



Friday 13th March 2026

HEADLINES

St Mary's Catholic School



DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday 16th - Friday 20th March
Charity Week

Thursday 26th March
Y8 HPV Vaccinations

Thursday 26th March
Year 10 Parents' Evening, 4.30pm-7.30pm

Monday 30th March - Friday 10th April
Easter Holidays

Monday 13th April
Summer Term begins.



Dear St Mary's Community,

It has been a truly wonderful few weeks at St Mary's, with our school musical, World Book Day events, the year of St Francis events and our sporting fixtures it has been an epic fortnight of events for our school calendar. I wanted to take a moment to share some of the remarkable things that have been happening across our school, photographs and further detail is contained within this edition.

On Wednesday evening, we were honoured to welcome Archbishop Richard Moth to the Lea Valley and Stevenage Mass in Welwyn Garden City. I extend my sincere thanks to those parents and students who so kindly represented St Mary's at this beautiful celebration. It was truly special to witness over 20 Priests and Deacons from our parishes gathered alongside Bishop Paul and Archbishop Richard, all united in dedicating their prayers to our schools and families. These moments of shared faith and community are at the very heart of what we do.

That same day, our Chaplaincy Team joined with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal – Fr Emmanuel and Brother Paul – to celebrate Mass and mark the start of the year of St Francis. Our worship band and Choir were absolutely outstanding and created a most prayerful and beautiful atmosphere. Beyond the Mass itself, Fr Emmanuel and Brother Paul generously gave their time to lead an inspiring talk for our Year 12 students and offered the sacrament of reconciliation and confession. Their commitment and support means so much to us, and I am deeply grateful for the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal and all they bring to our school community.

On a different note, I am delighted to celebrate some exceptional achievements. Our U14 girls netball team have had a tremendous success – they are now county champions! Their victory at the Janice Cook Emerging Schools County Netball Tournament is a wonderful testament to their dedication, teamwork and skill. Congratulations to them and to everyone who has supported them along the way.

We have also been treated to something rather magical this week with the first night of our Moana Jr. Musical. What an amazing spectacle it was – the music, the dancing, and the wonderful acting left audiences truly captivated. Our cast and crew should be exceptionally proud of themselves. I must extend tremendous thanks to our staff who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes, including our backstage team, lighting, sound, set design, props and technical team. The dedication and creativity on display has been nothing short of stunning. I am very much looking forward to tonight's finale show and encourage you to take a look at the photos on page 2 for a taste of what promises to be an unforgettable experience.

Thank you to all parents who have supported and purchased tickets for their child for our annual Charity Week extravaganza of events. Over £6,400 has already been raised for our Charity Week and I certainly hope we can boost this total with the range of activities and events planned for our Charity Week focus.

Wishing you and your families a blessed and restful weekend.

Thank you all for being part of the St Mary's community.

Deirdre McHugh

GO 4 Schools

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

LOVE - RESPECT - FLOURISH

Moana Jr



World Book Day

Last week brought a wonderful burst of creativity, imagination, and excitement to St Mary's as the school celebrated World Book Day! Students immersed themselves in authorship, storytelling, and deducing! We had two inspiring visitors and a schoolwide mystery unfolding in the library, it was a memorable week for students.

We welcomed author Fleur Hitchcock, known for her gripping crime & thriller novels for children. During her visit, Fleur spoke to students about her writing journey, where she gets her ideas, and how she crafts suspenseful stories. Her talk sparked curiosity in many budding authors in the room.

As part of the visit, Fleur led a hands-on writing workshop looking at how to write an impactful thriller story. Students had the chance to explore character development, setting, and narrative twists. Students felt empowered and newly inspired, armed with tools to elevate their own creative writing.

Adding to the excitement of the week, Books & Biscuits welcomed Zanna for a special author event. Zanna, a pupil from a trust primary school, has already achieved the remarkable milestone of publishing two nonfiction books. She shared her experiences of becoming a young author, the process behind her work, and the ambitious goal she has set for herself to publish 25 books before she turns 18.

