



Friday 7th February 2025

HEADLINES

St Mary's Catholic School



DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday 10th February

Extra-Familial Harm Parental Information Session
6.00pm - 7.30pm

Monday 17th - Friday 22nd February

Half term

Tuesday 25th February

Yr12-13 Film & Media Studio trip

Tuesday 25th - Thursday 27th February

Yr10-11 Retreat

Monday 3rd March

Catenian trip to St Edmund's College



Dear Parents

I start this edition by paying great tribute to the cast and crew of our school musical *Matilda*! Well done and congratulations to all who made a wonderful contribution to the school musical. The matinee performance to the Y4 and Y5 students from St Joseph's Catholic Primary was exceptional and gave the cast a tremendous boost as they prepared for the two evening performances last Thursday and Friday. I am exceptionally proud of the actors, musicians, dancers, stage team, lighting, sound, set design, prop making and production team! The show was a terrific success and I am so proud of our school community. I hope you enjoy the photographs in this edition. A special thanks to our parents association Friends of St Mary's FOSM for their generosity and time, we are truly blessed with the generosity and kindness of our parents with their great support of school events.

Over the last two weeks we have also had our Y9 Options Evening and our Y9 Parents Evening as our cohort receive valuable feedback on their academic progress and targets to improve and start to explore their GCSE subjects of choice and personalised pathway for their KS4 studies. A reminder the deadline for submitting the option forms is to the Y9 Form Tutors on Friday 14th February.

As part of our PSHEE schedule on Monday 10th February we welcome Paul Wright, our Guest Speaker who will be running workshops with year groups on the context of extra-familial harm. This will be an opportunity for our young people to explore the choices faced in society and the potential consequences of those decisions. The aim of the sessions is to equip students with strategies to make positive, informed choices. In addition to the student-focused events, we warmly invite you to a Parent Information Evening from 6:00pm to 7:30pm on Monday 10th February evening in the Hume Theatre, further information can be found in this edition.

Please do keep in your prayers our current Y11 and Y13 students who are completing their mock examinations during this week and next week. May they remain calm and focused and follow the advice and guidance of their teachers and secure the best grades possible as they work towards their summer external examinations. We pray for our students:

We give you our school.

We give you all the teachers and staff who work here,

We give you all the children who study here.

We pray our school would be place of great discovery, adventure and creativity.

May it be a place where we love to learn and where we learn to love,

A place where every one is respected and all are deeply valued.

We ask all this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

God Bless,

Deirdre McHugh

LOVE - RESPECT - FLOURISH

Matilda Jr: The Musical

The magic of the West End arrived at St Mary's in late January as students took to the stage for a spectacular two-night run of *Matilda Jr: The Musical*. Our incredibly talented children brought the story of a remarkable young girl with big dreams to life, delivering captivating performances filled with energy, passion, and charm.

The opening night was met with a standing ovation. Audience members described the show as a 'slick and polished performance' with 'commanding performances' from everyone involved. One particular highlight was the scene where Matilda uses her telepathic powers to write on the blackboard -without touching the chalk!

Ciara M, one of the Year 11 students who played Miss Honey, said: '*Matilda Jr* was a fantastic show to be part of. My fellow cast members were superb and I have huge admiration for the two Year 7 girls who played Matilda, they stepped out of their comfort zone to perform in front of such large audiences. The teachers were kind and incredibly supportive. Performing in front of such an amazing audience has given me lots of confidence.'

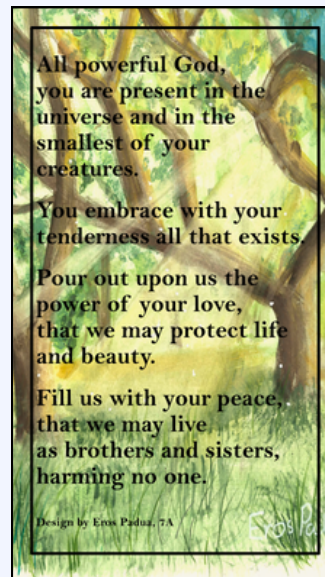
Congratulations to the entire cast and crew for staging such a magnificent and unforgettable production!



Laudato Si prayer

Many congratulations to Eros P (7A) who created this stunning background design for our Laudato Si prayer. A competition was held at the end of last term and the winning design was selected from a shortlist of amazing finalists.

The prayer will be printed and displayed in all the classrooms where Geography is taught.



