



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: 'Families and Community'

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

Dear parents and carers,

21st November 2025

I am delighted to share some highlights of this week with you: -

Red Wednesday

Thank you for your generous support of Red Wednesday, in support for Aid to the Church in Need (ACN). By wearing red and joining in prayer and reflection, our children stood in solidarity with those around the world who suffer persecution for their faith. This powerful gesture reminded us of the importance of compassion, justice, and religious freedom, and I am grateful to our families for supporting this initiative.

Year 5 Assembly – Christ the King

Today, Year 5 led a beautiful assembly on the feast of Christ the King. The children spoke with confidence and reverence, helping us reflect on what it means to recognise Christ's kingship in our daily lives. Their prayers, readings, and songs were uplifting, and it was wonderful to see them take such pride in leading worship for their families.

Diocese Jubilee Live Stream

This morning, our school joined a special live stream with all Birmingham Diocese schools to mark the approaching end of the Jubilee Year. It was inspiring to be part of such a large collective gathering, united in prayer and reflection, and to hear messages of hope and renewal as we prepare to move forward together as pilgrims of hope and in faith.

Parish Fair

We are very much looking forward to our Parish Fair tomorrow. Thank you to everyone who donated items and supported preparations. Events like this are a wonderful way to bring our parish and school community together, and we are excited to celebrate with you all. I hope to see many families tomorrow.

Advent Charity Work

On Monday, we welcomed Kevin from Fr Hudson's Care, who led a special assembly to launch our charity work for Advent. His message encouraged the children to think about how they can make a difference to others, and it was a meaningful way to begin our Advent journey of giving and service. Our children are taking the lead in driving our charity initiatives, choosing to support a number of causes that are close to their hearts. Details of these charities and how you can help are included later in this newsletter. It is inspiring to see our pupils living out their faith through action, showing generosity and compassion to those most in need.

As we move towards Advent, I am proud of the way our children continue to grow in faith and service. Thank you, as always, for your support in helping us nurture a caring and prayerful school community.

Warmest wishes,
Mrs Yorke, Headteacher

We pray for those who have died in November





Catholic Life

Luke 17:19

'I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict.'



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

- God loves us and we can bring our troubles to God in prayer;
- God gives us courage to face our worries and difficulties and encourages us to help each other;
- We can help and support our brothers and sisters in faith through our prayers, words and actions.



Year 6 Mass – 19.11.25

St. Rose of Lima

Year 6 celebrated 6R's feast day to St. Rose of Lima. The Mass was a lovely celebration of St Rose and We reflected on the humility of St Rose and how she served Jesus through her acts of service for others.



Next week's Mass: – Year 2 Mass – Christ the King

Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 26th November 2025**, starting promptly at 9:15am.

Year 2 and Year 1 will attend Mass.

All parents are welcome.



Serenity prayer

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference
Amen



Our Charity Appeal

Faith in Action



Please help support our Advent charities

Our Reception classes are collecting for: – Fr Hudson's Caritas



This Advent, the Archdiocese will once again unite as a family of schools in our collaborative social action mission to support Father Hudson's Caritas. St Mary's were fortunate to welcome Kevin from FHC who came to speak to the children on Monday about the Reverse Advent Calendar.

This year, every school has been invited to collect non-perishable food items, including **dried foods (such as pasta and rice), sauces, tinned foods, biscuits, crisps and any suitable Christmas food items.**

The donated food will be used to create hampers for distribution across FHC projects before Christmas.

Collective social action makes a real difference to so many people. This is a wonderful opportunity for us once again to work as part of our diocesan family, demonstrating the impact of our collective hunger for justice.

We will be collecting donations in school from **Monday 24th November.**

Reception are keen to drive this charity appeal – please label any donations/bags with 'FHC' so we can easily identify the items.

Thank you for your support.



Year 1 and Year 2 are collecting for: – **Birmingham Christmas Shelter**



St Catherine of Siena Primary School, in Great Colmore Street B15 2AY, support **Birmingham Christmas shelter** every year. This year, the school will open between 24th-28th December to serve those who need food and clothing. Last year, 400 guests received fresh clothes and toiletries in those four days supported by local Primary Schools.

