



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

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

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.



November is dedicated to the Holy Souls.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'Dignity of the human person'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Learned and Wise'

7th November 2025

Dear parents and carers,

I hope you all had a restful and enjoyable half-term break. As we begin the month of November, our thoughts turn to remembrance. The children have shown such compassion—wearing their poppies with pride and choosing to pray for loved ones, the Holy Souls, and soldiers who gave their lives in war. Next week, we will mark this with a two-minute silence and a Remembrance Mass on Wednesday, offering a quiet moment to reflect and honour those who came before us.

All Saints Week

This week, we've celebrated All Saints, a time to remember those who inspire us to live with kindness, courage, and faith. Our whole-school Mass included a joyful procession where each class honoured their Saint. This morning, Year 4 led a beautiful prayer service for parents, celebrating St. Martin De Porres with reverence and pride. These moments help our children understand the value of role models and the strength found in faith.

Reception Open Day

We were thrilled to welcome prospective Reception families for September 2026 during our recent Open Day. Our prefects did an outstanding job showing visitors around and answering questions. I was incredibly proud of their confidence, warmth, and the wonderful things they shared about our school. They were a true credit to our community.

Bonfire Night Safety

As Bonfire Night approaches, many families will be enjoying celebrations this weekend. Please do take care—especially around fireworks and during the darker evenings. Organised events are generally much safer and more enjoyable for children, and we encourage families to attend these where possible.

Learning about Other Faiths

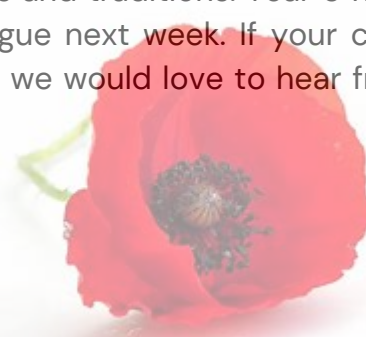
Next week, children will be learning about other faiths as part of our curriculum. This is a vital part of our inclusion strategy, helping children appreciate and respect different beliefs and traditions. Year 6 have already visited a Mosque this week, and Year 4 will be visiting a Synagogue next week. If your child would like to bring in a religious item or share something about their faith, we would love to hear from them—it's a wonderful way to celebrate our diverse community.

Wishing you all a peaceful and safe weekend,

Mrs Yorke,

Headteacher

We pray for those who have died in November



Catholic Life



Remembrance and Holy Souls



We will remember them...

John 15 : 13

"There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends."

We remember before God, and commend to Him, those who have died for their country in war; those whom we knew; and whose memory we treasure; and all those names of people who we do not know; who lived and died in service and faith of the Lord.

We pray for peace in our World. Amen.

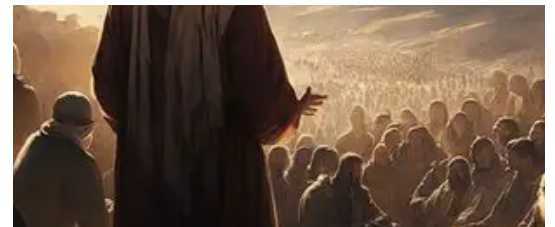


Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn that:

- The saints are holy men and women who put God first in their life and now live with God in Heaven.
- The Communion of Saints are our heavenly cheerleaders, supporting and encouraging us to live in God's way.
- We are all called to be holy by putting God first and we can turn to the saints to help us.

Matthew 5: 1-3

'Jesus went up on the mountain... And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."



Whole School Mass -

5.11.25

All Saints

As we celebrated All Saints Mass- we learnt that the saints are 'superheroes for God' and we can be too!



Our next Mass: - Y4 Mass for Remembrance

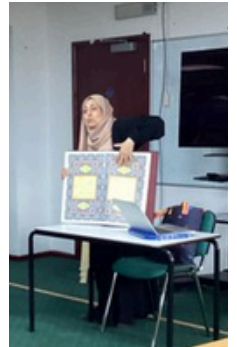
Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 12th November 2025**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 4 will be leading our Mass and Year 3 will be in attendance.
All parents are welcome to attend.



