

LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter

Issue 4 - 29th September 2023



Open Evening—Thank You

Mr Johnston - Headteacher

Open Evening on Wednesday night was a fantastic celebration of the very best of the school community! We had three 'sell out' Headteacher speeches at 6, 7 and 8pm and I was ably assisted by Martha and Fabio (Year 8) who spoke so eloquently and confidently about their experience moving up to St. Mary's and over their first year here. I think hearing from them, and all the other students across the school site was hugely reassuring and very exciting; the feedback we have had from our visitors on the night was uniquely positive (some details below).

Thank you for the part you played in assisting the evening as parents; we really could not have done this without your help—with the early finish, late start and ensuring your children were here, dressed so smartly in the evening until pick up at 8.30pm. It is truly appreciated. The students were true ambassadors—as I said in my speech: speaking to the students and staff around the school this evening will tell you all you need to know about us as a community. I stand by every word!

Have a fantastic weekend with your family. God Bless.

Congratulations to Holly and Conrad—our new Head Pupils!



Open Evening Feedback – from Parental Questionnaire:

(NOTE: there was no grade less than Satisfactory!)

The Welcome was... GREAT 75% GOOD 23%
The Headteacher's talk was... GREAT 66% GOOD 30%
The information available was... GREAT 69% GOOD 25%
The departmental activities were... GREAT 75% GOOD 19%
The wall displays were... GREAT 69% GOOD 30%
The staff were... GREAT 90% GOOD 7%
The pupils were... GREAT 84% GOOD 11%
The evening overall was... GREAT 73% GOOD 25%

**Seen our new School Video?
Available on our website homepage NOW!**

Parental Survey 2023!

We would value your thoughts on the questions in the survey.
Please click on this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/7ZCGGCC>

The deadline for completion is
Monday 2nd October 2023
Thank you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 4th October 2023
Year 12 A Level Art Trip

Thursday 5th October 2023
Year 11 Invitation Only Evening

Thursday 5th October 2023
Year 13 Invitation Only Evening

Friday 6th October 2023
CAFOD Family Fast Day

Friday 6th October 2023
GCSE Art Trip



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

CAFOD Family Fast Day



no one
beyond reach

CAFOD Family Fast Day Friday 6th October 2023

As a Catholic community we are called into putting our faith into action, this year CAFOD are calling us to educate our young people about the food crisis around our world. **On Friday 6th October 2023 we are called to fasting, and so on this day the only lunch provided at St. Mary's will be vegetable soup with a bread. Thus please bring in a packed lunch if your child is not having soup.**

We are called to prayer, so let us all take the opportunity to give thanks for the food we have. Pope Francis reminds us that through prayer we reconnect ourselves to God, through charity, we reconnect ourselves to each other, and through fasting we reconnect to ourselves.

Please do encourage your child to participate on this Friday in selecting the soup and bread roll option for lunch at school. There is also a CAFOD Family Fast Day Prayer card, which you may choose to say before your evening meal on Friday, and a Poster that provides information about how we can donate to CAFOD. Finally, I would like to thank Aspens and all the kitchen staff for their efforts and support.

We pray for all those people around the world that do not have enough to eat. May God grant us the gift of compassion, that we might be moved to share our bread with the hungry, and work with all our strength to end food poverty. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.



This **QR code** will take you straight to CAFOD's website where you can make a donation

PRAYER: SEEDS OF HOPE



Above: A woman's home was destroyed by floods, the night her baby was born.

Generous God, we thank you,
for the gifts you have given
for all people to share.
We plant seeds of hope
and nurture them as we seek
a harvest of plenty for all.

Forgive us for the times these seeds
fail to take root in our hearts.
We grieve when homes and crops
are washed away by floods,
when lives are uprooted by disaster,
or trampled by fear and greed.

Living God, you lead us
to a new way of being.
Move us to help one another
in our times of need,
to care for the earth and
to love one another,
sharing your harvest with all.

Amen.



CHILDREN'S PRAYER



Above: People all up attempting to get away from floodwaters in Pakistan.