St Catherine's have asked our schools to support by collecting items for the Birmingham Christmas Shelter - they need: -
toiletries, biscuits, crisps, cordial, and clothing.

Year 1 and Year 2 would like to support this appeal - please help them in their charity efforts by bringing any donations to the school office over the next few weeks, labelled Birmingham Christmas Shelter.

Year 3 and Year 4 are supporting the: – **Christmas Toy Appeal**

We have been asked to support the Birmingham Irish Association Initiative again this year, to provide toys for children in Birmingham who may not receive a Christmas present this year. Our families and staff have always been so generous at supporting this initiative.

Year 3 and Year 4 are asking for toys to support families in Birmingham this Christmas.



We are accepting toys – new and unwrapped – and our final collection time is
Friday 12th December.
Thank you for those who have donated so far.

Year 5 and Year 6 are collecting for: – St. Vincent De Paul

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING DONATION

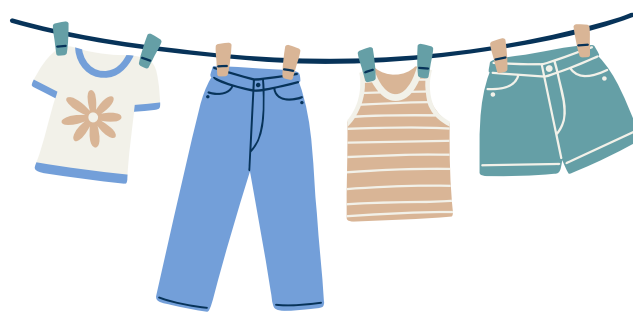


CLOTHING, SHOES, COATS, HATS,
SCARVES, GLOVES.

Please bring them in by Wednesday 10th
December 2025

St. Vincent De Paul have put in a request for clothing this Advent – particularly children's clothes. They are requesting pre-loved clothes in a good condition for this appeal.

Year 5 and Year 6 would like to support this appeal – please help them in their charity efforts by bringing any donations to the school office.



Our Community Work

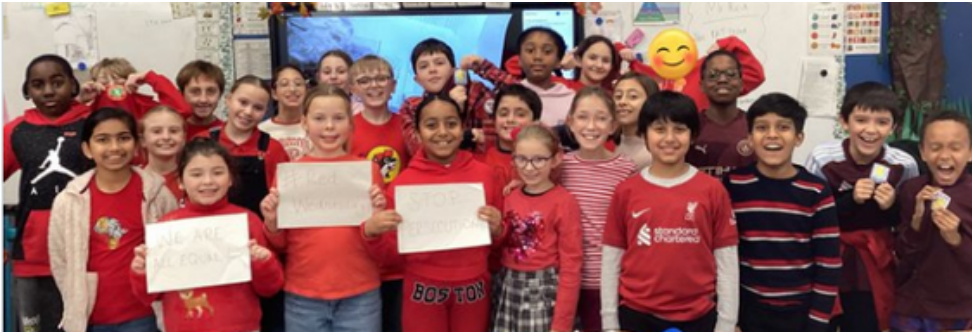
Thank you to our families who support our fundraising. We received so many donations for the Parish Fair, which will take place tomorrow – Saturday 22nd November at 12:00pm. We hope to see many of you there.



Red Wednesday

On Wednesday 19th November 2025, children and staff wore red 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, pupils explored why it is important to speak out for those who cannot. We have set a donation up on gateway, if families wish to support acnuk.org 'Aid to the Church in Need'



End of Jubilee Assembly

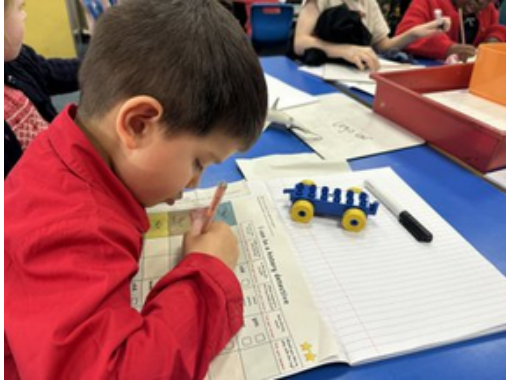
We are coming to the end of the Jubilee Year and today all schools in the Diocese joined together for a special livestream assembly. As a school, we pledge to remain committed to continue living out the themes of Jubilee, beyond this special year



CURRICULUM

History

In History this week, Year 1 have been history detectives, examining toys by naming them, deciding whether the toys are old or new and looking at what material the toy is made from; and Year 3 travelled back in time to the Stone Age, using Now Press Play.