Year 6 visit to the Mosque

Year 6 visit to the Mosque

Year 6 spent a fascinating morning at Central Mosque, learning all about Islam as part of Other Faiths Week, in order to broaden their understanding of beliefs and traditions of others.



Rights Respecting Silver Award - we have a banner!

Our Rights Respecting Monitors were thrilled to receive a banner that showcases our Silver Award to thee whole community – they couldn't wait to put it up.



Prayer Service for Parents

4M Feast Day – St Martin De Porres

On Friday 7th November, 4M celebrated their class Saint's feast day and it began with a lovely prayer service that Year 4 children put together for their parents.



Reflecting on this half-term's virtues

This half-term, our focus virtues are 'learned and wise'. Across the school, children have begun reflecting on what it means to grow in knowledge and use that knowledge thoughtfully in their words and actions. Each class has a virtues tree, which will be filled with leaves showing examples of how pupils are living out these virtues in their daily lives, celebrating thoughtful choices, and learning.



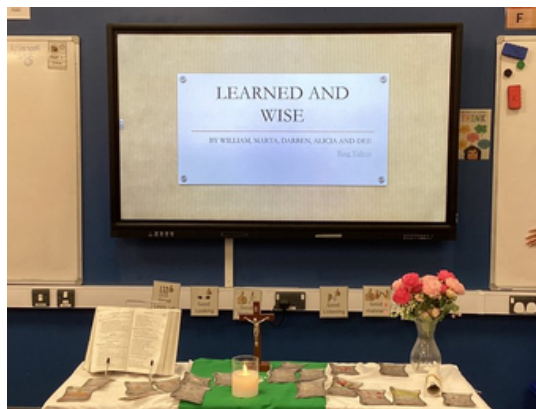
Closing our Jubilee Year

A team of Year 5 and Year 6 children worked with Bishop Challoner this week to create their "Faith in 30 seconds" video as part of the Tolkien schools' conclusion to the Jubilee Year. As always, our children had wonderful messages of hope and it was lovely to welcome back past pupils Luke and Martha too.



Child-led prayer

This week, children have led thoughtful moments of prayer across school—reflecting on All Saints, our virtues of being learned and wise, and what it means to be pilgrims of hope. These opportunities help pupils grow in faith, confidence, and respect for one another as they lead our school in prayerful reflection.



Remarkable RE



Congratulations to all the children selected for the remarkable RE award. Your spirituality shines through!





Open Day 2025



This Thursday, we opened our doors to welcome potential Reception parents. We offered tours of the school and an opportunity to ask questions about life at St Mary's. Both sessions were very well attended and we are blessed to have such interest in our school. The parents were led around by our prefects and I must say they did an incredible job! We received so much positive feedback about our fantastic tour guides and our beautiful school. Thank you children and to everyone involved!



Look at some of Reception's lovely learning this week...



Using a parachute to develop listening skills and team work.



Using oil pastels and loose parts to create vibrant firework displays over Birmingham.



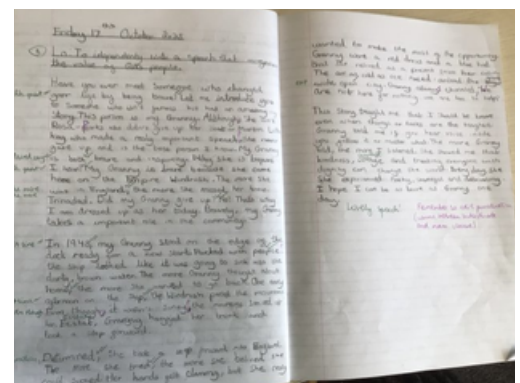
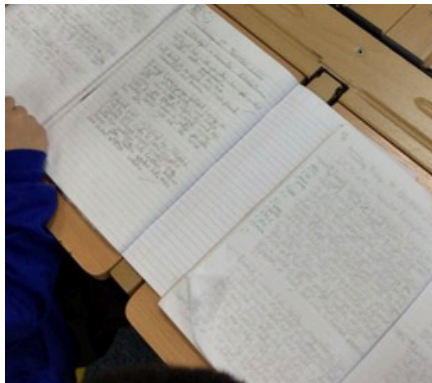
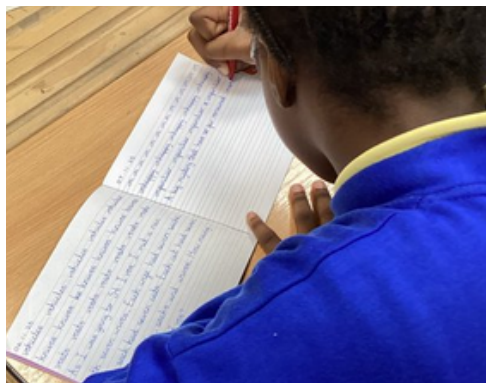
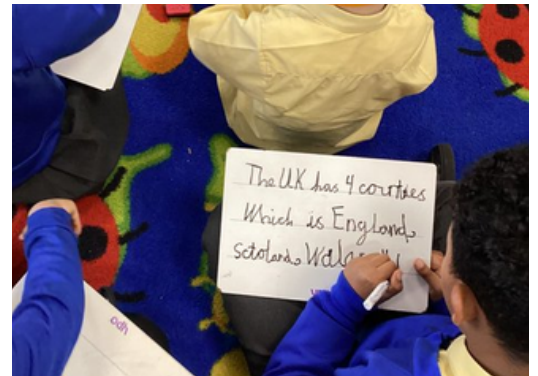
And KSI are really enjoying their new playground equipment



