



— SPRING TERM 2025 —

Curriculum Newsletter

St Mary's Catholic School



Spring Term 2025 Highlights

- Art
- Business & Politics
- Computing
- Design Technology
- DT Food and Nutrition
- Drama
- English
- Geography
- History
- Maths
- Modern Foreign Languages
- Music
- Physical Education
- Religious Education
- Science

Dear Parents and Carers

As we conclude our Spring term, I find myself reflecting on the remarkable achievements and experiences that have enriched our school life. The dedication and enthusiasm of our students and staff continue to inspire me daily, and I am delighted to share some highlights with you.

Our unwavering commitment to excellence in teaching and learning remains at the heart of everything we do. The focus and engagement demonstrated by our students in their classes is truly commendable. This edition of our newsletter serves as a testament to the vibrant curriculum across all subjects, showcasing the breadth and depth of learning taking place throughout the school. I encourage you to peruse the details within; there is indeed much to celebrate and be proud of!

I've been particularly impressed by the commitment and dedication shown by our GCSE and A Level students as they undertake their practical examinations in Food and Nutrition and Media Studies. These assessments not only challenge their subject knowledge but also their ability to apply skills in real-world contexts – a crucial aspect of their educational journey.

Excitement is building as our Iceland trip prepares for departure. We wish our intrepid explorers a safe and wonderful adventure as they immerse themselves in the vast and awe-inspiring geological landscape of this unique country. Such experiences are invaluable in broadening horizons and fostering a sense of wonder about the world around us.

Last weekend saw our Year 9 students embark on their Duke of Edinburgh trial expedition for the Bronze Award. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all the staff who gave so generously of their time to make this opportunity possible. These experiences play a crucial role in developing resilience, teamwork, and self-reliance – skills that will serve our students well beyond their school years. I wish them well as they prepare for their expedition.

Another highlight this week was our enrichment trip to the University of Cambridge. Our students had the privilege of visiting various colleges, participating in workshops, and attending guest lectures. Such experiences are instrumental in raising aspirations and opening doors to future possibilities. I hope the students found the day rewarding and inspirational, helping them aim high and excel. There will be further opportunities for University visits during the Summer term.

As we look ahead, please note that the **Summer Term will commence at 8:40am on Tuesday 22nd April 2025**. I kindly ask that you make a note of this date to ensure a smooth start to the new term.

In closing, I would like to wish you and your families a blessed Easter break. May it be a time of rest, renewal, and joyful celebration. I look forward to welcoming everyone back, refreshed and ready for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

God Bless,

Deirdre McHugh

STOP PRESS! Final total for Charity Week is £8,813.17!

Lord of life

We pray for all who bring your
word of life

As a light to those in darkness
For those who bring your word of
peace

To those enslaved by fear
For those who bring your word of
love

To those in need of comfort
Lord of love and Lord of peace

Lord of resurrection life

Be known

Through our lives
and through your power

Christ the Lord is risen

Amen

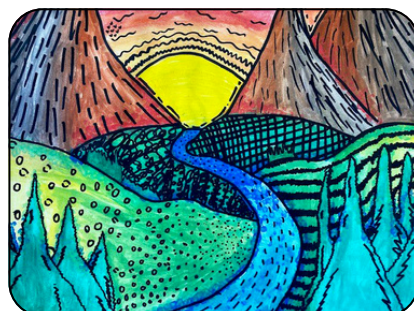
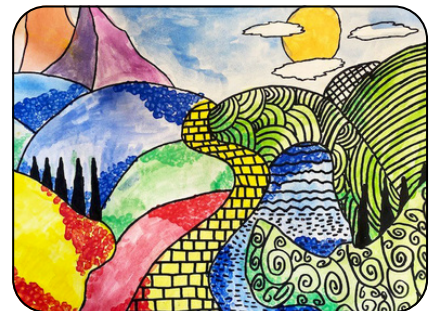
LOVE - RESPECT - FLOURISH

ART

Mrs Reece and Miss Nairn want to congratulate our wonderful Year 7 students on their progress with their David Hockney inspired landscape project this term.

We are both so impressed with the hard work and diligence of Year 7 in bringing their creative landscapes to life. We have thoroughly enjoyed watching your confidence and skills grow in response to the work of iconic artist David Hockney. Well done!

Below is a selection of work from Miss Nairn's 7A Art Class – a huge well done to those who finished their landscape last week.



In other news we welcome our new permanent member of staff Mrs Reece to the Art Department. Mrs Reece has already brought so much to the department in terms of ideas, energy and enthusiasm and we are very happy to have her working here at St Mary's. Below is a little bit about Mrs Reece for those of you that don't know her:

After teaching in London for ten years, I am so happy to have joined St Mary's Creative Art department, the standard of work here is outstanding and the wonderful students are very ambitious with their project scope and scale.

I look forward to adding my expertise to the Art curriculum and getting to know more of our lovely students - the future is bright!

My hobbies are painting, walking with my dog, cooking and playing with my little girl who is one. During the holidays I enjoy visiting Cornwall where I am originally from to enjoy the fresh sea air and see my family.