Despite her young age, Zanna spoke with confidence, passion, and maturity during what was her first ever visit to a secondary school. She captivated the audience as she described the themes of her books, the challenges she has faced, and the motivation that drives her to keep writing. Her determination, paired with her impressive achievements, left students amazed and inspired.

Meanwhile, in the Library, intrigue took over as students were greeted with a murder in the Library! This interactive literacy activity transformed the library into a crime scene complete with clues, a suspect board, and plenty of red herrings to lead students astray. Students needed to take out a crime book to get extra clues to work out who committed the crime. This activity created a huge buzz across the school, with intrigue and involvement from all year groups.

Overall, World Book Day reminded us of the power and importance of reading, not just stories, but in everyday life. We're proud of students' enthusiasm for reading and grateful to our guests for helping make this such a memorable week at St Mary's.



County Champions!

The U14A team competed in the Janice Cook Emerging Schools County Tournament on Wednesday 11th March and delivered an outstanding performance throughout the day. The team remained undefeated in all of their matches in the first pool, earning a place in the Cup division for the second round where they continued their excellent form and once again remained unbeaten. This success secured them a place in the final, where after a challenging and competitive match they achieved a fantastic 8-4 victory, becoming County Cup Winners. This achievement reflects the team's dedication, commitment, and hard work since Year 7, and it is wonderful to see their continued effort and teamwork rewarded with such a well-deserved success.



J House Celebration Assembly

We were delighted to bring together all J House tutees from Years 7–11 for our recent J House Celebration Assembly, a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our shared identity and refocus on the values that unite us as a House community.

The assembly was led expertly by our Year 9 and 10 Intermediate House Captains, who demonstrated confidence, maturity and leadership throughout. They were ably supported and mentored by our Sixth Form Senior House Captains, whose guidance and encouragement ensured the event ran smoothly and purposefully. It was fantastic to see such strong student leadership in action.

A key focus of the assembly was reflecting on the values of Saint Joseph, particularly the importance of integrity and responsibility. Students were reminded that integrity means doing the right thing even when no one is watching, while responsibility involves taking ownership of their actions, learning and contributions to our school community. These values remain central to life in J House and underpin our expectations of all students.

We also reviewed our House point system, revisiting the values that earn recognition and celebrating the positive contributions already being made. Clear strategies were shared to help students continue demonstrating these qualities in lessons, around school and within the wider community. We are excited to see this renewed focus translate into even greater success for J House in the weeks ahead.

The assembly concluded on a high note with an engaging and lively quiz, which brought plenty of energy and enthusiasm to the room. It was a fitting end to an event that combined reflection, celebration and community spirit.



Celebrating our Rotary Quiz Team

We are delighted to share the fantastic achievement of our Rotary Quiz Team, who finished as runners-up in this year's Rotary Inter-School Quiz competition.

Our team—Richard L (Year 13), Fabian J (Year 13), Alexander M (Year 11), and Ifechukwu I-I (Year 11)—demonstrated exceptional knowledge, composure, and teamwork throughout the event. Competing against several strong schools, they showed impressive university-level breadth of knowledge, tackling questions across a wide range of subjects including history, science, literature, and current affairs.

Their confident collaboration and quick thinking saw them defeat teams from Herts & Essex School and Bishop's Stortford College B Team, progressing impressively through the rounds.

In a closely contested final, our students ultimately finished second to Bishop's Stortford College A Team, but their performance was nothing short of outstanding.

We are incredibly proud of Richard, Fabian, Alexander, and Ifechukwu for representing the school with such distinction. Their achievement is a wonderful example of academic enthusiasm and teamwork in action.

Congratulations to the team on an excellent result!



PREPARING STUDENTS FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI) GUIDE FOR PARENTS

AS A PARENT, OR CARER, YOU WILL HAVE THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE CAREER PLANS.

Encouraging them to explore a broad range of jobs will enable them to make informed decisions about their future. However, young people today face a much more complex and competitive job market than ever before and one full of jobs they've possibly never heard of too.

There's more than one pathway into most jobs. The path that someone might take into a job is a lot more flexible than a decade or two ago. Apprenticeships make a very good alternative route to higher level qualifications and there are other work-related training options into some careers for those preferring a vocational route over an academic one.

It's also a lot easier to switch between different types of qualifications. Meaningful, relevant work experience is very important in helping young people get a feel of the world of work and what career they may want to pursue.

Using Labour Market Information is just one way in which you can help your child make these important decisions.

WHAT IS LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION?

Labour market information tells you what the workplace looks like. LMI is data taken from publicly available sources, which gives information on jobs and industries. This helps us understand the structural trends and demands of an economy. Labour market information describes the condition of the labour market currently and makes future predictions. It informs us where work opportunities are increasing or decreasing, what occupations exist, what you need to study to get into that occupation, what is required to take up an occupation, how you can find a job, change job or progress in a career. Labour markets operate at local, regional, national and now at international levels.

Labour market information can be overwhelming and confusing. Learning what it is and how to use it can assist you in helping your child research careers and find out where those careers exist.

Labour market information tells you:

- > What jobs and skills employers are looking for
- > Skills gaps
- > Which job areas are growing in the future (Details on page 2)
- > Which industries are hiring and where they are located
- > Wage rates
- > What education and training you need for specific jobs

Creative and digital, information and communication technology, hi-tech engineering and cyber-security are all examples of sectors which contribute greatly to the UK economy and a lot of the new jobs available to young people will be in these industries. A relatively new sector often called the 'green economy', offers a variety of roles which will help the government meet its environmental targets.

There will also be a demand for people to join the hospitality, construction, agri-tech and logistics sectors – some will be into new jobs such as in hotels and leisure activities. With life expectancy growing there'll be a huge demand for care and health workers across a range of jobs.

Labour Market Information



National Careers Service



LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION



A free Parents' Guide to Careers for National Careers Week 2026 can be downloaded from [this link](#)

HOP LIVING AND WORKING IN EAST HERTS

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO PEOPLE HAVE?

LEVEL 4 (degree or equivalent)

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| ENGLAND | 43.1% |
| HERTFORDSHIRE | 48.8% |
| EAST HERTS | 49.8% |

LEVEL 3 (A-level and equivalent)

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| ENGLAND | 61.3% |
| HERTFORDSHIRE | 63.7% |
| EAST HERTS | 65.2% |

GETTING AROUND

1 - 1.5 hours by train to London
15 - 30 minute drive to Stansted Airport
40 minutes - 1 hour drive to Cambridge

DISCOVER SOME OF THE AMAZING EMPLOYERS ON YOUR DOORSTEP...

MCP is a multi-award-winning, privately owned family business that has been delivering professional and committed services to the Social Housing Sector for over 40 years. With over 170 employees, MCP completes in excess of 70,000 orders every year.

CARIAD MARKETING, located in Hertford, is a multi-award-winning digital marketing agency. Cariad offer services such as SEO, PPC, Social Media Management, Content Marketing and Web Development.

HANBURY MANOR MARRIOTT HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB is a Jacobean-style manor house set in 200 acres of beautiful countryside in Ware.

HERTFORDSHIRE ZOO The family run park on White Stubbs Lane is renowned for getting close to the animals and educating through fun.

Although just across the county border **STANDED AIRPORT** is a busy place, operating 24/7 365 days a year. They are looking to recruit people who enjoy challenges, share their values and can deliver a first-class experience for guests.

TOP 5 EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

- HEALTH**
Work in: Nursing, Social Care, Medical Practitioners
- PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES**
Work in: Engineer, Tech Specialist, Law, Scientific
- BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES**
Work in: Administration Support, Business Professionals, Marketing Specialist
- ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION**
Work in: Art & Illustration, Tourism, Photography
- WHOLESALE AND RETAIL**
Work in: Sales, Merchandising, Customer Service

HOW MUCH DO PEOPLE EARN ON AVERAGE?

| | LIVING IN | WORKING IN |
|---------------|-----------|------------|
| HERTFORDSHIRE | £36,045 | £33,902 |
| EAST HERTS | £38,763 | £33,965 |
| ENGLAND | £31,490 | £31,490 |

SOURCE: NEMS

WWW.HOPINTO.CO.UK

part of **HERTFORDSHIRE FUTURES**

GROWTH SECTORS

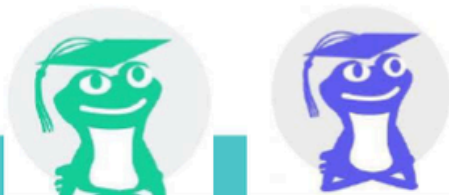
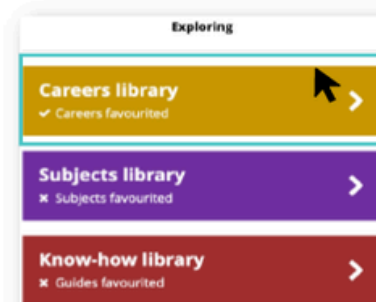
The following sectors have been identified as having strong potential for growth in East Herts



Labour Market Information - where can you find it?

LMI is used by job seekers to find suitable roles, by employers to guide recruitment, and by policymakers to develop education and training programs.

It can be found through official government statistics, industry reports, and employer data – and on Unifrog via the Careers Library.



unifrog

Careers, Work Experience and Apprenticeships Survey

We are delighted to share below a link to Hertfordshire County Council's latest Parent/Carer Perspective Survey on Careers, Work Experience and Apprenticeships. Parents/carers with children in all year groups are invited to complete the survey that launched during National Careers Week and will remain open until the end of April.

www.surveymonkey.com/r/st-marys-catholic-school-parents-26



East of England
Community and School-Aged Immunisation Service

Important Information: Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccination

As you may be aware from recent media coverage, there has been an increase in measles cases due to outbreaks in parts of North London. Considering this, we strongly encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child has received both doses of the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine.

Measles is a highly contagious disease and, in some cases, can lead to serious complications. As part of the routine UK childhood immunisation schedule recommended by the UK Health Security Agency, your secondary school aged child should have been offered:

- The first MMR vaccination at 12 months of age
- The second MMR vaccination at 3 years and 4 months

If you are unsure whether your child has received both doses of the MMR vaccine, or if your child has not yet received their MMR vaccinations and you would like to arrange this, please contact our service on 0300 555 5055 (option 7) or email hct.csaishwe@nhs.net. We run regular catch-up clinics across various locations in Hertfordshire.

If your child has received vaccinations abroad or in another area of the UK, these records may not appear on our system. In this case, please email a copy of your child's immunisation history, including their full details, to hct.immshistoires@nhs.net so that we can update our records.

Further information about the MMR vaccine is available on the NHS website, attached are two useful links below.

[MMR \(measles, mumps and rubella\) vaccine - NHS](#)
[MMR vaccination for all eligible](#)

Yours sincerely,
Hertfordshire and West Essex Immunisation Service

This service is provided by Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust and covers Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Hertfordshire and West Essex, Mid and South Essex, Norfolk and Waveney, and Suffolk and North East Essex

www.hct.nhs.uk

Developing Special Provision Locally (DSPL3) Parent/Carer Coffee morning

The next coffee morning will take place on Wednesday 18th March, 10am - 11.30am, at St Catherine's School, Ware, SG12 0AW. The aim of the meetings is to provide parents and carers with support, information and networking opportunities. For more information, please click [here](#).



Delivering Special
Provision Locally

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