CURRICULUM

English

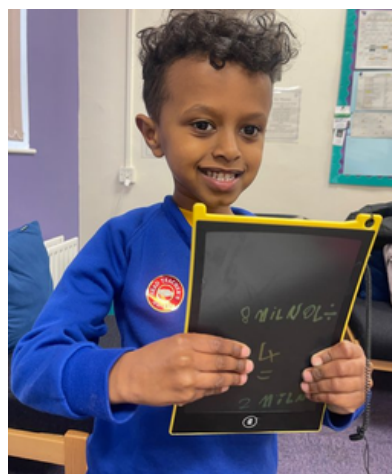
At St. Mary's, we are proud of the way our English curriculum nurtures confident, creative, and thoughtful writers from the very start of their school journey. In EYFS, children have been exploring language through exciting literacy activities, including using onomatopoeia to describe fireworks; KS1, pupils are developing sentence structure and meaning using Colourful Semantics, a brilliant tool that helps them build sentences with clarity and confidence; and across KS2, we're seeing wonderful examples of handwriting practice and extended writing pieces, where children are expressing themselves with increasing fluency, imagination, and accuracy.



Outstanding Home Learning

We love it when learning taking place at home is really seen with how well children do in school. Look at this amazing project completed about materials, and how children are improving in their maths and spellings because they practise every day at home.

Well done children (and parents) for all the work that you are doing.



Other faiths week

Next week, we celebrate Other Faiths at St Mary's.

We have planned in to our RE lessons, links to other religions that will support our Building the Kingdom theme of Dignity of the Human Person and the importance of understanding and tolerating other faiths and beliefs. The faiths that children will be studying are: -

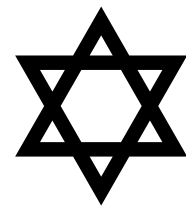


Reception - Sikhism

Year 1 and Year 2 - Hinduism

Year 3 and Year 4 - Judaism

Year 5 and Year 6 - Islam



Please feel free to send in with your children any artefacts, food, clothing that can be explored as part of our faith week and support the learning in school, if you are able.

Remembrance Week - WB 10.11.25

Next week, we will be observing Remembrance Week as a school community. Children will take part in a two-minute silence and a special assembly on Tuesday, followed by a Remembrance Mass and war poetry activities throughout the week. These moments help our pupils reflect on the sacrifices made by others and understand the importance of peace, gratitude, and remembrance. It's a meaningful opportunity to connect history with values we hold today. Through prayer, poetry, and reflection, we hope to foster empathy and respect in every child. We look forward to sharing this important week together.



Year 4 Other Faiths Visit

Singers Hill Synagogue

4M - 10.11.25

4J - 13.11.25

Next week, Year 4 will be visiting Singers Hill Synagogue to enhance their learning about Judaism.

Other key dates



Monday 17th November - Non School Uniform Day

On Monday 17th November, St Mary's School and PTA are asking for donations for the Christmas Fayre.

