



Friday 25th April 2025

HEADLINES

St Mary's Catholic School

Welcome Back!



DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday 28th April
Inter-House Football & Netball

Tuesday 6th May
Year 11 Mass of Celebration

Thursday 8th May
Year 13 Leavers Mass

Friday 9th May
GCSE exams begin

Dear St Mary's Community,

As we return from the Easter break and begin the Summer Term, our community does so with a sense of both reflection and renewal. The news of Pope Francis's passing on Easter Monday has deeply touched our global Catholic community. His enduring message of love, humility, and mercy leaves a powerful legacy that will continue to guide us. We will honour his life and papacy in a special school Mass next week, providing an opportunity for our students and staff to come together in prayer and remembrance.

Despite this solemn news, the spirit of renewal that Easter brings has been evident in the vibrant energy with which our students have launched into the new term. Over the break, two exciting school trips took place. Our Geography students ventured to Iceland, where they explored dramatic natural landscapes and brought their learning to life through geysers, glaciers and volcanic beaches. Meanwhile, our netball teams headed to France for a competitive and rewarding tour, returning with fantastic results and unforgettable memories—including a magical visit to Disneyland Paris.

You'll find a selection of photos from both trips on pages 3 and 4 of this bulletin. The joy, curiosity, and team spirit captured in these moments remind us of the value of learning beyond the classroom.

Hats off to the amazing staff and students who turned out in such strong numbers for our Easter revision sessions—over 120 each day! The energy and commitment were fantastic to see. With exam season just around the corner, we're excited to offer our Year 11 students a Well-Being Breakfast next week. This special morning is designed to offer them a calm, positive start ahead of the exam season—reminding them that they are supported, encouraged and never alone here at St Mary's as they approach this important milestone.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of all we do at St Mary's.

God Bless,
Miss Deirdre McHugh



LOVE - RESPECT - FLOURISH

Pupil Achievements



Congratulations to the recipients of the Spring Term Headteacher's award who were invited to morning tea with Miss McHugh just before the Easter break.



On the 31st March, two teams of avid readers took part in the National Reading Champions Quiz, run by the National Literacy Trust. The quiz was made up of 8 rounds featuring a wide range of book genres, series and characters. Our teams put in a fantastic effort for the school's first attempt. St Mary's won the Newcomers prize as this was our first time taking part. The teams will win book tokens to spend on new books for themselves. Well done team and onto next year!

" Our team worked really well together as we all had different knowledges on books. Some questions were easier than others, but we did well. I want to take part again next year!"
Matilda, Year 8

Science

During the last week of the Spring Term, Year 12 joined Year 11 in a triple chemistry class. Year 11 chemistry pupils then sat in on a Year 12 lesson during their lunchbreak to experience a taste of Sixth form science lessons.

Both year groups really enjoyed the experience and we look forward to repeating it again in the future.



Iceland Geography field trip

Before Easter, a group of Year 10 and 11 Geography students took part in an amazing trip to Iceland. Day one included a guided walking tour of Reykjavik city centre and sea front, taking in the stunning Hallgrímskirkja church and maritime landmarks.

Day two was a guided tour of Iceland's Golden Circle, the most popular sightseeing route in the country. First stop was a visit to Hellisheidi Power Plant where the group watched a film about geothermal power and the development of the power plant. They also had the opportunity to view the turbine area from a viewing platform and explore the museum exhibits.

Next was the Secret Lagoon, known locally as Gamla Laugin, the oldest swimming pool in Iceland. It was made in 1891 at Hverahólm, a geothermal area near Flúðir. The students bathed in the hot thermal pools for an hour, emerging fully refreshed and re-energised.

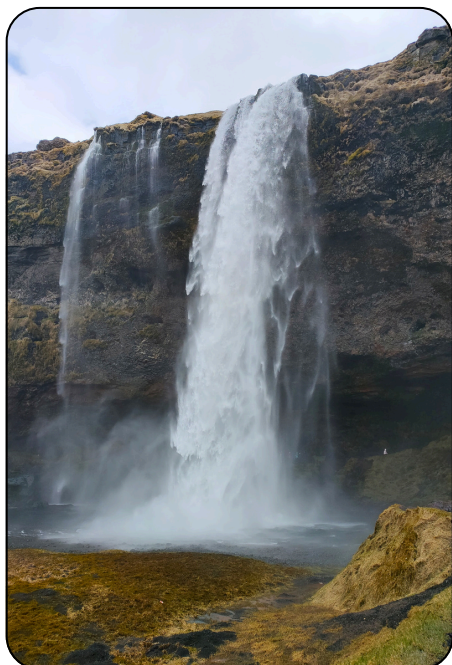
After lunch the students witnessed the majesty of the famous Gullfoss waterfall, which they approached along the rim of a 2.5 km canyon. This is one of the most impressive waterfalls in Europe caused by a resistant basalt cap rock.

Next was the Great Geysir, one of the most active geysers in the Strokkur area, spouting up to 25 metres every 5-7 minutes. Last stop of the day was Þingvellir National Park, where a beautiful canyon running through the park forms the meeting point of two of the earth's tectonic plates and a unique opportunity to witness the mid-Atlantic ridge.

Day three was a full day excursion of the South Shore to see Skógafoss waterfall, which is more than 200 ft high, followed by a visit to Reynishverfi, which is a black sand beach with views of sea stacks and Dyrolaey, a peninsular with a good example of coastal caves, arches and stacks.

After lunch there was the opportunity to hike up a footpath that runs parallel to a glacier tongue that lies south of the Mýrdalsjökull Glacier, before driving to Seljalandsfoss waterfall, where students could walk behind the waterfall – waterproofs were an essential!

That evening there was pizza and ten-pin bowling, before flying back to the UK. Both the students and staff feel incredibly privileged to have had this opportunity to see such spectacular scenery and experience this amazing country.



Netball tour

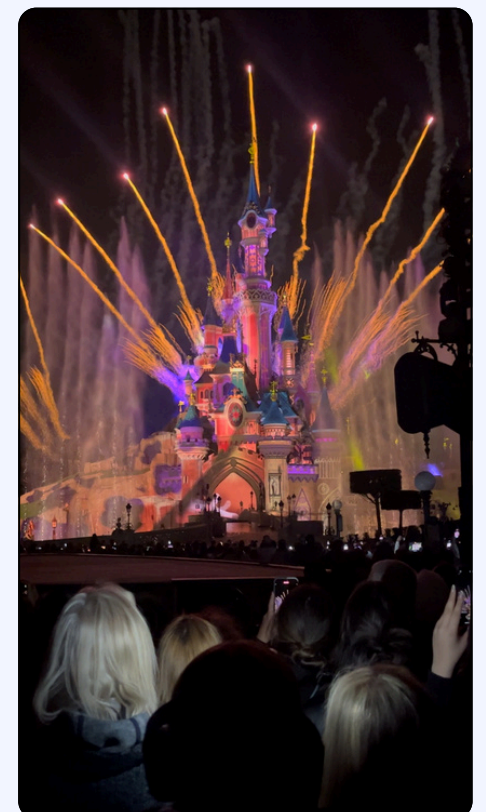
During the Easter break a group of Year 8 and 9 girls went on a netball tour to Disneyland Paris. They completed masterclasses with elite netball coaches and also super league players including Britney Clark. The students were complimented throughout on their advanced skill level and behaviour. They then took part in a tournament playing against clubs and schools from across the UK and Botswana!

The students achieved magnificent results:

Team A, after being undefeated, were moved into the Olympus Cup where, after a nail-biting final, they were placed First. Team B worked hard throughout and finished in an incredible 5th place in the Atlantica Shield. Team C got through to the semi-finals of the Tortuga Bowl and after a tough match came out in 4th place.

Out of over 260 girls who competed in the tournament, Libby P was chosen as Player of the Tournament for the U14s.

The trip ended with a day at Disneyland Paris where we enjoyed the incredible lightshow together.



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