

LOVE-RESPECT-FLOURISH

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter

Issue 11 - 1st December 2023



Congratulations to our Award Winners!

Mr Johnston - Headteacher

It was my privilege to host the annual Presentation Evening last night in the school hall, alongside all the teaching staff, parents and award winners from the academic year 2022-2023.

There are academic awards, nominated by Subject Leaders for Years 7-12 in each of the subject areas and 'Special Awards' recognising those students who have achieved 'Excellence at GCSE' (progress and attainment), 'Head Pupil' awards and for 'Overcoming Adversity', 'Contribution to Liturgical Life' amongst



others. It was fantastic to congratulate each winner in turn and to hand them their engraved trophy that marks so much personal achievement.

In my opening address, I reflected on the events of the past academic year, our school values and the future plans for the school, already underway through our 3 Year School Development Plan*.

One aspect that I focussed on was that we are proud of and celebrate our diversity at St. Mary's (*SDP Objective 6) – people from all backgrounds, from a

vast geographical area – from Enfield to Cambridge, Dunmow to Hertford coming together as brothers and sisters in Christ – with students and families often demonstrating their dedication in the long journeys they make to be a part of this special school community.

Finally, I asked the award winners to continue to work hard, be true to themselves and strive to do their very best in everything that they do. In the tough times that will inevitably occur I reminded them to draw strength from their faith and the knowledge that God walks by their side.



Save The Date

St Mary's Catholic School
invites you to an

Advent Carol Service

Tuesday 12th December 2023
at St Joseph and the Martyrs Church, Windhill



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday 6th December 2023
Scholastic Book Fair Opens

Thursday 7th December 2023
Year 11 Parents Evening

Tuesday 12th December 2023
Carol Service, 7.00pm

Wednesday 13th December 2023
Scholastic Book Fair Ends

St Mary's Presentation Evening 2023



St Mary's Presentation Evening 2023



Congratulations!



Anti-Bullying Week at St Mary's

Student Report, Year 12

For Anti Bullying week we did various activities, such as on Monday everyone wore odd socks to raise awareness for people who get bullied.

We researched and watched videos on how to make paper origami swans and made them in form, with each swan being every house colour.

The whole school signed a pledge saying we won't bully others, we will support one another, we will never leave students out and we will report any bullying that we know of.

The benefits of anti-bullying week are that it's a time where you can be yourself no matter what, it's also a time to raise awareness about bullying and promote inclusivity, respect, acceptance and helping and talking to people who might need help to find someone to talk to and be friends with.

Year 12 Anti-Bullying Week

13th – 17th November 2023

"It is very comforting and lovely that the school raises awareness on this"

Monday 13th

Odd socks Day!
Students encouraged to wear odd socks to show that it's okay to be different and to stand up against bullying and discrimination

Form activity – Origami crane making

Who can I speak to?

Miss McHugh, any of our trusted teachers, Learning Coordinators will either help you with your concerns or pass on them onto the relevant person. If you feel like not telling someone directly, please use the anonymous report system on the SMCS website.

Anti-Bullying Assembly by Mr Nobel

FORM PLEDGE

"Anti-bullying week helps others realise the effect on a person's behaviour if they are the target, and also prevents bullying."

ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE



Student Report, Year 11

Last week was anti-bullying week. In Year 11, we took part in some activities in form time to remind us of what to do to stand up against bullying. Many people wore odd socks last Monday to show how we are all unique and united against bullying. In form, we also signed pledges, promising not to be a bystander to bullying and to tell someone we trust if we are concerned about ourselves or someone else. In assembly, we were informed of what to do if we feel we are being bullied, and how actions can affect other people (for example, is it bullying or banter?). Sometimes people don't even realise how they're making others feel, however, if someone is repeatedly hurting you (emotionally or physically) and not treating you with respect and kindness, you should always tell a trusted adult. This can include, a parent, teacher, form teacher, or head of year.

Celebrating Success

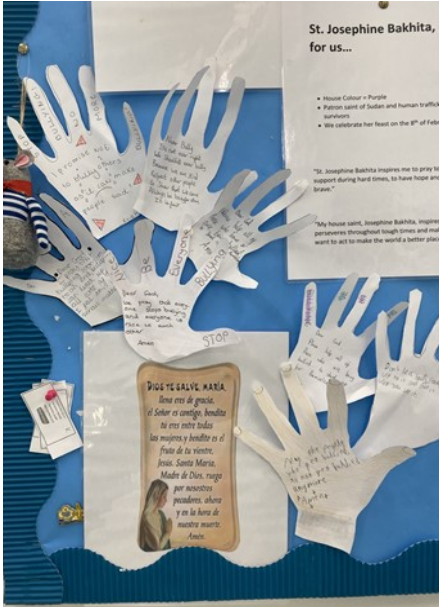
Celebrating success with our Year 9 students



Modern Foreign Languages award winners for coming in the top 10% nationally in the GCHQ's MFL language challenge.



Anti-Bullying Week at St Mary's



Student Report by Kayla C, Year 8

On Monday, many students wore odd socks to celebrate what makes us all unique. The next day, we had an assembly on different types of bullying and what we can do to help stop bullying. In Form, we all signed a pledge to state that we will not bully others and that we will be kind to everyone.

"The anti-bullying assembly was purposeful, and the odd socks day helped us be aware of how we can be more inclusive."
Emily N (Year 8)

Anti-Bullying Week aims to raise awareness about the harmful effects of bullying and to promote a culture of inclusivity, respect, and acceptance. The primary aim is to engage schools, parents, and communities in meaningful conversations about bullying and its various forms.

Student Report by Barney W, Year 10

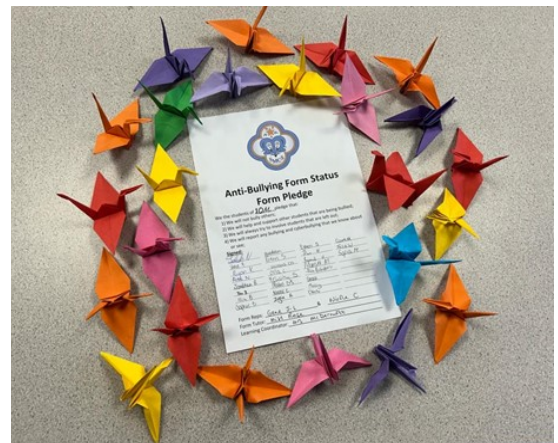
Over the recent week, as a school we have participated in Anti Bullying Week, a national event where schools raise awareness for the problem of bullying in everyday life. Bullying is seeking to harm, intimidate, or coerce someone perceived as vulnerable. This problem is increasing recently due to the increase of social media where people can sit behind a screen and bully others through Instagram, TikTok or Snapchat. At St Mary's, we understand the need to raise awareness of bullying and so we were active in inspiring others to stand up against bullies.

One of the things we did for Anti Bullying week was 'odd socks day' where students were encouraged to sport non-matching colourful socks in order to stand out from the rest. We were trying to convey the message of being different is okay and it is something to be proud of, not to get made fun of for. A student told me;

"It was nice to see everyone stand up against bullying as a whole school."

We also signed form pledges, stating that we will not bully others, and we will stand up for those who are victims of bullying. Hopefully, everyone has signed one of these pledges meaning we can work towards a future as a school where we can love, respect and flourish in a constructive and kind environment.

If you are dealing with problems of bullying, do not be afraid to talk to a close friend, parent or guardian, form tutor or trusted teacher or your respective head of year such as Mrs McDermott. Also, you can anonymously report it on the sharp system found on Teams.



Year 7 & Year 8 Christmas Tree Competition



Year 7 and Year 8 Christmas Tree Maths Decorations Competition

If you like Christmas, decorating the Christmas tree and you are competitive, this competition is just for you!

We will have two Christmas trees at school that need decorating (one in the Hall and one in the Student Hub).

We ask you to be as creative as you can. The only requirement is that the decorations must be 3D (so they go on and under the tree) and full of very visible maths. You can design Christmassy maths baubles, chains, presents or even a family maths game!

As always, the Maths department is providing fun, loads of house points and prizes!

Deadline for entry is **Wednesday 13th December.**

Each entry must be brought to your maths teacher or Mrs Brewin in K5 and must be labelled with your name and surname as well as form.



Scholastic Book Fair

Scholastic Book Fair at St Mary's Thursday 7th December to Tuesday 12th December

This year's book fair is taking place in the library, starting on Thursday 7th December. Students can come and choose books in AR and English lessons or after school.

Please don't send students to school with cash as we can't accept it.

There are two ways to pay:

1 Pay for a voucher online here now:

<https://bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/gift-vouchers> Your child brings the voucher to school next week and exchanges it for a book. There will be lots of stationery items to choose instead of cash change.



Book Fair Gift Vouchers

OR

2 Your child fills in an order form after looking around the fair. You pay the amount on the order form on the Scholastic website by 12th December.