The children can come to school wearing non-uniform and bring in the following items...

Reception



Chocolate or sweets for the tombola.

Years 1, 2, 3



Christmas Stockings – filled with sweets / little treats. Take a new pair of socks, roll one sock up and put into the other, fill the sock with treats, sweets, hair accessories etc... Secure with an elastic, tie or ribbon.

Years 4, 5, 6



A bottled drink – alcoholic or non-alcoholic for the Tombola (Unopened and in date please).

Finally, if you are doing a clear out before Christmas and have any pre-loved items that you would like to donate, they would be greatly received (toys, books, gift sets, jewellery, crockery etc) You can deliver any of your donations into school or the Priory between 8-4 Mon-Fri over the next 2 weeks.



Year 5 Harborne Library Visit - 18.11.25

Year 5 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.

6O will leave at 9:00am

6R will leave at 10:45am

If you are a parent who would like to attend and support walking to and from the library, please let the Year 6 staff know.

Wednesday 19th November 2025

Red Wednesday – wear red to stand up for solidarity

Next week, children are invited to wear red on Red Wednesday as a symbol of solidarity with those around the world who suffer persecution for their faith. This powerful gesture reminds us of the importance of religious freedom, compassion, and standing up for justice. Through prayer, reflection, and discussion, we will help our pupils understand why it's important to speak out for those who cannot.



Year 5 Assembly – 21st November 2025

We are looking forward to welcoming parents of all Year 5 children into school next Friday 21st November, for their year group assembly based on Christ the King.





ST MARY'S PARISH / PTA CHRISTMAS FAIR



Saturday 22 November
12.00-3.00pm



Parish Halls, Vivian Road, Harborne



- * Santa's Grotto *
- * Bottle Tombola *
- * Chocolate Tombola *
- * Christmas Stockings *
- * Mulled Wine & Mince Pies *
- * Festive Sandwiches & Drinks *
- * Stalls: Books, Jewellery, Toys, Fancy Goods,
Glass, China & Pottery, Cakes,
Jams & Chutneys *



Free
Admission
(£4 for
Santa's Grotto)

St Mary's PTA Wreathmaking Workshop



Wednesday 3 December
7 – 9pm

St Mary's Parish Hall, Vivian Road, Harborne

All materials provided
£25 per person, including mulled wine & mince pies



Get creative this Christmas!



Carols by Candlelight

*St Mary's Parish Hall,
Vivian Road, Harborne*

Friday 12 December

*Open with bar – 7.00 till 9.30pm
Carols from 7.30pm, Close 9.00pm*

Raffle



Entry:

Family (2 adults/up to 3 children) - £12

Adults - £6, Seniors - £5

Includes 1 glass mulled wine & mince pie

Squash & biscuits for children

More mulled wine available to buy

*Alcoholic and non-alcoholic hot mulled fruit punch or tea/coffee also
available*

All proceeds to:



**St Basil's for
homeless teenagers
& St Mary's School PTA**



**Tickets available at Parish Office during the
week and Piety Stall at weekends**

KEEPING SAFE

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

SAFEGUARDING: ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is essential for your child's academic success and personal development. Consistent attendance helps children build strong foundations in not only the academic subjects but also helps them to develop social skills, and form positive relationships with peers and teachers. Missing school can lead to gaps in learning, lower achievement, and reduced confidence, making it harder for children to reach their full potential. Good attendance sets the stage for lifelong learning and future opportunities.

Attendance %	Missed Education Equivalent Days	Impact Equivalent Weeks	Attendance %
96 – 100% Green		Your child is taking full advantage of his/her learning!	
85 – 95.9 % Amber	9 – 19 days	2 – 4 weeks	Satisfactory. Your child will need to spend time catching up with their work.
	19 – 29 days	4 – 6 weeks	Your child is in danger of underachieving and will need your help and support to keep up with his/her learning.
	29 – 38 days	6 – 8 weeks	Your child's poor attendance will be having a significant impact on his/her learning.
Below 85% Red	38 days plus	8 weeks plus	Your child is not getting a wide and varied education. You are in danger of being prosecuted.

Good attendance, continues to be a school and government priority.

Good attendance is 96% and above.