Generous God, we thank you
for the gifts you have given
for all people to share.
Sometimes things go wrong.
Floods wash away
homes and crops.

Living God, move us
to help one another
in times of need,
to care for the earth
and love one another
sharing your harvest with all.

Amen.

Charity no 1160354 and a company
limited by guarantee no 05307390.
Shayer and photos: CAFOD. Printed
on paper from well-managed forests.
CAF7026



Chaplaincy Celebration Liturgy



On Wednesday 27 September a group of Year 7, Year 8 and Year 12 Spiritual leaders went to our St Francis of Assisi Trust Chaplaincy Celebration to start the new academic year.

With all the trust Chaplaincy teams in attendance it was a great occasion to share a liturgy together, whilst reflecting upon the Franciscan values of: Creating a caring community, Sharing compassion for others, Reverence for creation and Peace-making, and how we bring them to life within their own school community. After some beautiful bidding prayers read by the students, each school was then presented with their own trust badges, which they can wear with pride. There was then also an opportunity to be reminded about the Franciscan values awards that students can achieve throughout the whole trust.

Finally, all the chaplaincy teams then had the opportunity to suggest charities that the trust schools could raise money for this academic year, they also had the chance to talk to each other about how they raise money for charities within their own schools. It was particularly lovely to see our St Mary's students interacting with the younger pupils and discussing ideas together.

I would like to thank: Julia, Shay, Joel, Rianne, Ben, Crystall, Tez, Megan, Tobiasz, David, Eliza, Natalie, Giovanni and Victoria for attending the event and being outstanding role models.

We look forward to ensuring that these shared Franciscan values are enacted out within our St Mary's School Catholic Community.

Mr Wright



Student Health Care Plan ~ Is it up to date?



It is essential that any student identified as having a health care need has an up to date and accurate health care plan in place.

Individual Health Care Plans must be kept up to date, and any changes to health care needs must be notified to the school immediately.

Please contact Mrs Harding in the Student Hub.



Student Lost Property ~ Visit the PE Department

We have various items of student property in our Lost Property Department.

Please encourage your child to visit the PE Department during break or lunch time to reclaim anything which they may have lost in school!



Forgetting to bring items into school...?



We have had lots of students forgetting to bring items into school (especially PE kits) and asking their parents to bring them in.

Please note: we cannot accept the items at School Reception, unless it is for an exceptional reason beyond their control or for medical reasons.

Student Leadership Team 2023 - 2024



**Congratulations to the newly appointed
Student Leadership Team 2023-2024!!**

Head Pupils

Holly M



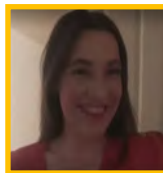
Conrad L



Deputy Head Pupils



Niamh



Lilly



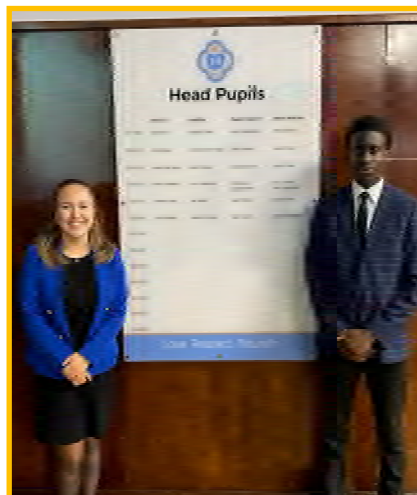
Demi



Joseph

House Leaders

Nicholas I, Ezekiel M, Pierce D, Daniel K, Gabrielle L, Lily-Ann M, Tobias R



Maths Department

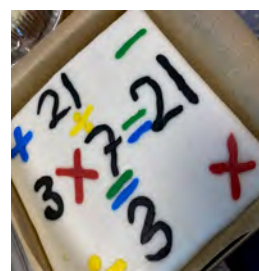
Maths Bake Off Competition

Some of our Maths team, who were judging the entries for Year 7 and Year 8 Maths Bake Off Competition had a very difficult job to decide on the winners. We have had **over 50 entries** and they all were absolutely brilliant and so impressive! What a talent we have! From biscuits to pies and cakes all beautifully decorated (all with maths theme) students have made so much effort. Some tasting has also been done - all divine!



The Maths department would like to say a massive THANK YOU to all the participants and their parents for their support.

Winners to be announced - check next week's School Headlines!



Harry Potter Book Day



Harry Potter Book Day takes place on Thursday 12th October.

To join our special event after school, students should **sign up with Ms Keane or Mrs Frino**.

There will be a £2 contribution on the door for refreshments and prizes.

Students can dress as a character from Harry Potter if they would like
(for the after-school event only, school uniform must be worn during the day).

It promises to be a magical event (only come if you can *solemnly swear you are up to no good!*).

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to inform you that you have been invited to our
Harry Potter Book Day: Magical Places party.



Date: **Thursday 12th October 2023**

Time: **3.20 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.**

At: **St Mary's Catholic School Hall**

RSVP

By owl, email or in person, to:

Professor Keane or Professor Frino

DRESS CODE: WIZARDING ROBES OR HARRY POTTER FANCY DRESS



InterHouse Competitions

Inter House Girl's Football & Boy's Rugby Junior, Intermediate & Senior Competitions

This week saw our Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students represent their House in either the Girl's Football or Boy's Rugby Inter House Competitions.

What impressed the PE Department most was that the students recognised the importance of representing their House, and this was reflected in their high motivation levels and desire to support one another! The selection of photos from the day, demonstrates those values at the very heart of your school: **Love, Respect, Flourish.**



Our Sixth Form students were tremendous in their willingness to officiate the competitions and support our younger students when needed.

All participating students have received positive House Points in relation to how they performed in their respective competitions.

Position	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6 th /7th
HP's awarded	12	10	8	6	4	2

A very well done to all involved.

Mr Eddleston

Hou **e** **C**oord **n**ator



Love Science ?



Read all about it!

Borrow a Science book from the library linked to your learning to earn House Points.

Ask your Science Teacher or Mrs Frino for information.



Inter-House Cross Country



Inter-House Cross Country

Tuesday 10th October 2023

Year 7 to Year 11

The Inter-House Cross Country Competition takes place on Tuesday 10th October 2023.

Period 1 – Year 9

Period 2 – Year 7

Period 3 – Year 11

Period 4 – Year 8

Period 5 – Year 10

Pupils are expected to run as every student's score contributes to their forms performance. Students will all complete a 3km course for all year groups.

Kit

Pupils are to come to school in their PE kit, after the event they then have the option to change into their uniform if they wish.

Boys: Reversible rugby top, blue shorts, PE socks and football boots.

Girls: Skort or shorts, PE socks, house top and football boots.

If you are listed as needing an inhaler or an EPIPEN you must carry them with you during the race.

Introducing some of our new staff...



Mr Diggory **Assistant Headteacher/Teacher of English**



Hello! My name is James Diggory and I am one of the new Assistant Headteachers here at St Mary's. One of my main responsibilities at the school is to oversee the quality of Teaching and Learning and it is a privilege to be working within such a high-performing, passionate and professional group of teachers. As a teacher of English, I love teaching all students the value and importance of stories and narratives written by others, but also helping students find the power and tools to express their own voices as the storytellers of tomorrow. My classes would also tell you that I am fairly obsessed with the two most important questions in English: "Why?" and "How?"

I studied English at Exeter University before completing my teacher training at Cambridge University. I lived and worked in Cambridge for 10 years, with experience as a Head of English in two large comprehensive schools. For the past six years I worked with the English and Film Studies departments at the Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School in Upminster, ultimately as Head of Year 12 before joining SMCS in September of this year.

Although I have only been here for four weeks, I already feel so at home here: all the staff and students have been so friendly and welcoming and it is such a joy to be part of the St Mary's family. Nothing showcased the joyful family spirit of the St Mary's community more than Open Evening last night and it was a privilege to see so many of our remarkable students representing themselves and the school so brilliantly.

Outside of school I love spending my time with my wife and 4-year-old twin boys. Whilst the boys don't often leave me much spare time (!), when I do get some, I love cooking, going for walks with the dog, cycling and all things musical: I play the piano and drums so can usually be found tapping my fingers and feet along to whatever is on the radio or the CD player!

After my first month at the school, I know from both my own classes and walking around the school that St Mary's students are a remarkable group of young people who value their learning and I am really excited at getting to know you all better over the coming academic year.

Miss Gavaghan **Teacher of Science**

My name is Lucy Gavaghan, I am one of the new Science teachers at St Mary's. I have been teaching for almost 15 years and have worked in a range of schools across Hertfordshire, and for the last 7 years I was working at Marriotts School in Stevenage. Although I teach all the Sciences across KS3 and KS4, my passion is Biology and in particular Ecology. My hope is, that through teaching young people, I can make a small but lasting difference to the planet by helping to shape more Earth conscious minds.

In my spare time, I enjoy practising yoga asana (the poses), pranayama (breathing techniques) and meditation. I have also recently discovered Kirtan, a form of devotional chanting which allows me to feel closer to God and more connected to the people around me.

I love to read, I am currently reading "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" by Gabrielle Zevin. I also enjoy crocheting and although I am no expert, I am starting a knitting and crochet club on Friday lunch time for students in all year groups.

I am looking forward to getting to know the students and staff at St Mary's, they have already made me feel so welcome!



After School Club



Yoga and Mindfulness

After school club
open to all year groups

Mondays
3.15pm - 4.15pm

Sports Hall

Mats provided. Wear easy to move in /
comfortable clothing.

Have you borrowed any items of uniform...?



In the Student Hub we have some items of uniform that can be borrowed, but students must hand in their phones (which will be returned on return of the borrowed uniform).

If the borrowed uniform needs washing before it is returned to the school (eg. shirts, PE kits etc) we will contact parents/carers to ensure the borrowed uniform is returned.

Minus House Points will be issued for incorrect uniform.

The School has clear expectations with regard to school uniform.

We pride ourselves on excellence and require our students to uphold these high standards.

Full uniform is compulsory and must be worn at all times.

[Fosters Schoolwear](#) and [Uniform4Kids](#) are our uniform stockists.

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL CAREERS BULLETIN

Hello!

Careers has been super busy at the start of this term collecting Destination Data from the students who left us in Year 11 and Year 13 and getting everything ready and organised for the year ahead.

We have a Careers Carousel planned for Thursday 5th October 2023, if your business or employer would like to exhibit at the Carousel, please do get in contact with Mrs Knight. Our Careers Carousel will be a great opportunity for our students to meet with local and national employers, employees and speak to Further and Higher Educational providers to get an insight into what is available to them post 16 and 18.

All Students in Year 11 will be offered a Careers Information Advice and Guidance appointment with our external Level 6 Qualified Careers Advisor to talk through their post16 plans. These appointments are happening now and throughout the year. Students will be notified of their appointment by their form tutors and a copy of their Action Plan will be stored on their Unifrog Account under the Locker Section.

Careers Carousel Thursday 5th October 2023

We have our annual Career Carousel on Thursday 5th October and are very excited this year with our exhibitors in attendance. We have employers coming in, colleges and a University to get the students seriously thinking about their futures.



London Stansted Airport Jobs Fair

Tuesday 10th October 2023 - 10am to 2pm

Discover the many career opportunities at Stansted Airport

Do you want to land a career at London Stansted Airport?

Learn more about the numerous range of exciting opportunities at all levels.

Speak directly with employers and find out what they are looking for from applicants to boost your chances of securing employment at the airport.

Our staff Stansted will save you up to £25 on public transport to the airport.

For further information about the job fair, please email: workexperience@stanstedairport.com

Link to Event

ICAN HELP TO: BOOKEN AND BOOK NOW FOR THE AIRPORT & TRAINING

London Stansted Airport, SA, H, HARLOW COLLEGE

Career Guidance Appointments

As stated above, all of our Year 11 students will have a career guidance appointment with an external Careers Advisor, to prepare for the appointment we strongly recommend all students to log on to their Unifrog account and:

1. Complete (or recomplete) the Personality Quiz
2. Select 3 favourite careers in the Careers Library
3. Create a shortlist of colleges / Sixth Form courses or Apprenticeships that you may be interested in.
4. Complete the Post 16 Intentions tool on Unifrog.

unifrog

OPEN EVENINGS

HARLOW COLLEGE

OPEN EVENING

19 October 2023 5-8pm



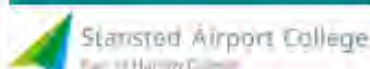
21st November 2023

5.30pm - 8.00pm

Broxbourne Campus, Ware Campus
Open Events



Wednesday 18th October 2023 - 4.30pm-7.30pm



Open Event

Saturday 14th October
10am-2pm



Upcoming Dates

- Saturday 14th October, 10am - 3pm
- Saturday 25th November 10am - 3pm



Shared on Teams this Week!



Year 11's and Sixth Formers were given the up to date apprenticeship vacancies with Hertford Regional College.

Sixth Formers were provided with the full Stansted Airport Vacancy List. Check out their Teams Careers Pages for more info!

Farewell to Fr Antonio



St Joseph's and the English Martyrs Parish in Bishops Stortford

'Farewell Fr. Antonio and God Bless'

This Sunday, the parishioners of St Joseph's and the English Martyrs Parish in Bishops Stortford said 'Farewell and God bless you' to Fr Antonio Pineda, who has served as Assistant Priest in the parish for the past three years.

The St Mary's Catholic School community is grateful for the service offered by Fr Antonio to our students during his time at the parish. Fr Antonio regularly celebrated Mass for our different year groups. He has encouraged many of our students to take up membership of St Stephen's Guild as altar servers, and thus serve the local Church community.

We wish him all the best as he takes on the role of Parish Priest at St Therese of the Child Jesus, Headstone Lane in Harrow.

**Some of our students helped in serving the community at the farewell BBQ.
Well done to Isabella, Oliver, Kiera and Emily.**

*Mr D'Cruz
Teacher of RE*





LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

#DedicatedtoExcellence

Parental Survey 2023

Please take some time to complete the
St Mary's Catholic School Parental Survey 2023!

Parental Survey 2023!



Parental Survey 2023!

We would value your thoughts on the questions in the survey. Please click on this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/7ZCGGCC>

The deadline for completion is
Monday 2nd October 2023

Thank you!



We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Click Here For Latest Vacancy Information

<https://www.stmarys.net/vacancies>



Children's Wellbeing Practitioner Workshops (October-December 2023)

Workshops are open to all young people & parents/carers of children and young people who attend a school or are registered to a GP in Hertfordshire. A referral is not needed to access a workshop.

All workshops are currently being delivered online via Microsoft Teams. For more information about what each workshop covers and to book a place onto a workshop, visit the Children's Wellbeing Practitioner Eventbrite page: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-school-nursingservice-hertfordshire-33494371787>

Workshop	Date & Time
Emotional Wellbeing (For Young People 11-16) A workshop focused on adolescents managing their own emotional wellbeing and things parents/carers can do to help.	Wednesday 22 nd November 6pm
Supporting Adolescents with Self-Esteem A workshop focused on adolescents improving their self-esteem and what parents can do to support.	Wednesday 13 th November 6pm
Supporting your Child's Self-Esteem A workshop focused on parents/carers supporting their child to improve their self-esteem.	Monday 9 th October 10am Tuesday 5 th December 10am
Supporting with Sleep Difficulties A workshop supporting children and adolescents with managing their sleep difficulties and how parents/carers can help.	Tuesday 3 rd October 6pm Thursday 7 th December 6pm
Supporting your Child's Resilience A workshop focused on parents/carers supporting their child to improve their resilience.	Friday 27 th October 10am Monday 18 th December 6pm
Developing your Child's Emotional Literacy A workshop focused on parents supporting their child with developing emotional literacy.	Tuesday 7 th November at 10am
General Emotional Wellbeing and Regulation Tips for Parents A workshop focused on parents supporting their child's general emotional wellbeing and emotional regulation.	Monday 13 th November 6pm
School Transitions A workshop supporting children and adolescents with managing school transitions.	

To access the recorded Emotionally Based School Avoidance Webinar please visit: <https://www.hct.nhs.uk/our-services-and-referral-information/our-services-a-z/childrens-wellbeing-practitioners-service/>



Bookings Email:
bookings@supportinglinks.co.uk

Talking Teens From Child to Adult

This 6 week course is for parents of teenagers.
It builds week on week giving you the tools and strategies to handle life

We will help you look at:

- What you want from your teen.
- What is going on in the teenage brain and how this affects them.
- What it is to be a teenager today.
- Conflict: why it happens and how to handle it.
- Choices and consequences: how to encourage responsibility and independence.
- Challenging behaviour: why teens can be stroppy and what we can do about it.
- Understand and manage dishonesty and lies.

Talking Pre-teens Managing and encouraging your 7-12 year old

This 6 week course is for parents of children aged 7-12 years.
It will give you the skills you need to guide your child through this time of

We will help you look at:

- Managing challenging behaviour with consistency.
- Understand the causes of conflict, arguments, dishonesty and lies.
- How to keep your child safe, at home with modern technology and once they begin to go out alone.
- How to encourage positive and responsible behaviour.
- Preparing for the changes that will happen in your preteen's brain and how this affects them.
- Moving onto Secondary school and what this means for your family.

Talking Additional Needs Understanding their behaviours and needs

This 6 week course is for parents of children with Additional Needs.
Your child does not need to have a diagnosis but does need to have a

We will help you look at:

- Gain a real insight to help you understand your child's behaviour.
- Find strategies that really work.
- Manage anger effectively.
- Understand conflict: why it happens and how to handle it.
- Motivate, encourage and support your child.
- Manage the different needs within your family.



Talking Anger for Families **To help you break the cycle of anger**

This 6 week course is for parents of all ages.

We will help you to:

- Understand why children and adults get angry.
- Recognise the early signs of anger.
- Develop strategies to manage anger in yourself.
- Develop strategies to manage anger in other members of your family.
- Understand conflict: why it happens and how to handle it.
- Reduce stress.

Talking Dads **Be the best dad you can be**

This 4 or 6 week course is for dads of children aged 0-19 years.

It will give dads an opportunity to meet other dads and share experiences in a supportive and encouraging environment. We will help you to:

- Increase your confidence as a dad.
- Develop a strong dad/child relationship now and for the future.
- Improve communication and work out strategies for dealing with problems.
- Understand how to set and enforce boundaries, deal with anger and resolve conflict.

Talking Families **Because parents don't get training for the toughest job on earth**

This 6 week course is for parents of children aged 0-12 years.

It will give parents an opportunity to meet other parents and share experiences in a supportive and encouraging environment. We will help you to:

- Increase your confidence as a parent.
- Increase fun and enjoyment.
- Develop a strong parent/child relationship now and for the future.
- Gain a real insight to help you understand your child's behaviour.
- Improve communication and work out strategies for dealing with problems.
- Understand how to set and enforce boundaries.
- How to negotiate and stay calm during a conflict situation.

Talking Tantrums **Reduce the frustration and have more fun**

This 6 week course is for parents children under 5.

We will help you to:

- Understand why young children have tantrums.
- What you can do to prevent and manage them.
- Manage difficult or unco-operative behaviour.
- Effective strategies to cope with bedtimes, mealtimes and other stressful times of the day.
- Having fun together.
- Reduce family stress.

The Nurturing Programme **Family Links Parenting Puzzle**

This 10 week course. It can be adapted for parents of children under 5, 5 to 11 years and 11 to 18 years. We will help you to:

- Understand and manage feelings and behaviour.
- Improve relationships at home and in school.
- Improve emotional health and wellbeing.
- Develop self-confidence and self-esteem; crucial ingredients for effective parenting and learning.
- Build on your pre-existing parenting skills.
- Use positive behaviour management, communication and relationship strategies.