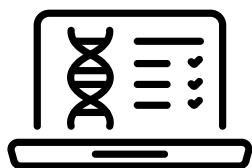


BUSINESS

GCSE Business

Over the past number of weeks GCSE Business students have been investigating how different businesses use technology to ensure the products and services that they offer are up-to-date and relevant. Students have completed a research project and have used Domino's Pizza to demonstrate all the ways they use technology: from ordering materials from suppliers to paying their staff. After Easter, students will turn their attention to external factors, which includes key concepts such as: inflation; interest rates; unemployment; taxation; legislation and exchange rates.

Again, all these key topics are important for the GCSE examinations but also to improve their life skills.



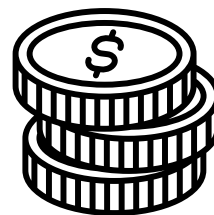
A-Level Business

We were fortunate to have guest speaker David Wojcik, Founder and Director of JustOne come into our community and speak to our Year 12 and Year 13 A-Level students. JustOne specialises in ways to support businesses raise working capital. David gave a passionate and informative talk and used fantastic examples of real businesses to ensure that the curriculum was engaging. Furthermore our students asked relevant and impressive questions. We are looking forward to welcoming David back after Easter to discuss the most effective methods of motivating staff.

Diploma in Finance

We are very proud of our Year 13 Finance students who have all recently passed their Unit 3 external exam. This means that 75% of the course is complete and all students are currently achieving a grade of A*-C.

Well done Year 13, now keep going and finish the job!



POLITICS

Year 12: Ideologies in Action - Shaping the World.

Year 12 have been exploring the fascinating world of political ideologies, focusing on Liberalism and Socialism. They've been analysing the core principles of these ideologies and their impact on society, engaging in lively debates and developing their critical thinking skills.



Year 13: Comparing Political Systems - UK vs. USA.

Year 13 have been delving into the intricacies of the UK and US political systems, comparing their structures, processes, and cultures. They've been analysing the strengths and weaknesses of each system, gaining a deeper understanding of the diverse ways in which power is exercised.



COMPUTING

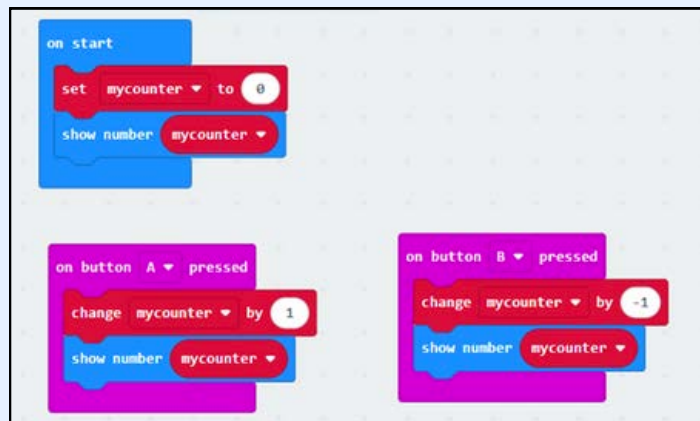
It has been a busy and productive term in Computer Science, with students across all key stages engaging in a variety of topics that develop both their theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Key Stage 3

Year 7 students have been introduced to programming through the use of the BBC MicroBit. This has provided them with a hands-on approach to learning fundamental programming concepts, including variables, outputs, inputs, and selection statements. Through interactive projects, they have gained an understanding of how to control hardware and write simple programs.

In Year 8, students have progressed to text-based programming with Python. They have taken their first steps in writing code using this widely used programming language, developing programs that incorporate user input, basic calculations, and decision-making structures. This experience lays a strong foundation for further programming studies in later years.

Year 9 students have been focusing on e-safety, an essential aspect of modern digital literacy. They have explored the risks associated with online activity, including cyberbullying, grooming, and data privacy concerns. Additionally, they have learned strategies for staying safe online and protecting personal information, ensuring they can navigate the digital world responsibly.



Key Stage 4

Year 10 students have been refining their programming skills by working through advanced techniques such as string manipulation, file handling, and error management using try-except statements. These skills are crucial for developing robust and efficient programs. Alongside programming, they have been learning about computer networks, gaining an understanding of network infrastructure and hardware that underpin modern communication systems.

For Year 11 students, the main focus has shifted to exam preparation. Having completed their course content, they are now working through structured revision activities, consolidating their knowledge in preparation for their upcoming GCSE Computer Science exams. This period is vital for reinforcing key concepts and developing effective problem-solving techniques.

```
1 file = open("names.txt", "r")
2 number = 0
3 for x in range(4):
4     number += 1
5     data = file.readline()
6     print(number, "-", data)
7
8 file.close()
```

Key Stage 5

Year 12 students have been deepening their understanding of data structures, studying stacks, queues, graphs, and trees. They have explored how these structures are used in computing, their efficiency, and their real-world applications. This knowledge is instrumental in preparing them for more advanced programming and problem-solving tasks.

Meanwhile, Year 13 students have completed their course content and are focusing on revision activities to ensure they are well-prepared for their final A-Level exams. Additionally, they are putting the finishing touches on their non-exam assessment projects, which are due after the Easter break. These projects showcase their ability to apply computational thinking and programming skills to solve real-world problems, demonstrating their readiness for higher education and careers in technology.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Year 10 Textiles students have been designing and manufacturing hooded sweatshirts to expand their knowledge of clothing production. They've creatively developed their own applique designs and carefully applied them to their garments.