All powerful God,
you are present in the
universe and in the
smallest of your
creatures.

You embrace with your
tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the
power of your love,
that we may protect life
and beauty.

Fill us with your peace,
that we may live
as brothers and sisters,
harming no one.

Design by Eros Padua, 7A

Year 12 Mission Team

Mr D'Cruz recently led a trip to the Cardinal Hume Centre in Westminster to deliver the items collected by the school during Advent. Mr Cage (caretaker) and Mr O'Leary (Head of Geography) accompanied members of our Year 12 Mission team to the Centre, where our items were gratefully welcomed. The Christmas period saw the emergency supplies in the Food Bank depleted, so the arrival of our school mini-bus filled with essential food items was a timely blessing. The staff of the Cardinal Hume Centre praised the efforts of our Year 12 Mission team and thanked our students, staff and parents for their generosity.

After the dropping off the items, our students went to Westminster Cathedral to pray for our school community and for their charity work this year.



Safeguarding workshops & parent information evening

On **Monday 10th February**, we will welcome Paul Wright (Practice Lead for Extra-Familial Harm and Team Manager of the Contextual Safeguarding Hub) to host a series of workshops and a parental information evening aimed at raising awareness about the risks of extra-familial harm and empowering young people to make informed decisions.

Throughout the day, students across all year groups will participate in age-appropriate workshops lasting an hour. These sessions will focus on:

- Understanding the concept of extra-familial harm.
- Exploring the choices young people face and the potential consequences of those decisions.
- Equipping students with strategies to make positive, informed choices.
- County lines

In addition to the student-focused events, we warmly invite you to a Parent Information Evening from 6:00pm to 7:30pm on the same day. During this session, Paul Wright will:

- Examine the underlying factors that contribute to extra-familial harm.
- Share practical strategies to help reduce risks and support your child's safety.
- Provide an opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns in a supportive environment.

Your participation in the evening session is invaluable, as it allows both home and school to work together to better safeguard our young people and prepare them to thrive.

Please email info@stmarys.net to attend.

Inter-House News



The Headteacher's Tea is held every half term to congratulate those students in Years 7 - 10 who achieve the most positive House Points.

Very well done to the students who achieved that this half term!

Quiz Masters

Pupils were invited by their form to represent their House at the Inter-House Quiz Masters Competition. Students were selected as a result of excellent general knowledge shown in their weekly form quiz.

Students worked together in their House Team to try to answer as many general knowledge questions correctly in two minutes. Mr Eddleston and the senior prefects were very impressed with the team work displayed by the students.

In addition to the positive House Points students achieved, the individuals who answered the most questions correctly, will be invited to represent the school at the Rotary Quiz later this term.

Well done to all those involved.



Senior Football Competition

For Year 13 the Senior Inter-House Football competition was some welcome respite from the busy-ness of their exam preparations. Having journeyed through the school with them as their Learning Coordinator and seen them participate in many an Inter-House, it was fantastic to see them come together as a school community to work together and have some fun.

Congratulations also to Year 12, who recognised the importance of participating in Inter-House competitions.

The final results were:

- 1st place - M
- 2nd place - T
- 3rd place - J
- 4th place - A



Water Bottles

St Mary's is committed to reducing its environmental impact. As part of this effort, we are moving away from single-use plastics. Bottled water and juice will no longer be sold in the Refectory, and we encourage children to bring reusable bottles and use the sustainability machines, which dispense free, filtered, and chilled water. Various flavoured water options are also available at an additional cost, using tokens that can be purchased at the Refectory tills.

All water bottles should be **clearly named** and may only be filled before school, at break or during lunchtimes.



MESSAGE FROM THE STUDENT HUB

Procedure for collecting students during the school day

If you are collecting a student for an appointment during the school day, please come to the Student Hub entrance (Great Hadham Road), ring the buzzer and tell us who you are collecting.

We will not let any student leave the school site without confirmation that an adult is here to collect them, or that you have authorised them to make their own way home.

For safeguarding purposes, **all** students who are unwell must be collected by a parent or carer.

Get the right help at the right time



early help, brighter futures

Need advice and support for your family?

-  Relationship support
-  Parenting Advice & Courses
-  Emotional & Mental Health
-  Staying healthy
-  School attendance/anxiety
-  Money advice
-  Services for Young People
-  SEND Local Offer
-  Search local services
-  and much more



Visit Hertfordshire's Families First website:-
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst