

LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter

Issue 7 - 20th October 2023



Celebrating a Successful First Half Term!

Mr Johnston - Headteacher

October half-term began at 3.15pm this afternoon! It's been a fabulous first half term of the academic year—welcoming our new Year 7 students, and students into Year 12 after celebrating their excellent achievement at GCSE last summer. The data from the summer exams has now been published online and I am very pleased that the school has been recognised as being **significantly 'Above Average'** based on national figures.

Indeed, our Progress Score (the measure of how much progress our students make from KS2 to the GCSE examination results means our students have made almost half a grade better progress than students nationally!

Last week, our Sixth Form team, led by Mr Noble, sent out **11 applications to Oxford and Cambridge Universities** and another application for Medicine, which demonstrates the drive, ambition and excellent standards being set by our Year 13 students.

The Year 7 students ended their half term with a celebration assembly during which they were given their lapel badge for achieving the **St. Mary's Summer Challenge Award**. 'Bake Off' winners also got certificates and vouchers.

October is the **month of the Holy Rosary** and the whole school prayed together this morning in form time. Dedications were chosen by students and it proved to be a special moment of calm reflection.



St. Mary's Summer Challenge Award winners, with their badges!



Year 7 Chaplaincy Team read Rosary Dedications in assembly

Save the Date!
Sixth Form Open Evening
2024 Admissions
Thursday 9th November 2023



Have a safe Half Term Break!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday-Friday
23rd-27th October 2023
HALF TERM

All Pupils Return to School on Monday 30th October

Monday-Friday
30th October-3rd November 2023
Year 11 & Year 13 Mock Exams continue all week

Wednesday 1st November 2023
All Saints Day

Thursday 9th November 2023
Sixth Form Opening Evening

Introducing our Senior Prefect Team

On behalf of the Senior Prefect Team, we look forward to serving your child in their quest to represent their house in lots of Inter House Competitions this academic year. We believe a successful House System is an integral part of an effective school and this is why we are extremely proud to be a key part of this.

Our Senior Prefect Team



Ezekiel M

Q. What are you studying?

A. A Level Biology, Chemistry, Maths, Further Maths.

Q. What extra-curricular clubs do you participate in?

A. Duke of Edinburgh Award, Peer Mentoring, Reading Mentor.

Q. Name one thing that you love most about the school?

A. I love the friendly interaction between students.

Q. What are your aspirations for the future?

A. I want to become a Doctor. I want to do a medicine degree at The University of East Anglia.



Gabrielle L

Q. What are you studying?

A. A Level Geography, Art, BTEC Media Studies.

Q. What extra-curricular clubs do you participate in?

A. I volunteered as a TA in the Art Department for a term in Year 12.

Q. Name one thing that you love most about the school?

A. I love the community throughout the school connecting all of the years, making it easy to connect with them.

Q. What are your aspirations for the future?

A. I am striving to achieve a TV Production Apprenticeship, and if I am unsuccessful, I am hoping to go to University to complete a Filmmaking Course.



Daniel K

Q. What are you studying?

A. A Level Maths, Chemistry & Economics.

Q. What extra-curricular clubs do you participate in?

A. Former Debate Club member, former Basketball team member and survived DofE!

Q. Name one thing that you love most about the school?

A. The school community - especially now that my role as Senior Prefect gives me a lot more opportunities to interact with other members of the school.

Q. What are your aspirations for the future?

A. To study a Chemistry degree at Loughborough University. I would like to take a gap year at some point to travel the world!





Introducing our Senior Prefect Team

Lily-Ann M

Q. What are you studying?

A. I am studying A Level English literature, Sociology and History

Q. What extra-curricular clubs do you participate in?

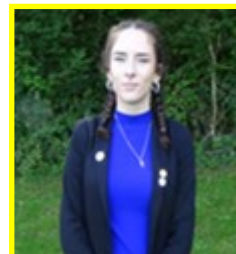
A. I completed the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award, coached the Year 9 boys for Gaelic football and was one of the organisers of Charity Week.

Q. Name one thing that you love most about the school?

A. In our school, I love the sense of community through sports as it gives us a chance to come together to have fun and show commitment as a team.

Q. What are your aspirations for the future?

A. In my future, I want to attend Queen's University Belfast for English Literature and I want to become a primary school teacher.



Tobias R

Q. What are you studying?

A. History, Geography, English Literature.

Q. What extra-curricular clubs do you participate in?

A. The Duke of Edinburgh Award and various Inter House sports

Q. Name one thing that you love most about the school?

A. The great community feel about the school and the ease to find support from peers and staff alike.

Q. What are your aspirations for the future?

A. Study Law at Cambridge University, Achieving my RSL level 6 Performance Diploma in Drums.



Nicholas I

Q. What are you studying?

A. I study A Level Economics, Sociology and Politics.

Q. What extra-curricular clubs do you participate in?

A. I've represented the school Basketball, Football and Rugby teams over the years. I've done my Bronze DofE.

Q. Name one thing that you love most about the school?

A. One thing I love most about the school is the sense of community that I think is present here across all of the year groups.

Q. What are your aspirations for the future?

A. My aspirations are to study International Business at Loughborough University and to go on to be a successful business owner and investor.



Pierce D

Q. What are you studying?

A. A Level History, Biology & Chemistry.

Q. What extra-curricular clubs do you participate in?

A. I've represented the school at Football and Gaelic Football.

Q. Name one thing that you love most about the school?

A. The sense of community around the school.

Q. What are your aspirations for the future?

A. To study Biomedical Sciences.



Anti-Bullying in School



We all have a part to play in tackling bullying. We are encouraging students to reach out to someone they trust if they need to talk.

We would also like to see students taking the initiative to reach out to someone if they know they are being bullied and offer to support them in getting the help they need. It takes courage, but it can change lives.

St Mary's is unequivocal in its opposition to intimidating behaviour of any kind and will adopt a positive, whole school approach to confront such behaviour when it occurs. The School believes that intimidation is best dealt with openly, by discussion with all parties being fully involved.

The School urges all pupils who feel they are the victims of bullying, peer-on-peer abuse, assault or intimidation to report their worries or concerns to an appropriate person, so that the problem can be identified and brought out into the open and dealt with appropriately.

The victim may report to:

- a fellow pupil who can go to a member of staff;
- a form tutor, their Learning Coordinator or an Assistant Headteacher;
- any other trusted member of staff—teaching or non-teaching;
- use the 'Report a Concern' anonymous reporting button on the website home page

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Windhill, Bishop's Stortford,
Hertfordshire, CM23 2NQ

📞 01279 654901

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✉ info@stmarys.net

REPORT A CONCERN



Do you have any unwanted PE Kit?



Do you have any unwanted spare PE kit?
Do you have any PE kit that is now too small?

The PE Department would be grateful for any donations of spare unwanted PE kit.
Thank you.

Student Librarian Team

Thank you Student Librarian Team!

This week 23 students in Year 7 and Year 8 received their student librarian badges.

These students give their time before and after school, at breaks and lunch times to help our library run more smoothly. Their duties include shelving books, helping with displays and checking books in and out on the system, as well as being a friendly face to welcome students who are using the library.



A group of students are still completing their training, so we look forward to presenting their badges next half term. Here are some of the reasons the new student librarians enjoy their job:

"Being a Student Librarian is fun. You can ... help out shelving books, using the computer to log people to the system i.e. returning and borrowing. As a librarian you also can help others, give book recommendations and of course reading and borrowing books!"

"I always love being in the library and it is a great place to relax and have a break. I love to shelve books and ... the best thing is meeting new people every single day."

"I enjoy helping others to find what suits them."

"I like being a student librarian because you get to help people find books, and I love reading so I think it is the perfect job for me."

"I like to be around books and help other students in finding what they are looking for. Also, it makes me feel more a part of the school community."

Senior Inter House Basketball & Netball

This week saw our Sixth Form students participate in the Senior Inter House Basketball and Netball Competitions.

All competitions were very well attended and with students giving their best efforts for their house. All students received positive house points for their participation and performance on the day.

It was great to see students volunteer to help officiate the competitions.

Well Done to all involved!

The PE Department



Results

BASKETBALL	
Year	Position
12	1 st T
	2 nd J
	3 rd A
	4 th M
NETBALL	
Year	Position
12	1 st A
	2 nd J
	2 nd T
	3 rd M
OVERALL	
	1 st T
	2 nd A
	3 rd J
	4 th M
BASKETBALL	
Year	Position
13	1 st J
	2 nd M
	3 rd T
	4 th A



The SMCS Reading Challenge Cup Launch



We are monitoring the number of words read by each AR / English group by completing quizzes and getting high scores in them.

The groups will be in a league within their own year group. The group that reads the most words at the top.

The top group each term will receive a whole class prize.

Winning English/AR groups for half term 1:

1st place for Year 7: 7D 1,879,188 words read

1st place for Year 8: 8B 1,588,648 words read

1st place for Year 9: 9B 768,431 words read



Keep reading over half term!



'Read and quiz' homework has been set for Accelerated Reader classes for this half term.

This is to encourage students to keep reading regularly and reward them every time they finish a book. It's important to finish the book before taking the AR quiz, because the multiple choice questions are about details in the book's plot.

Students can find the link for Accelerated Reader on their AR Team or use the link below. It is also available on the school website under 'Curriculum' > 'Library'.

<https://global-zone61.renaissance-go.com/welcomeportal/1893751>

Congratulations Year 11 ~ Art Department

Congratulations Year 11 – A Wonderful Response to our Coursework Theme of ‘Heritage’

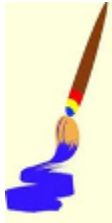
Miss Nairn would like to congratulate 11B on their fantastic response to this year’s coursework theme of *Heritage*. Student’s project work culminated in learning to design tessellated repeated patterns using different visual aspects of all the work we have done this year. Final pattern designs were then painted using a mixture of watercolour, ink and pen washes to add form and texture, which all students completed with perseverance and refinement. Here is a selection of final outcomes which have a wonderfully surreal quality to them. A brilliant end to this project, well done!

Work by artists:

Ieva, Alex
Anastasia, Natalia
Maeve, Vivian
Lara, Tobi
Keziah, Addison
Esme, Krisana
Mercedes, Olivia
Janey



Congratulations Year 11 ~ Art Department



UCAS Early Entry Submissions

Congratulations to the twelve Year 13 students who have completed their UCAS 'early entry' submissions.

Applying to university
through UCAS

UCAS

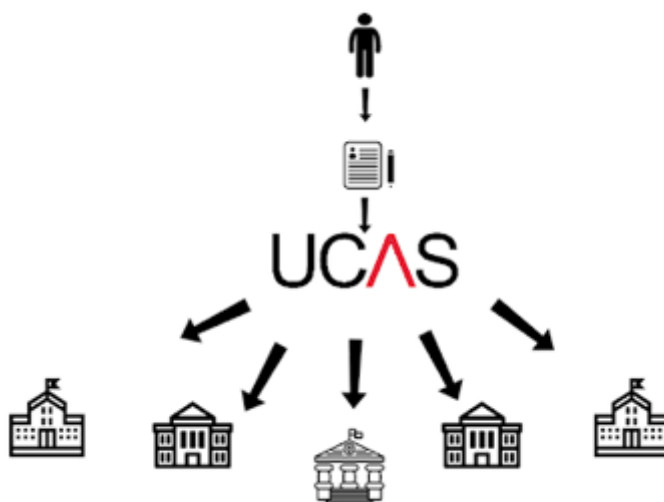
For context, A Level students who are applying for Oxford, Cambridge, Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science must meet a much earlier deadline (16th October vs 31st January) and so have to display excellent organisation, proactivity and commitment in order to complete this process so early into the Autumn term.

Many of these twelve students have also had to sit additional examinations that are required for these very competitive courses.

As always, our students have been ably supported by a range of St Mary's staff. A huge thank you to the Sixth Form Tutors, subject specialists, Miss McHugh, and especially Mrs Wilkin for the advice, guidance and time that they have provided (with Personal Statements, the School Reference, etc.)

The students should be really proud of themselves for putting themselves forward in such a competitive process, and our fingers are crossed as they await decisions from these Universities in the coming months.

*Mr Noble
Director of Sixth Form*



Classwork Heroes Year 7 ~ Art Department

Ms Ashton's Classwork Heroes in Year 7

Ms Ashton would like to congratulate the following students on their beautiful classwork submissions and superb level of effort in their Art lessons:

Olivia H, Filip S, Winter H, Anton K, Mae M, Peaches B

We are all so proud of how Year 7 have started their Art journey here at St Mary's.
Keep up the great work!

The Art Department.

Classwork heroes



Introducing some of our new staff...



Mr Neesam **Assistant Subject Leader—Science**



Growing up in a small Welsh town in the Severn Valley meant big changes when I went to Lancaster University to study biochemistry with genetics and organic chemistry. I really enjoyed the opportunity they gave us to get into a classroom in a secondary school in my second year there, from that point I was hooked on being a teacher. I went on to study my PGCE at the University of Chester.

My real teaching career then started in Bishop's Stortford (a town I had never heard of or been anywhere near) at The Bishop's Stortford High School. I started teaching there in 2008. It taught me a great deal and gave me many opportunities that I then tried to offer to students throughout my time.

After 15 years I was lucky enough to be Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator, Head of the house system, motorsport manager, staff governor, PTFA member, first aider, rugby coach and organiser of the annual Year 7 residential.

Giving students opportunities outside the classroom is a big passion of mine and I am hoping to be able to offer things for the students of St Mary's that can push them not just academically but also mentally and physically, my main aim is to restart a trip I ran for several years to Poland to give students the opportunity to see the remains of Auschwitz and other such sites around Krakow.

Outside of school I am passionate about supporting Wales at rugby, visiting historical sites and reading about history as well as running. Most of my time is taken up playing and helping to care for my two young children who dictate my time at home.

I really am enjoying working with the students here already and trying to push them.





WE NEED YOU!



We Need You!

On Thursday 7th December, all Year 11 students will be taking part in our Mock Interview Day. Having a mock interview will help students learn how to answer difficult questions, develop interview strategies, improve their communication skills and help students to remain calm before an actual interview.

We need 20 volunteers to be our Interviewers!

NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED.

We would appreciate any parents / carers to come in on the day and assist in being an interviewer.

If you can support us, please email Mrs Knight on j.knight@stmarys.net Thank You!

Janice N, Year 12 Careers Ambassador.

We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Click Here For Latest Vacancy Information

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



Half Term Activities—Bishop's Stortford

OCTOBER HALF-TERM SPORT AND FITNESS

SPORT AND FITNESS FOR 11-19 YEAR OLDS

TUESDAY

24 OCTOBER

4.00-6.00PM

SWORDERS FIELD,
BISHOP'S STORTFORD,
CM23 2AY



East Herts
Community Safety Partnership

Many thanks to the following organisations who have contributed towards these activities: Ware Town Council, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Hertford Town Council, Buntingford Town Council, Sawbridgeworth Town Council, Network Homes, Sporting Inspirations CIC, HCC Services for Young People and East Herts Council.

For information please contact
community.safety@eastherts.gov.uk

FREE, NO NEED TO BOOK!





Half Term Activities—Buntingford

OCTOBER HALF-TERM SPORT AND FITNESS

SPORT AND FITNESS FOR 11-19 YEAR OLDS

TUESDAY

24 OCTOBER

1.00-3.00PM

NORFOLK ROAD PLAYING FIELDS,
BUNTINGFORD, SG9 9TA



East Herts
Community Safety Partnership

Many thanks to the following organisations who have contributed towards these activities: Ware Town Council, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Hertford Town Council, Buntingford Town Council, Sawbridgeworth Town Council, Network Homes, Sporting Inspirations CIC, HCC Services for Young People and East Herts Council.

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FREE, NO NEED TO BOOK!





Half Term Activities—Hertford

OCTOBER HALF-TERM SPORT AND FITNESS

SPORT AND FITNESS FOR 11-19 YEAR OLDS

WEDNESDAY

25 OCTOBER

3.30-5.30PM

HARTHAM COMMON,
HERTFORD, SG14 1QR



Many thanks to the following organisations who have contributed towards these activities: Ware Town Council, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Hertford Town Council, Buntingford Town Council, Sawbridgeworth Town Council, Network Homes, Sporting Inspirations CIC, HCC Services for Young People and East Herts Council.

For information please contact
community.safety@eastherts.gov.uk

FREE, NO NEED TO BOOK!





Half Term Activities—Ware

OCTOBER HALF-TERM SPORT AND FITNESS

SPORT AND FITNESS FOR 11-19 YEAR OLDS

MONDAY

23 OCTOBER

1.00–3.00PM

BURYFIELDS, PARK ROAD,
WARE, SG12 0AJ

3.30–5.30PM

KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELDS,
KING GEORGE ROAD,
WARE, SG12 7DP



Many thanks to the following organisations who have contributed towards these activities: Ware Town Council, Bishop's Stortford Town Council, Hertford Town Council, Buntingford Town Council, Sawbridgeworth Town Council, Network Homes, Sporting Inspirations CIC, HCC Services for Young People and East Herts Council.

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FREE, NO NEED TO BOOK!