This project has allowed students to explore the process of making clothing while showcasing their creativity and attention to detail. It's a fantastic opportunity for them to learn valuable skills in textiles and design.



Year 10 Product Design students have applied their metalwork and product design skills to create unique candle holders. Working with aluminium and pewter, they explored techniques such as marking out, cutting, shaping, and finishing through hollowing, filing, and gravity die casting. Using tools like bench shears, scribes, and emery cloth, students refined their designs.

This project enhanced their understanding of non-ferrous metals and GCSE theory, while showcasing creativity, precision, and high-quality finishes, building confidence for future design challenges.



DT FOOD AND NUTRITION

Year 10 Food Preparation and Nutrition students have been honing their practical skills in preparation for their Year 11 exams. They've practiced techniques such as fine dicing, seasoning, shaping, and coating while making Scotch eggs.

These hands-on activities are helping students build confidence and refine their culinary abilities as they work toward mastering the skills needed for their upcoming practical exams. It's an exciting time for the students as they continue to develop their cooking expertise.



DRAMA



Our drama students have been working hard this term, developing their performance skills and creativity through a range of exciting projects.

Year 7 have been exploring characterisation through 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory', experimenting with voice, movement, and expression.

Year 9 have been rehearsing and performing scenes from 'DNA' by Dennis Kelly, focusing on teamwork, stage presence, and the play's dark themes of morality and responsibility.

Meanwhile, Year 10 have been busy developing ideas for their Component One Devising Unit, where they are creating original performances from scratch, using stimulus materials to inspire their work.

On top of all this, we were thrilled to stage our school musical, Matilda, which was a huge success! Our talented cast and crew worked incredibly hard to bring the show to life, and it was fantastic to see their dedication pay off in such a brilliant production.

It has been a term full of creativity, confidence building, and collaboration—well done to all our drama students!



ENGLISH

Students in Miss Rose's English class had success in having their work selected for publication in a book called 'Magical Map'.

The competition involved writing a short story (no more than 100 words!) with this as the title. They are pictured here with their certificates and bookmark prizes, and examples of their work can be seen below.



Enchantment

As I woke up, I noticed I was not at home, but instead, lying on the floor of a forest. Where am I? I thought, as I sat up. As I glanced towards my surroundings, I noticed it wasn't a regular forest, but instead, it seemed like a foreign world. The trees were purple and the sky was pink, blue and orange. As I started to panic, I realised that there were two eyes staring at me through the bushes. "Aargh!" I screamed, tripping over my own legs. As I let out this scream, a squirrel jumped out. I now felt silly.

Eros (12)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford

The Bomb

I'm running as fast as I can... hopefully it's fast enough. There it is, the bomb that could end the world. It all happened because of the Martian goats, the aliens that invaded. It started the intergalactic war that caused millions to die, and probably millions more will. There it is, the massive otherworldly bomb. The size of the Eiffel Tower. I see the control pad. How will I reach it? It's too high - could I? No. Actually, yes. I grab a bar and swing over the rails. Don't. Look. Down. I look down. "Oh no!" What's going to happen?

Tabitha (12)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford

Trees And Deforestation

Gary the alien found a tree and wanted to blow it up with dynamite. Galactise took him to school and taught everyone about trees and deforestation. Gary went home and did his homework about Earth and forests. After that, he went back to the tree. Gary felt bad for the tree, so he stayed up all weekend, built a glass dome and gave the tree food and water. Gary saved the tree, all thanks to education and Galactise the camel.

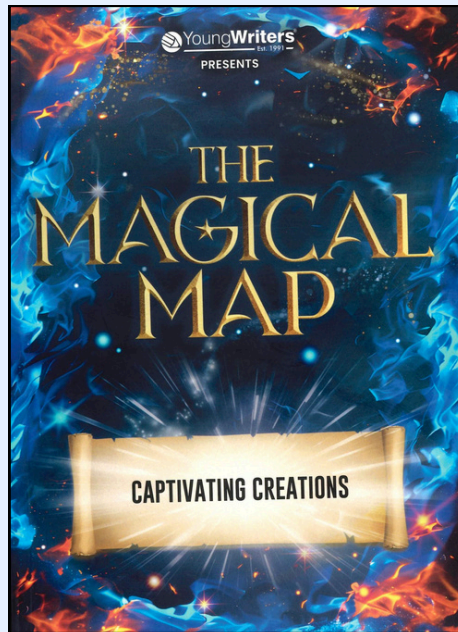
Roisin (12)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford

The Takeover

One day, on a planet far, far away, there was a creature called Duxngolskog. Duxngolskog got very mad with his living environment. It was boiling hot, so he gathered an alien army to take over Earth.

As soon as he landed in the cold British air, he grabbed a button and transported every human. When the humans were transported to Planet Peal, they trashed it, while the aliens looked after Earth. When the aliens missed their planet and went home, they were all shocked. Their home turned to ashes and smoke, so they had to live on Earth with the humans.