95.9% and below is a concern.

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.

Attendance and Punctuality: –

Our attendance for last week was –

Week 03/11/25-07/11/25

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

Well done RB, 2G, 4J and 6R: - Our attendance champions!

Dates for next half-term

Autumn theme -

Autumn 11 Virtues

WB 10th November 2025

WB 10th November 2025

10th November 2025 - 12:45pm

12th November 2025 - 9:15am

13th November 2025 - 12:45pm

17th November 2025 - all day

18th November 2025 - am

19th November 2025 - all day

19th November 2025 - 9:15am

21st November 2025 - 9:15am

22nd November 2025 - 12:00pm

25th November 2025 - am

26th November 2025 - 9:15am

27th November 2025 - 9:00am

28th November 2025 - all day

WB 1st December 2025

1st December 2025 - 9:30am

2nd December 2025 - am

2nd December 2025 - 3:15-4:15

3rd December 2025 - 9:15am

3rd December 2025 - 3:15-4:15

3rd December 2025 - 7:00pm

4th December 2025 - 3.30-4:30

8th December 2025 - 9:30am

9th December 2025 - 9:15am

9th December 2025 - 10:45am

11th December 2025 - all day

11th December 2025 - 9:30am

11th December 2025 - lunch

12th December 2025 - 9:00am

12th December 2025 - 6:45pm

12th December 2025 - 7:00pm

Dignity of the Human Person

Learned and Wise

Other faiths Week

Remembrance Week

Year 4M Synagogue visit

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

Year 4J Synagogue visit

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

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

*Wear **red** for Red Wednesday*

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

Year 5 Year group Assembly

Parish Fete

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

Year 2 Mass in Church (and Year 1 classes attend) - parents welcome

Coffee morning for parents - come in to school and find out more about SEND

Reception bedtime story day

Corporal Acts of Mercy

Penitential Service for Years 4 - 6 (children and staff only)

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

PTA event - KS1 Christmas Disco in school hall (children only)

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

PTA event - Reception class Christmas Disco in school hall (children only)

Annual Wreath making workshop in Parish Hall

PTA event - KS2 Christmas Disco in school hall (children only)

Whole School Mass - Feast of Immaculate Conception

PANTO for EYFS/KS1 in school

PANTO for KS2 in school

Christmas jumper day in school

Reception Nativity in Church (for parents)

Christmas dinner day in school

Year 3 Prayer Service for all Year 3 parents

Choir sing for Carols by Candlelight - meet at school 6:30pm

Carols by Candlelight in St. Mary's Church (all welcome)

16th December 2025 - 2:00pm

17th December 2025 - 2:15pm

18th December 2025 - 2pm

19th December 2025 - 9:30am

19th December 2025 -

Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity in Church (for parents)

Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Assembly in School Hall (parents welcome)

Year 5 and Year 6 Christmas Carol Service in Church (for parents)

Whole school Christmas Mass for all children, staff and parents

Break up for Summer holidays

1:40 finish time - Reception classes

1:45 finish time - KS1 classes

1:50 finish time - sibling group

2:00 finish time - KS2 classes



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

Year RB	Tin Lam	For working really hard on her letter formation!
Year RT	Sapphire	For having super focus and working hard to complete all our Bonfire Night activities independently – well done!
Year IF	Jack	For his wonderful behaviour in class and trying his best in all lessons!
Year IL	Eric	For his increased focus and concentration during learning time
Year 2E	Chimdindu	For working hard to produce a beautiful collage in R.E
Year 2G	Priam	For trying really hard with his maths!
Year 3L	Thomas	For his enthusiasm in History when learning about the Stone and Bronze age
Year 3T	Tina	For her amazing efforts with her writing and maths this week
Year 4J	Tomas	For always trying his best in every lesson, maintaining a consistently positive attitude he is a great role model!
Year 4M	Meredith	For working hard and being resilient
Year 5F	Ella	For being more confident to share her ideas in English this week
Year 5M	Reese	For always being such a respectful, caring and helpful member of 5M :)
Year 6O	Mustafa	Showing such improved focus in his lessons and getting involved more in class discussions
Year 6R	Abigail.L.	For always being ready to learn and modelling fantastic behaviour to others.