Science

In Science, Reception scientists have been identifying and talking about the ways that nature changes over time, learning how to use a magnifying glass correctly to observe different features of Autumn; Year 2 have explored fitness by tracking their heart rates during exercise; and Year 3 have been investigating which surfaces create the most and least friction.



Extra-Curricular

Huge congratulations to our Chess team for securing BRONZE in the 2025/26 Warwickshire Primary Schools Team Championship – Zone 1 (Birmingham & Solihull)!





Parish Fair – 22nd November 2025

Come along on Saturday 22nd November between 12pm and 3pm to support our annual Parish Fair. With lots of stalls, bargains and entertainment – this is a great opportunity to support the school and parish in essential fundraising. We look forward to seeing you there.



Year 4 Harborne Library Visit – 25.11.25

Year 4 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.

4J will leave at 8:45am

4M 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 4 staff know.



Reception Bedtime Story Day – 28.11.25

As part of our Day and Night learning, Reception will be enjoying a special Bedtime Story Day on Friday 28th November 2025. On this day, children (and staff!) are invited to come to school dressed in their pyjamas, ready for a cosy day of fun. The children will take part in lots of activities around bedtime routines, enjoy listening to a variety of stories, and spend time talking about their dreams and imagination. It promises to be a magical day of learning and creativity, helping the children to explore the theme of night-time in an engaging and memorable way.



Own Clothes Day (Y1 to Y6) for OPAL – on Friday 28th November 2025

We are running low on play resources for OPAL and we will be having an own clothes day for Year 1 to Year 6 on **Friday 28th November** in exchange for donations. If you wish to wear your own clothes on this day, please bring in a donation of any of the following from our Bingo card below:



We are also collecting large loose parts such as:

- Wooden pallets
- Tyres
- Cable drums
- Plastic guttering / piping
- Crates

If you have any of these items that you are able to donate, please email enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk to arrange drop off.

Coming up:

Penitential Service for Years 4-6 – 1.12.25

In order to prepare our hearts and minds during the season of Advent, children in Years 4–6 will be attending Confession on Monday 1st December. This is a special opportunity for our pupils to reflect on their actions, seek forgiveness, and renew their commitment to living out the values of kindness, faith, and hope as we journey towards Christmas. .



Christmas Discos

Dates for the Christmas discos are –

2.12.25 (3:15–4:15) – KS1

3.12.25 (3:15–4:15) – Reception class

4.12.25 (3:30–4:30) – KS2

Cost for disco and non-school uniform is £3.00

If you are just taking part in non-school uniform, the cost is £1.00



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!

TEACHER GIFT!



The cost of living is affecting us all. Rather than buying gifts for each other this year, the staff have chosen to purchase Christmas treats of chocolates, biscuits, cakes for **care home residents at Fr. Hudson's**. We have so many families who buy gifts for staff and we are so thankful for your generosity, but this year we would like to ease any pressure families may feel and ask for your prayers as our Christmas gift instead or support for our fundraising appeals.

Christmas Charity



For our advent charity donations this year, we will have charity buckets at our Nativities and Carol Services.

Rudolph Run

4th December 2025

All children will be taking part in the Rudolph Run, week beginning 4th December. This is a sponsored event where children will receive antlers to wear, complete a sponsored run, and raise money for Birmingham Hospice (formerly Birmingham St Mary's and John Taylor Hospices) – a charity that has helped support our families with loss.