Isla (11)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford



The Spaceman's Dream

The intelligent spaceman set off to space. It had been his life goal to get there. While he was in space, he had to survive off certain types of food. This was very hard for him but he knew if he wanted to survive, he would need to do it. During his journey, he went outside to look at the beautiful stars. He had to go back soon so he got ready to start his journey home. When he got home, all of his family were very happy and to celebrate his arrival home they hosted a very big party.

Noah G (11)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford

The Adventure

It all started on a sunny day when Maya woke up. She found a strange watch just beside her wooden-framed bed. She picked it up, when suddenly she felt dizzy. She spun and spun, and hallucinated into a hole.

When she woke up, she found herself on top of a mountain. She started panicking; she couldn't find a way to get out.

Just as she was about to give up, her bear came with the watch. When her finger touched the watch, she felt the dizziness again.

Later she disappeared and returned home.

Adrianna Pawlowska (11)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford

The Frozen World

David, an archaeologist, found a map on an ancient tomb. He saw it and when he picked it up, he got teleported into a frozen wasteland. He saw a tiny base camp and took shelter there. He saw a cave within the mountain of ice and decided to go there with the abandoned supplies. He trekked up to the cave and he saw a shadow. Thinking it was a person, he went into the cave to see a frozen yeti. Its deformed body was like a demon. He ran as fast he could. Then he heard the mountain crumble...

Daniel (11)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford

Lost

He was starving. Ryan hadn't eaten for days and he had only had a little water. He had been stranded on the island after a storm had thrown everyone off the boat. There had been others lost on the island with him, but now it was only him. They had all died. Suddenly, a wind came from overhead and he could hear whirring as well. A helicopter had come to save him finally! "Come on, you're safe now," a man said. Ryan really hoped he was right as he was so tired. All he cared about now was going home.

Noah S (11)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford

The Map Of The Future

Today was the day. I went on my camping trip to the forest! When I arrived it was already dark. Daisy and Henry were already tired and wanted to sleep but I wanted to explore! The tent was cold and damp from all of the rain so I said to Daisy, "I'm really thirsty." So Daisy and I went to the campfire to drink water but that's when we heard the rumbling sounds of a bear. The tent was jammed so we ran. In the depths of the darkness we were lost, everywhere was darkness, that's until we saw the map of the future!

Aoife (11)
St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford



Anya and Zoryana have also been published in the 'Magical Map' publication.



Demi S has had her poem published in a poetry compilation called 'Wonder Verse: In Another Realm'

Growing Up

Growing taller, reaching for the sun,
Reaching milestones, one by one.
Out of childhood, a new path to tread,
World expanding, dreams in my head.
Inside, a change, a heart that grows,
New experiences life bestows.
Growing stronger, wiser and bold,
Understanding stories yet untold.
Passing through phases, learning and seeing.

GEOGRAPHY

It has been a successful Spring term for the Geography department at St Mary's.

In January, our Year 13 students submitted their independent investigations (fieldwork), which forms part of their final overall assessment grade for their A-level examination. This will allow them time to focus on teaching the remainder of the syllabus and revising for their final written examinations.

In February, we attended the second subject curriculum meeting with our primary school partners in the St Francis of Assisi Trust, once again at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Further plans were made in planning an outdoor fieldwork orienteering treasure hunt activity on their school site in the Summer term. We also liaised regarding shared curriculum and assessment resources.

Year 12 students are preparing for their field trips in May, to Walton On the Naze, and Stratford Olympic Park, where they will carry out a range of primary data collection techniques in a number of locations. This will help them to complete their own independent investigations (fieldwork coursework), which is worth 20% of the final overall grade for their final A-Level examinations.



The winning design from our Year 7 Laudato Si prayer design competition, was produced by Eros P, 7A. This design for the background to Pope Francis' prayer for caring for our common home-planet earth is now proudly displayed in each classroom where Geography lessons are taught, and used for the start of lesson prayer.

Congratulations to Eros for the care and effort that went into designing creating this design!

Year 11 Booster Sessions

Mr O'Leary and Mrs McGrath continue to run Booster Support sessions for targeted students on Mondays and Wednesdays after school in 'D' block. Key students have been identified but ALL GCSE Geography students are welcome and encouraged to attend. These sessions will continue throughout the Spring term and focus on geographical skills and helping student to break down practice exam questions.

Mr O'Leary will also be running two revision sessions in the Easter holidays for Paper 1 and Paper 2 of the final written examination. Please check the final Easter Revision schedule for details on how to sign up.

Progress Exams

In February, Year 11 and Year 13 Progress Exams took place in formal examination conditions in the sports hall. After the papers were marked, students received written feedback then used mark schemes to edit / improve their work, to help prepare for the final written examination. Valuable exam technique lessons were learned (such as which optional questions to choose in Paper 1....i.e. not the glaciers question!!!).

In April, Year 10 and Year 12 Progress Exams will take place. Students are busy preparing for these assessments which will take place in formal examination conditions in the sports hall.

Iceland Field trip

In March we held a parent information evening, for the parents and students in Year 10 and Year 11 who are attending the Geography department trip to Iceland in April 2025.

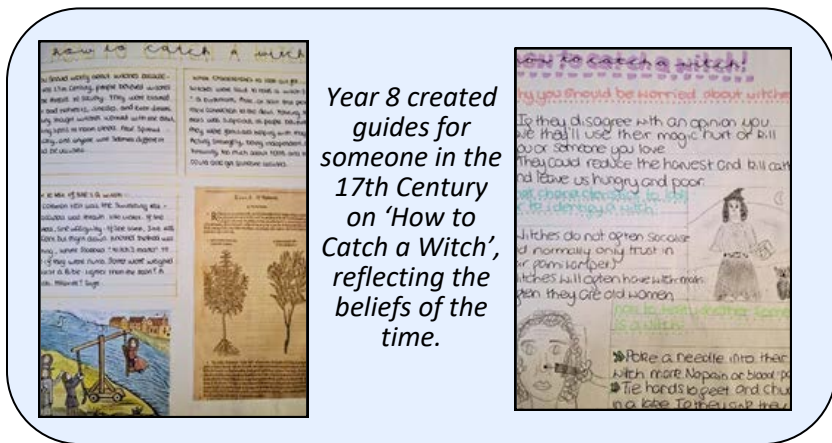
Trip hoodies have been ordered for all staff and students. We all are very excited to set off on this once-in-a-lifetime tour!



HISTORY

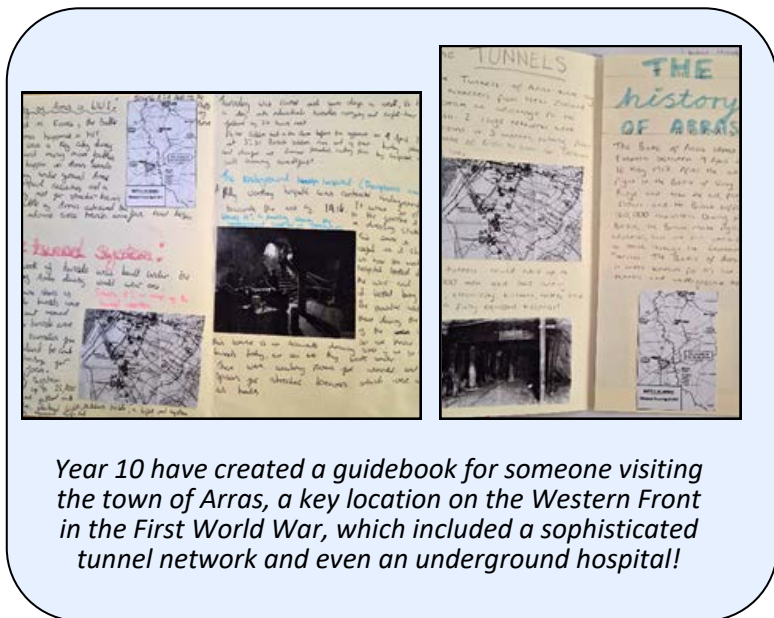
Year 7: The Norman Conquest - A Clash of Cultures. Our youngest historians have been transported back to 1066, exploring the dramatic events of the Norman Conquest. They've investigated the battles, the castles, and the lasting impact of William the Conqueror's victory, discovering how this pivotal moment shaped the future of England.

Year 8: The Witch Craze - Fear and Fury. Year 8 have plunged into the eerie world of the 16th and 17th century witch hunts. They've examined the social and religious anxieties that fuelled this dark chapter in history, uncovering the stories of those accused and the devastating consequences of mass hysteria. It's been a chilling but crucial exploration of how fear can grip a society.



Year 8 created guides for someone in the 17th Century on 'How to Catch a Witch', reflecting the beliefs of the time.

Year 9: Women's Suffrage - Voices of Change. Our Year 9 students have been passionately exploring the fight for women's suffrage in Britain. They've investigated the diverse tactics of the suffragettes and suffragists, from peaceful protests to radical actions, and analysed the key figures who campaigned for equality. They've come to understand the long and arduous journey towards women gaining the right to vote.



Year 10 have created a guidebook for someone visiting the town of Arras, a key location on the Western Front in the First World War, which included a sophisticated tunnel network and even an underground hospital!

Year 10: The Western Front - Innovation and Horror. Year 10 have been studying the First World War, focusing on the Western Front. They've examined the devastating injuries suffered by soldiers and the revolutionary medical treatments developed in response. They have learnt the brutal realities of trench warfare, and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable suffering.

Year 11: The Dawn of the Cold War - A World Divided. Year 11 students have been navigating the tense beginnings of the Cold War, examining the ideological clash between East and West. They've explored the key events and figures that shaped this era, from the Potsdam Conference to the early stages of the arms race, understanding how the world was reshaped by this global conflict.

Year 12: Politics and Empires - From Westminster to the Tsars. Year 12 have been tackling a broad historical canvas, exploring post-war British politics and the complex nationalities of the Russian Empire under Tsar Alexander II. They are gaining a deeper understanding of the forces that shaped both British and Russian society in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Year 13: Napoleonic Wars and Coursework Mastery. Year 13 have been diligently completing their coursework, demonstrating their research and analytical skills. Alongside this, they have been studying the dramatic Napoleonic Wars, examining the military strategies, political upheavals, and enduring legacy of this era.

In February as part of their enrichment programme, our Sixth Form had the privileged opportunity to hear from someone who suffered during the Holocaust. Unfortunately, as time passes, the generation that lived through the horrors of the events in the 1930s and 1940s slowly diminishes. As a result, the Holocaust Educational Trust has embarked on a new phase: training and encouraging relatives of survivors to continue sharing their story.

Peter and Moira Hart kindly shared the testimony of Peter's mother, Kitty Hart-Moxon, who is 98 years of age. Our Sixth Formers listened to what Mrs Hart-Moxon endured at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Peter and Moira's narrative, accompanied by a series of photographs and video recordings of Kitty, created a visually engaging presentation for our students.

Students reflecting on the talk described it as 'a remarkable story of survival' and 'an authentic view on a life few of us could imagine'. Others stated that it reminded them of 'the sheer scale of suffering in this time' and that 'we should never forget or ignore that this has happened but rather learn how to stop this happening again'.

MATHS

We have had a busy term in maths.

Our Year 9 and Year 10 students won 6 gold, 8 silver and 19 bronze in the annual Intermediate Maths Challenge. The competition encourages mathematical reasoning, precision of thought and fluency to make students think and our students have represented themselves and the school brilliantly.

Two teams of Year 7s competed in the Heats Maths team Challenge. It was an afternoon of quick maths, fun and biscuits. We look forward to the next one in a few months. Our youngest students showed excellent communication, problem-solving and team-working skills, as well as mathematical skill and insight.

In Further Maths, Year 11 students had a hands-on experience of learning about the Nearest Neighbour algorithm (Decision Mathematics 1 topic) with Year 12 students. It involved creating a distance matrix from the network and working out the upper bound for the shortest route. They also started the process of learning about roots of polynomials which Year 12 students are starting as their next topic for Core Pure model. Fun was had by all!



This year we celebrated NSPCC's 25th annual Number Day. There were a lot of activities on in the hall with guess the number of sweets, an estimation challenge, guess the weight of the cake, a treasure hunt around the school and a fabulous maths bake competition. Well done to all those who took part and made it such a memorable day.



MUSIC

66

On Tuesday 11th March, we were given the honour of judging a wonderful array of Year 9 bands in the annual Battle of the Bands competition. Each band had their own unique style and honestly the levels of creativity were quite remarkable. We had an amazing mix of songs, spanning from 'Zombie' by The Cranberries to 'Marry You' by Bruno Mars and every band clearly demonstrated how hard they have been working in the music lessons over the past few months. With the support of the rest of their year group, the bands showed how well they work in a team, producing some amazing songs.

When choosing our winners, we found it extremely difficult considering the standard of every band. We focused on how groups collaborated together as bands and the overall energy that they brought to the day. Despite there being many talented individuals, we had to award 1st and 2nd place to the groups which performed the best as a collective. Ultimately, our runner-up was 'That's What I Like' and our winner was 'Piano Man'. However, every band was amazing and it was so wonderful to see the hidden musical talent of students and we hope they continue with it.

It is so heart warming as fellow musicians to see the talent coming up through the school as it gives us positive hope for what's to come in the future.

To any younger musicians who may be reading this, our bit of advice is to take part in Battle of the Bands next year - You won't regret it!

Osahon O and Marie S

99



On March 25th we held our Spring Concert with 96 students taking part this year! The evening started with all the guitarists, string players and singers performing 'Rather Be' by Clean Bandit with a huge amount of energy and enthusiasm. Next, we had 25 different performances from clarinet solos to rock bands to Gospel Choir, all playing a wide variety of musical styles and genres with a fantastic selection of age ranges performing together. For some students it was their first public performance, so inevitably there were nerves but the audience was incredibly supportive and encouraging.

There was something for everyone regardless of their musical taste from Mozart to Jazz, and Dire Straits to Billy Joel. The Junior Choir finished the first half superbly, singing 'This Is Me' from The Greatest Showman.

The second half started with a percussion piece arranged by Mrs Russell featuring our wonderful bass guitarist Ruby Cahill.

It was a medley of 'Another One Bites the Dust', 'Billie Jean' and the Mission Impossible theme to name but a few. The concert finished with a huge finale number of 'Africa' by Toto, one of our GCSE set works, with all the students singing the final chorus. The audience were clapping along and it was a truly joyful experience. The concert was sold out with the staff helpers having to stand at the back!

Many students commented afterwards how much they enjoyed it and what a buzz they felt as this was the first Spring Concert we had put on for three years.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

As we conclude Term 2, we are pleased to share the incredible progress and achievements of our students in Physical Education (PE). This term has seen continued enthusiasm, dedication, and development across all year groups, both in lessons and through extra-curricular activities.

Key Stage 3 Highlights

KS3 students have embraced a diverse range of sports this term, developing core skills and discovering new interests. The girls participated in netball, Outdoor Adventurous Activities (OAA), gymnastics, and trampoline, enhancing their coordination, problem-solving abilities, and teamwork. The boys engaged in football, handball, OAA, gymnastics, and trampoline, focusing on tactical gameplay, physical literacy, and group collaboration.



Key Stage 4 Highlights

KS4 students expanded their sporting repertoire and refined their techniques in a variety of sports. The girls took part in dance, trampoline, badminton, and netball, demonstrating creativity, agility, and tactical awareness. The boys participated in football, handball, badminton, and table tennis, developing precision, fitness, and strategic thinking.



GCSE PE – Year 11

Our Year 11 GCSE PE students have successfully completed their mock exams and coursework this term and continue to show strong commitment to their studies. As we approach the final term, students will have opportunities to attend Easter revision sessions to further support their exam preparation. We are proud of their hard work and wish each student the very best as they approach the end of their time at St Mary's.

A-Level PE – Year 12

Our A-Level PE students have continued to explore complex topics such as sports science (biomechanics), sports psychology, exercise physiology, and globalisation in sport. Alongside their academic studies, many of our A-Level students have taken an active role in supporting GCSE PE lessons, sharing their knowledge and experience to inspire and assist those preparing for exams. Their leadership and dedication have been invaluable.

Competitive Success

This term, our students have represented the school in district football and netball competitions, achieving outstanding results. We are especially proud of the Year 11 girls, who were crowned district champions in netball; the Year 8 girls, who finished 2nd in both the cup and plate competitions; and the Year 7 girls' A team, who made the semi-finals and came 4th out of 10 teams. These accomplishments are a testament to their determination, teamwork, and sportsmanship.



Looking ahead to Term 3

As we move into Term 3, we are excited for the start of our athletics, cricket, and tennis season. We are also looking forward to our annual Sports Day and PE Presentation Evening, where we will celebrate the many achievements of our students throughout the year.

We thank you for your continued support and encourage all students to remain active and engaged both in PE and beyond.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

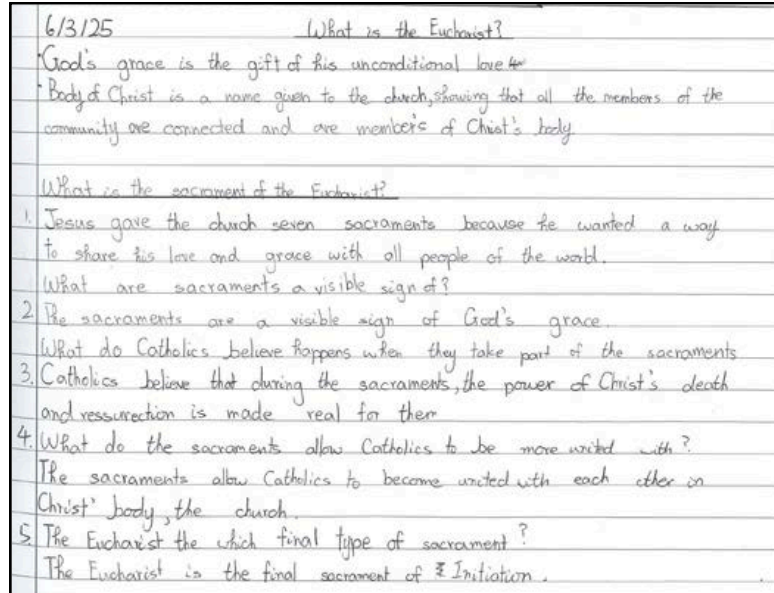
The RE Department has had a busy term with preparing students for examinations. We have also been fortunate to have two of our local priests visit lessons and answer questions on a variety of subjects. We have used some class time to go to the chapel to follow the Stations of the Cross so that everyone gets the opportunity to partake in a 'Lenten Pilgrimage'.

Year 7

Students have been learning about the sacraments and in particular, the Eucharist this term. They understand the importance of celebrating the Eucharist in Mass and the Catholic belief in the 'Real Presence'. They have also considered other approaches to the Eucharist from different Christian denominations.

Year 8

Students have been studying the Paschal Mystery with a particular focus on forgiveness and healing. They have learnt about the importance of Holy Week and how Lent is an opportunity to reconcile with God and others by receiving the sacrament and participating in the Stations of the Cross. They have also looked at some modern examples of forgiveness, in particular the remarkable Mizen and Walker families.



Year 9

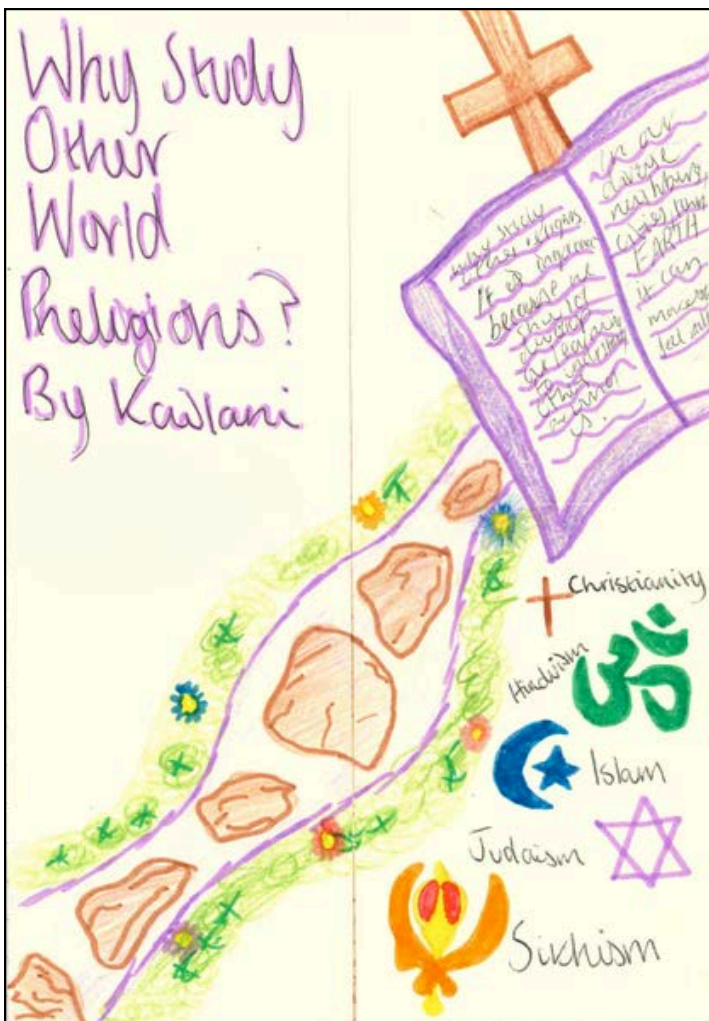
Students have continued with their work investigating other world religions and they have studied a pre-GCSE unit to prepare them for the start of our GCSE studies next term. They have looked at life after death, the sanctity of life, abortion and euthanasia. Challenging topics which the students have really enjoyed discussing!

