



Friday 29th November 2024

HEADLINES

St Mary's Catholic School

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Thursday 5th December

Year 11 Parents' Evening,
4.30pm - 7.30pm

Year 11 Mock interviews

Friday 6th December

Deadline for 6th Form
applications for September
2025

Friday 13th December

Year 8 Retreat

Tuesday 17th December

Christmas Dinner

Wednesday 18th December

Carol Service, 7pm, St
Joseph and the English
Martyrs

Friday 20th December

End of term, 1pm



Dear Parents

I was exceptionally proud to share with you yesterday our OFSTED report, it is very pleasing to see external validation of our hard work and dedication in making our mission statement "excellence for all" for every child, in every lesson, every day a reality.



As Interim Headteacher my personal drive and priority is ensuring outstanding teaching and learning to secure every child being able to make great progress in their education. With this in mind our INSET day last Friday 22nd November was centred on training for staff and sharing excellent practice in pedagogy, teaching and learning ideas to help guide and secure inspirational and motivational lessons. Our guest speaker, Michael Hartland, was from the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE) and guided our teaching staff through his expertise in challenge for the most able learners and adaptation and scaffolding techniques to ensure all learners are challenged in their learning as we strive for excellence. It was an exceptionally inspiring day for our teachers and I am challenging them to take/tweak their teaching and learning strategies into their lesson planning to secure greater outcomes for our students.

As we begin the season of Advent this weekend and Christmas draws closer, there is a busy calendar ahead for the school. I ask you please to ensure you are keeping up with the array of dates for your diary such as the Y11 Mock Interview Day, Y11 Parents Evening, Y8 group Retreat and our annual Carol Service as we near the end of term. I look forward to seeing you all in the coming weeks at our school events.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful weekend.

God Bless,

Miss D McHugh



LOVE - RESPECT - FLOURISH



DECEMBER 2024

HELP WITH OUR CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you on behalf of The Friends of St Mary's from St Mary's Catholic School, Windhill, Bishop's Stortford. We are a group of parents, guided by two school Governors, dedicated to raising vital funds for projects that benefit our school community.

This Christmas, we are holding a "Grand Raffle" and we would greatly appreciate if you would kindly consider donating a prize?

Any prize, however small, would be much appreciated. In return, your Company's logo and prize will appear on;

* Our Website www.stmarys.net

* In our "Headlines" newsletter which is sent to all Parents. (We have 1,150 students covering a large geographic area).

* In our Carol Service 'Order of service'

The raffle will be taking place after our Advent service on the 18th December 2024 in the Parish hall. The Advent service is always very well attended.

I do hope that you will feel able to support this cause, to benefit the children of St Mary's and their ongoing educational needs.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future, and thank you in advance for your support.

Yours Faithfully
Joanne Miller

Tel: 0794 129 3044 ,
On behalf of The Friends of St Mary's.

We look forward to welcoming all parents, children and staff to our Carol Service will be held at 7pm on **Wednesday 18 December 2024** in the Church of St Joseph's and the English Martyrs, Windhill, Bishops Stortford, CM23 2ND.

A collection will be taken on behalf of the Cardinal Hume Centre, which we have been supporting as part of our Advent Charity efforts.



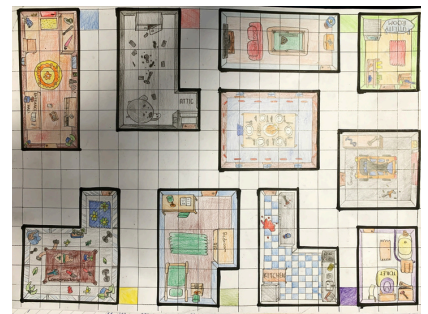
Pupil Enrichment Day

Cluedo board design.

All classes had two periods in which to design a Cluedo board, and if time, to add character, weapon and room cards. The idea for this came from realising that this traditional British game, designed during the World War 2 air raids, is still very popular amongst many of our students, but completely unknown to others. We also have Inter-House Cluedo scheduled in the near future, and need some extra boards!

The prizes of a backed and laminated copy of their design and a travel Cluedo game go to the following teams:

- Blake, Ivy, Eliana and Blessy in 7T for their cheerful and colourful Santa –themed Cluedo.
- Michael G, Joseph I and Patrick C in 8J for their determination, effort and absolutely beautiful illustrations on a traditional themed board.
- Ellie-May, Selina and Isabel in 9A for their fun theme 'Fast Food Shops'. This entry is also commended for artistic merit, inventiveness and an accurate following of all of the instructions!



Students from all year groups had the opportunity to take part in team-building challenges, CPR training and listen to inspiring talks from visiting authors.



Celebrating Success



Kailani L (9J) recently took part in the southern region Oireachtas. During this Irish dance competition, dancers from the region compete for a qualifying spot in the World Irish Dance Championships which will take place in Dublin next year.

Kailani was the 2nd place runner up and successfully secured her place in the World Championships.

Congratulations Kailani!



Movember sponsored walk

Mr D'Cruz, Mr O'Leary and Mr McGowan, as well as growing moustaches and beards, are organising a sponsored walk around school to raise awareness about men's mental health to support Movember - click [here](#) for more information.

The target is to get a minimum of 60 people (staff and 6th form students) to walk 1 km with me during the lunch break. Together, we will walk 60 km to remember that every hour, a man ends his life somewhere in the world.

Please donate to support men's mental health and prostate cancer awareness and research. You can donate via this [link](#)



MESSAGE FROM THE STUDENT HUB

The Year 8 HPV Vaccinations will take place in A1 on Wednesday 4th December.

Please submit your reply, *for consent and non-consent*, as soon as possible, by clicking [here](#)

MUSIC GROUPS

for the rest of the term will take place as follows:

Monday
After school
Year 11
coursework
catch up
(JMA)

Tuesday
Before school
Guitar
ensemble (DRU)
After school
Concert band
(ACO)

Wednesday
Before school
String
ensemble (JMA)
After school
Matilda singing
rehearsal
(JMA)

Thursday
Before school
Wind
ensemble
(DRU)
After school
Staff Band
(JMA/DRU)

Proposed Change of school uniform - Consultation for September 2025

As a school, we are always looking at ways to improve. As part of this, we wish to review our current school uniform for the girls and in order to make a full and informed decision as a school community, we will be consulting with parents, students, staff and governors.

The school has had the traditional long length kilt, which was originally priced at £54 per skirt. This cost prompted the decision to offer the shorter knee length option at £34.99 in response to increasing cost of living and pressure on affordability. Working with our uniform suppliers, we are now in a position where there is only a £4 price difference between the knee length and long kilt option, and as such, the need for the shorter knee length option has been removed. I, as Headteacher, and the Governors wish to retain the unique character and tradition of St Mary's by the girls uniform option being the longer length kilt or St Mary's school trouser option with effect from September 2025.

During this consultation, parents/carers and staff are invited to email me thoughts and feedback to info@stmarys.net to indicate their preference. Students will be consulted through the student council and assemblies.

The consultation will run from 28th November until 6th January 2025. Staff are informed at briefing on Monday 2nd December.

Once the consultation period is completed all the feedback will be collated and presented to the Governors. It is important to stress that we are fully aware that school uniform represents a significant cost for families, hence the early consultation and the Spring and Summer Term 2025 for the phase out of the knee length skirt option.

