



Friday 6th February 2026

HEADLINES

St Mary's Catholic School

GO 4 Schools

Click [here](#) to access your child's academic achievement and progress data.



Dear St Mary's Community,

I hope this newsletter finds you well. There are several important matters I would like to share with you today. First and foremost, I ask for your prayers and support for our Year 11 and Year 13 students as they navigate through their Spring Term mock examinations. These crucial assessments are pivotal moments in their academic journey. May their unwavering hard work and dedication translate into the strong progress we anticipate as they prepare for their upcoming GCSE and A Level summer examinations.

We have much to celebrate this term! I am delighted to express our gratitude to our Year 9 parents who attended the highly informative Year 9 Options Evening. This event provided an invaluable opportunity for students and parents to consider GCSE subject pathways and make informed decisions about their future academic choices. The Parents Consultation Evening further enabled fruitful discussions about current progress, individual subject performance, and targets for development as students complete their Key Stage 3 courses.

A particular highlight has been our Year 9 Music showcase, specifically our 'Battle of the Bands' contest. What a spectacular display of musical talent and fantastic group work! You will find photographs capturing the energy and creativity of the event above. Congratulations to all participants, and special accolades to our Battle of the Bands winners - we are immensely proud of your achievements.

I am also writing to invite you to an important community gathering. Our Friends of St Mary's Annual General Meeting (FOSM) will take place on Thursday, 12 February 2026, at 7:00 PM. We warmly welcome all parents to support our school community, help plan upcoming events, and consider joining our board of trustees. Your support genuinely makes a real difference to our school. The meeting will be held onsite at St Mary's - please arrive at the main reception at 7 PM. I very much look forward to seeing you there!

Together, we continue to build and strengthen our school community. Wishing you all a restful and relaxing weekend.

God Bless,

Deirdre McHugh, Head Teacher

JOIN US!

We invite you to join us for our Friends of St Mary's Annual General Meeting

- ✓ Support our school community
- ✓ Help plan our contribution to upcoming events
- ✓ Elect new members to our board of trustees

THURSDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2026 7.00PM

This meeting will happen onsite at St Mary's. Please arrive at the main reception at 7pm.

RSVP [Here](#)

Your support makes a real difference!

DATES FOR THE DIARY	Monday 9th - Friday 13th February	Monday 16th - Friday 20th February	 
	Year 12 work experience	Half term	

NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK 2026 9-15 February

Next week is National Apprenticeship Week, click [here](#) to access a parental guide to the exciting world of apprenticeships.

Year 9 Options Evening



Student Success!

Sisters win GOLD!!

Congratulations to our two fabulous springing sisters! Isla and Bella K both won the Hertfordshire Schools Cross Country Championship in St Albans at the weekend representing St Mary's Catholic School. Bella for Year 7 and Isla for Year 8/9 age group combined.

Isla has also qualified for the national schools final which will be held later in the year. We are exceptionally proud of the girls and their commitment and dedication to their sporting excellence.



We are exceptionally proud of Isaac H, Y8, a very talented actor and budding star of the stage on his recent performance in panto last weekend!



Cardinal Hulme Centre Visit

On Thursday 18th December, exactly one week before Christmas Day, the Mission Team and I were given the opportunity to visit the Cardinal Hume Centre, an organisation that supports families and young people who are struggling to overcome poverty.

Firstly, the Mission Team would like to say a big thank you to all of the parents and students who donated. As many of you will be aware, from Tuesday 9th to Tuesday 16th December, our school community collected food and supplies for the Centre. We hope that these items will have helped to bring some sense of comfort and reassurance to these vulnerable families and young people over the Christmas period.

Before we began our journey, we started with a prayer, giving thanks to God for the wonderful support we had received and asking Him to keep us safe on the road. After this, the Mission Team and I began to load the minibus with all of the donations. A massive thank you to Mr Cage and Mr Smith, who gave up their time to drive us and the donations safely to the Centre.

When we arrived, we were warmly welcomed by staff members who were extremely grateful for our donations. This was followed by a tour of the building, conducted by Steven Currid, a fundraising manager at the Centre, who explained what they do to help and how our simple act of generosity makes a huge impact on others. I was really touched by what Steven told us and one example of this, was hearing how, the Centre helps families by offering a homework club, giving young children the opportunity to complete their homework in a safe and calm environment—something they may not always have access to. Thank you again to the Centre, and in particular, Steven for allowing us to do this and for taking time out of your day to speak to us.

After finishing our visit to the Centre, we visited Westminster Cathedral, where we prayed for the work of the Cardinal Hume Centre at the grave of Cardinal Hume, as well as at the Reliquary of St John Southworth, a priest who served the poor in Westminster during the 17th century.

At the end of a long, yet impactful day, we enjoyed a delicious meal at McDonald's before making our way back home.

Overall, it was a valuable and eye-opening experience. Hearing some of the stories and problems that these people have faced really moved me, as I think that a lot of the time, we take things for granted. I am sure I speak on behalf of the whole Mission Team when I say that we were very grateful for the chance to visit the Centre.

Before I end, I would like to say a big thank you to Mr D'Cruz, the Leader of Catholic Life at St Mary's. Without him, events such as this one, wouldn't be possible!

To conclude, I would like to echo the mission of the Centre: "Each person matters."

Rebecca G (Y12)



Celebrating Student Success: Headteacher's Tea

We were delighted to recently host a Headteacher's Tea to celebrate students who have made excellent progress since the start of the academic year. This special gathering recognised not only academic improvement, but also the commitment and positive attitudes our students show every day.