As we are a cashless school, we have set up a Go Fund Me page for sponsorship – please follow the link to sponsor your child/children.

https://www.justgiving.com/page/sharon-tame-1700650634223?utm_term=VWZ5YDxjE

**All progress can be followed on our twitter feed.
The Run will finish on Friday.**



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**

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



SAFEGUARDING - MENTAL HEALTH



Looking after our mental health is just as important as looking after our physical health. If your child ever needs some extra support, Forward Thinking Birmingham, Pause, and the Shout text service are available. These free, confidential services offer guidance, care, and someone to talk to – because no one should face challenges alone. Remember, our school is also here to help, so please reach out to us if you need support or advice about your child's mental health.

PAUSE

Pause is a service delivered by The Children's Society, in partnership with Forward Thinking Birmingham. They provide access to immediate support & speak to an Emotional Wellbeing Practitioner. They listen to young people and help them find solutions. There are no referrals or waiting lists – the young people choose when and how to use the service.
<https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/pause>



Forward Thinking Birmingham is an innovative mental health service aiming to revolutionise care for 0-25 year olds across Birmingham. It's the first time a mental health service has spanned this age range anywhere in the country. It's designed to be easy to access, full of choice and well joined-up with other services. It also intends to increase awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health in our communities, in order to help problems from developing in the first place.
<https://www.forwardthinkingbirmingham.nhs.uk/>



Shout is the UK's first and only free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging service for anyone who is struggling to cope. Anyone experiencing anxiety, stress, loneliness, depression, or other mental health challenges can text 'Space' to 85258 to connect with a trained mental health professional – anytime, anywhere.



CLOTHING REMINDER



Please ensure that children wear comfortable and practical clothing on non-uniform days. Footwear should be closed-toe and flat (no heels), and outfits should be suitable for the weather and school activities. Please also ensure that your child does not wear any jewellery on non-uniform days. Only one pair of plain stud earrings and a wrist watch (not a smartwatch) are permitted in school.

The weather has also become a lot colder this week so please do encourage your child/children to wear (named) coats, scarves, gloves and hats! Ordinary winter temperatures are not a reason to keep children inside as they need fresh air and movement but please do ensure that they are wearing layers to keep them warm outside.

Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe, warm and ready for learning!

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 03/02/25-07/02/25

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	98	96	97	96	93	95	95	99	97	98	97	98	98	97
Lates	2	3	1	2	1	1	6	7	0	1	2	5	0	4
Whole School Attendance so far this year						97.3%		School Target					97%	

Well done 3T! – Our attendance champions!

Dates for next half-term

Autumn theme -

Autumn 11 Virtues

22nd November 2025 - 12:00pm

25th November 2025 - am

26th November 2025 - 9:15am

27th November 2025 - 9:00am

28th November 2025 - all day

28th November 2025 - all day

WB 1st December 2025

1st December 2025 - 1:45pm

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 - 10:45

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

16th December 2025 - 2:00pm

17th December 2025 - 2:15pm

18th December 2025 - 2pm

19th December 2025 - 9:30am

19th December 2025 -

Dignity of the Human Person

Learned and Wise

Parish Fair

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 - Reception children come in to school in pyjamas

Year 1 - Year 6 non-school uniform for items for OPAL

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 5 Mass in Church (and Year 6 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)

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

Star of the week

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

- Year RB Salah For striving for excellence in all his learning!
- Year RT Leanna For being so kind to her classmates this week!
- Year IF Florence For being such a kind classmate and striving for excellence in every subject!
- Year IL Raniyah For amazing contributions in Maths this week and also great effort in phonics.
- Year 2E Charlotte For trying super hard in all her lessons. Keep it up
- Year 2G Natnael For a wonderful piece of exciting writing!
- Year 3L Ian For his fantastic effort in computing and art lessons!
- Year 3T Asha For her increasing confidence in contributions to class discussions
- Year 4J Harrison For his effort in his writing and his increasing participation in lessons!
- Year 4M Michelle For an amazing start at St Mary's and her positive attitude to learning
- Year 5F Miguel For his enthusiasm in rehearsing songs for our Year 5 assembly
- Year 5M Peonya For showing great enthusiasm with her singing role in the 'Here I am Lord' song for our assembly
- Year 6O Marquis Outstanding effort and improvement in maths. Really working on his resilience! Keep it up.
- Year 6R Kanishka For always being an exemplary role model to others and for always showing kindness and care to others.

