Please do not: –

- stop or park on double yellow lines,
- stop in the middle of the road,
- stop or park on the zig zag lines outside of school
- block the school entrance,
- obstruct dropped kerbs meant for pushchairs,
- obstruct side roads such as Vivian Close.



Parking opposite the school is particularly dangerous for families crossing the road.

We work closely with the Council and Police, and fines may be issued. Any person of the community can photograph inconsiderate or dangerous parking and report...

We have an allocated police officer – PC Anthony Henry, badge no 30847, who is leading 'operation snap' <https://betterstreetsforbirmingham.org/op-snap/> where you can report directly to the Police

Or report directly to the Council –

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20109/parking/1983/report_an_illegally_parked_vehicle



Labelling of clothing with child's name and class name

Please label all belongings for your child (including lunch boxes / water bottles / school bags / clothing...) Items that are labelled are returned to your child's classroom when they are left somewhere else in school. Items that are not labelled are placed in the parent shelter. You can claim any items needed from the parent shelter. To ensure that no items are lost, label everything with child's name and class.

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

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

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 a member of the SLT team. 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 08/09/25-12/09/25

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	98	99	99	99	98	97	98	98	97	100	100	96	96	99
Lates	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	2
Whole School Attendance so far this year						97.6%		School Target				97%		

Well done 4M and 5M: - Our attendance champions!

Autumn theme -

Autumn I Virtues

WB 15th September 2025

16th September 2025 (am)

16th September 2025 - 2pm

17th September 2025 - 9:15am

18th September 2025 - 3:15pm

22nd September 2025 (am)

23rd September 2025 - 3:45pm

24th September 2025 - 9:15am

25th September 2025 - 9:00am

25th September 2025 - 3:30pm

26th September 2025 - all day

29th September 2025 - 8am

October 2025 - all month

October 2025 - all month

October 2025 - all month

1st October 2025 - 9:15am

2nd October 2025 - lunch time

3rd October 2025 - 9:00am

7th October 2025 (am)

7th October 2025 - 2:30pm

8th October 2025 - 9:15am

8th October 2025 - 2:30pm

10th October 2025 - 9:15am

14th October 2025 (am)

15th October 2025 - 9:15am

16th October 2025 - all day

17th October 2025 - all day

17th October 2025 - 6pm

WB 20.10.25

21st October 2025 - all day

21st October 2025 - 3:30-6:00

22nd October 2025 - 9:15am

23rd October 2025 - all day

23rd October 2025 - 3:30-6:00

23rd October 2025 -normal time

24th October 2025 - all day

Dignity of the Human Person

Eloquent and truthful

Education Sunday

Year 5 library visit - 5F (8:45) and 5M (10:15)

Phonics Workshop for Reception parents

Year 2 Mass in Church (Y1 to attend) - Parents Welcome]

PTA welcome meeting for new Reception parents

Year 4 library visit - 4M (8:45) and 4J (10:15)

PTA event - Film Club for Years 4, 5 and 6

Y6 Mass in Church (Y5 to attend) - Parents welcome

Macmillan Coffee Morning in Parish supported by School Council

PTA event - Film Club for Years 1, 2 and 3

Children in **St. Vincent de Paul House** - wear **white** non-school uniform

PTA Annual General Meeting in school hall

Pray the Rosary

Black History Month

Collection for Harvest - please send food and self-care items in for our harvest

Year 3 Mass in Church (Y4 to attend) - Parents welcome

Themed Lunch in the canteen

Year 1 Prayer Service for parents

Year 6 library visit - 6R (8:45) and 6O (10:15)

RHE talk for parents - KS1

Year 5 Mass in Church (Y6 to attend) - Parents welcome

RHE talk for parents - KS2

Year 6 Year Group Assembly

Year 3 library visit - 3T (8:45) and 3L (10:15)

Year 1 Mass in Church (Y2 to attend) - parents welcome

Photo Day - Children in full winter uniform please

Children in **St. Teresa of Avila** House - wear **blue** non-school uniform

PTA Fundraising - Children's disco in Parish Centre

School Book Fair in school - please support our book fair

Flu vaccinations in school

Parent Consultation Evening

Reception Welcome Mass (with Year 6 buddies) - Parents welcome

Children in **St. John Paul II House** - wear **red** non-school uniform

Parent Consultation Evening

Children finish today for October half-term (normal finish time)

INSET day - School closed to children

Autumn theme -

Autumn 11 Virtues

3rd November 2025 - all day

3rd November 2025 - 9:30am

6th November 2025

7th November 2025 - 9:00am

WB 10th November 2025

WB 10th November 2025

12th November 2025 - 9:15am

17th November 2025 - all day

19th November 2025 - 9:15am

21st November 2025 - 9:15am

22nd November 2025 - 12:00pm

Dignity of the Human Person

Learned and Wise

Children return to school at normal time

Whole School All Saints and Holy Souls Mass in Church (Parents welcome)

St. Mary's Open Day for Reception class 2024 (10:30) or (1:45)

Year 4 Prayer Service for all Year 4 parents

Other faiths Week

Remembrance Week

Year 4 Mass in Church (and Year 3 classes attend) - parents welcome

PTA non-uniform day in support of Parish Fete - bring sweets/bottles

Year 6 Mass in Church (and Year 5 classes attend) - parents welcome

Year 5 Year group Assembly

Parish Fete



Striving for Excellence

We're incredibly proud of Grace, who over the summer holidays chose to take part in the summer challenge for Birmingham children's hospital.

She walked 31 miles (1 mile per day) even when she was on holiday - doing a mile around the campsite in France!

She raised an impressive £405!

Thursday 25th September

COME FOR
COFFEE
AND

CAKE

Tombola Jumble Sale

St Mary's Parish Centre

WE ARE
MACMILLAN.
CANCER SUPPORT

8.45am onwards



Term Dates for this year

Autumn Term	Tuesday 2nd September - Thursday 23rd October
	<i>Half-term</i>
	Monday 3rd November - Friday 19th December
Spring Term	Monday 5th January - Friday 13th February
	<i>Half-term</i>
	Monday 23rd February - Thursday 2nd April
Summer Term	Monday 20th April - Friday 22nd May
	<i>Half-term</i>
	Monday 1st June - Friday 17th July

Star of the week

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

Year RB	Lila	For being a kind friend and always sharing.
Year RT	Odhran	For always having beautiful manners when he speaks to his friends and teachers in class!
Year IF	Aoife	For using both 'because' and 'and' in her sentences as well as supporting the class with signing the Hail Mary.
Year 1L	Aun	For a fabulous first week in Year 1.
Year 2E	Davvid	For a great first week in Year 2.
Year 2G	Chikanyima	For participating beautifully throughout Mass. What a wonderful role model!
Year 3L	Robyn	For her super behaviour this week and her great attitude to learning!
Year 3T	Patryk	For his excellent behaviour and attitude to learning – a fantastic role model to his peers!
Year 4J	Mieke	For always doing the right thing and being a great role model to other children!
Year 4M	Skyler	For an excellent first week at St Mary's.
Year 5F	Charlotte	For speaking so eloquently when talking about why she would be a good candidate for School Councillor.
Year 5M	Harry	He is always striving for excellence in both his behaviour and classwork. He should be very proud for always giving his best efforts.
Year 6O	Elsie	Showing incredible kindness to students in Year 6 but also younger students. A truly kind soul that models heavenly virtues.
Year 6R	Trinidad	For always showing exemplary behaviour and being a role model to others.