In the presence of Miss McHugh and Mr Eddleston, students enjoyed a relaxed and welcoming afternoon, complete with cakes, biscuits and hot chocolate. The event provided a wonderful opportunity to acknowledge hard work in a supportive and informal setting.

The afternoon concluded with a short speech from our Headteacher, who personally thanked students for their dedication and effort, and encouraged them to continue striving for success as the year progresses.

We are extremely proud of all the students who attended the Headteacher's Tea and commend them for their achievements so far. We look forward to celebrating many more successes throughout the year.



Inter House Quiz Masters

We are delighted to share the success of our recent Inter House Quiz Masters Competition for pupils in Years 7-10 – an event where our students demonstrated outstanding knowledge and teamwork.

Students were nominated by their form tutors after consistently demonstrating excellent general knowledge and a strong commitment to the weekly Inter House quizzes. The final competition brought together our top quiz representatives for a fast-paced and highly competitive challenge covering a wide range of topics, including history, science, geography, literature, sport, and current affairs.

All participating pupils represented their houses with pride and determination. The standard was exceptionally high, with many rounds decided by just a handful of points. It was fantastic to see students thinking quickly, supporting one another, and showing such genuine thirst for knowledge.

Congratulations to House A, who emerged as this year's Quiz Masters Champions by answering the greatest number of general knowledge questions correctly. Their teamwork, breadth of knowledge, and composure under pressure secured them a well-deserved victory.



Extended Project Qualification

In preparation for the launch of a new EPQ cohort, Year 13 students showcased their projects to Year 12 and Year 11 students. The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an enrichment option offered as part of the sixth form experience, enabling students to develop key academic skills in preparation for university, apprenticeships, or the workplace.

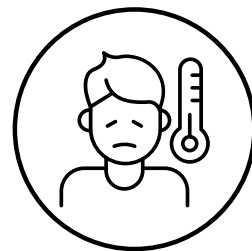
Worth the equivalent of half an A-Level, the EPQ allows students to choose a research question, undertake independent research, evaluate the suitability of sources and either write a 5,000-word essay or produce an artefact. Students also present their findings at the end to a small audience.

It was a joy to see our Year 13 students confidently sharing their projects as they prepare for their formal presentations in the coming weeks. We look forward to welcoming our new Year 12 EPQ cohort after February half term and hope this experience offered Year 11 students a valuable insight into another aspect of our excellent Sixth Form.



Reporting Illness Reminder

A reminder about the procedure for reporting when your child is unwell. School policy is correspondence **daily** via email or telephone. It is important **even if your child was sent home from school the day before to still call the attendance line 01279 654 901 following prompt 1 or email attendance@stmarys.net before 08:40am each day with student name, year group and reason for absence.** The school cannot accept unwell or ill.



Please remember to contact the school daily to avoid the truant call (absence management calls come from Sheffield) which will result in your child's attendance being unauthorised.

Students are still expected to attend school if they have minor sore throats, coughs and colds. The information linked below offers guidance on assessing whether your child is too ill for school and how to reduce the spread of illness during the colder months:

[NHS Guidance: Is my child too ill for school?](#)

[Reducing the spread of illness this winter: Seven steps to healthier schools and higher school attendance – The Education Hub](#)

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers that, whenever possible, Heads Of Year require 48 hours notice to authorise any medical leave absence appointments. These requests should be submitted with supporting evidence.

Notices



Co-parenting with Care programme for parents with children with SEN.

This 6-week online programme funded by Hertfordshire County Council, offers a structured approach to help you navigate your unique challenges, improve your relationship, and create a more supportive environment for your SEN child/ren.

The programme covers themes including:

- Understanding SEN and its impact on children and family dynamics
- Effective Communication Skills
- Managing Emotions & Stress
- Collaborative Problem Solving
- Building a Supportive Network
- Creating a Unified Parenting Approach

These 2 courses will be delivered via MS Teams, over 6 sessions on the following dates/times:

Date: Wednesday 11, 25 February & 4, 11, 18, 25 March 2026
Time: 9.30am to 11.30am

Date: Thursday 12, 26 February & 5, 12, 19, 26 March 2026
Time: 7.00pm to 9.00pm

For more information or to make a referral, scan the QR code, email services@familylives.org.uk or call 0204 522 8700 or 0204 522 8699

We build better family lives together




www.familylives.org.uk

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Funded by Hertfordshire County Council

Hertfordshire

Family Lives is registered as a company limited by guarantee in England and Wales No. 3817762. Registered charity No.1077722. Registered address: The Annex York House, Salisbury Square, Hatfield, Hertfordshire, AL9 5AD



Summer 2026 Teacher Internships

Are you an undergraduate interested in experiencing the teaching profession in
Maths | Physics | Chemistry |
Computing | Spanish/French | D&T

3 week paid internships available in Bishop's Stortford schools for undergraduates (Yr2/3/4/Masters) interested in teaching either Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Modern Foreign Languages*, Computing or Design & Technology. An excellent opportunity to learn new skills and experience being a teacher.


During your internship, you will be paid £455 per week*
*Terms and conditions apply

The 2026 internship programme will take place from:
15th June – 3rd July

To apply, please scan the QR code below. Applications close:
Friday 13th March 2026

For more information on the programme, please contact TeacherInternships@hertsandessex.herts.ch.uk

To find out more about the scheme in general, please go to [Teaching Internships | Get Into Teaching GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.getintoteaching.gov.uk)



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