GCSE

Our GCSE students have been learning about Religion and Relationships, Judaism and Redemption. Year 11 have their exams very shortly and our students have shown plenty of dedication and hard work in securing their knowledge and practising exam questions.

Sixth Form

In Core RE our students have been debating and researching Capital Punishment, Just War Theory, Catholic Social Teaching and Animal Rights.



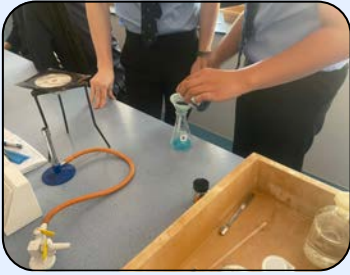
SCIENCE



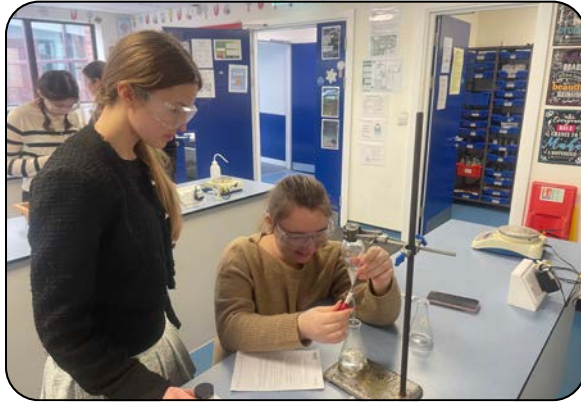
Year 11 making copper sulphate crystals



Year 11 pupils completing an Electrolysis required practical



Year 13 chemistry pupils completing their practical on the synthesis of a haloalkane.



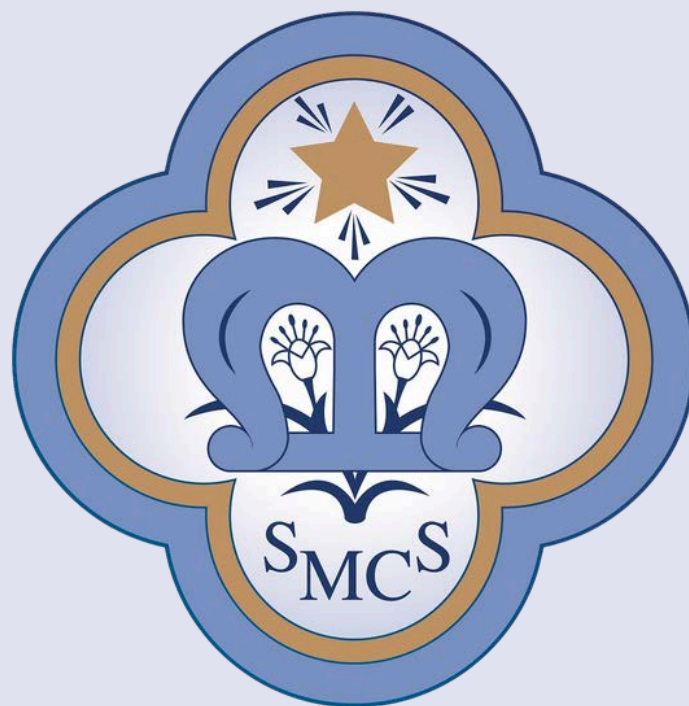
Some Year 9 students went on a fun-packed excursion to the National Space Centre in Leicester. As part of the visit they were treated to a show in the largest planetarium in the UK, a live science workshop on rocket power and a workshop on how we can save the planet from asteroid impact, what would they do if they had the power.

Alongside these activities they could see a real piece of the moon, as well as various historical artefacts in the galleries from space missions. It was a fantastic experience and gave all a greater depth of understanding of space exploration.



'St Mary's is a very special community to be a part of'

OFSTED 2024



'The quality of education pupils receive is exceptional'

OFSTED 2024

LOVE - RESPECT - FLOURISH