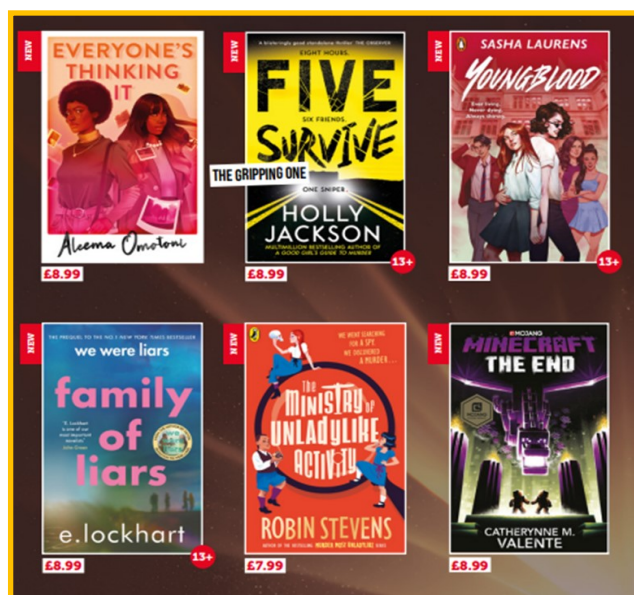
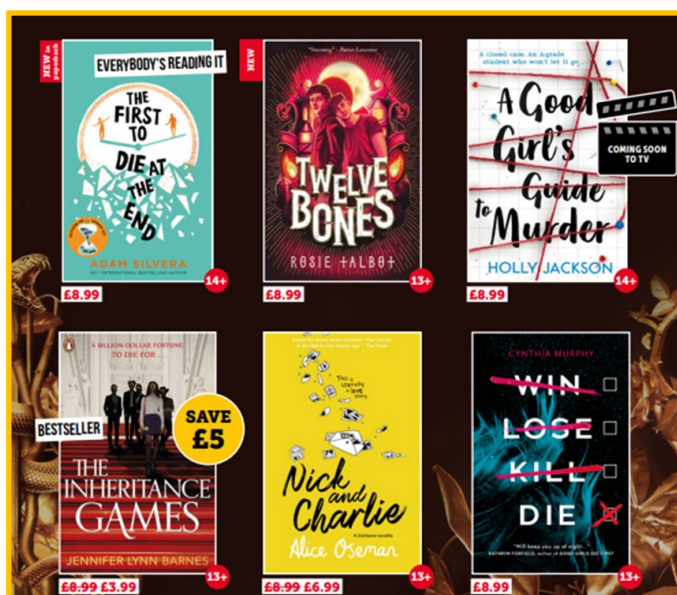
Click on this link www.bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/pay and enter the school postcode (**CM23 2NQ**). Then your child picks up their purchase from the library. You can also use the QR code shown here.



Remember that every book you buy goes towards free books for our school!

Use the school postcode to find our book fair on the Scholastic website: CM23 2NQ.

Scan the QR code to pay for your books online
or visit bookfairs.scholastic.co.uk/pay



Year 11–Sixth Form Application

Dear Year 11 Parents

It was great to see so many of you at our recent Sixth Form Open Evening. We trust you found the evening informative, and that your child is excited at the range of excellent post-16 opportunities available to them here at St Mary's!

Thank you to those families that have already submitted their child's Sixth Form application. If you are yet to do so, a gentle reminder that the **deadline is Friday 8th December**. The good news is that it's a really quick and easy process. For your convenience, the link to the online application is below:

<https://www.stmarys.net/form/?pid=51&form=72>

The advantages of our internal Year 11 students completing this process is that it helps the school further tailor out post-16 guidance over the coming months, not least as it provides insight as to what subjects your child is hoping to study next academic year. There is of course flexibility in the system to amend these choices at a later date, but early visibility of students' subject choices enables the school to start planning the curriculum timetable.

Mr Noble
Director of Sixth Form

A note from the Director of Sixth Form

It is a privilege to be the Director of Sixth Form at St Mary's Catholic School and I am committed to drawing on my **experience and vision** to ensure I continually develop the excellent Sixth Form education on offer at St Mary's.

Students deserve their post-16 education to be **enjoyable and memorable**, whilst also equipping them with the right qualifications, skillset and confidence to thrive in the exciting (but competitive!) wider world that awaits them beyond the school gates.

In keeping with the St Mary's mission statement of 'excellence for all', it will be my responsibility to help ensure you **reach your potential**. Of course, this is not just academic potential... although this is very important!

At St Mary's Sixth Form we will be **committed to developing you** as an all-round individual through an engaging and inclusive enrichment programme that will enable your unique personality, interests and talents to flourish. Throughout Year 12 and Year 13 you will also benefit from an excellent post-18 guidance and pathway programme. This will ensure you are aware of the huge range of exciting options that are available to you: university, an apprenticeship, a degree apprenticeship, or going straight into the world of work.

Equally importantly, the St Mary's post-18 pathway programme will **support you** in making an informed decision that is right for you. This is a really exciting time in your education; embrace it, good luck in your upcoming GCSEs, and **I look forward to working with you in September!**

Mr Ben Noble – Director of Sixth Form



Inter House Team Building

Thursday 23rd November saw our Form Captains throughout the school come together. Participating with one another in various teambuilding activities ranging from deceptive card games to games of coordination and teamwork in a more physical setting.

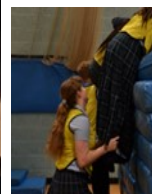
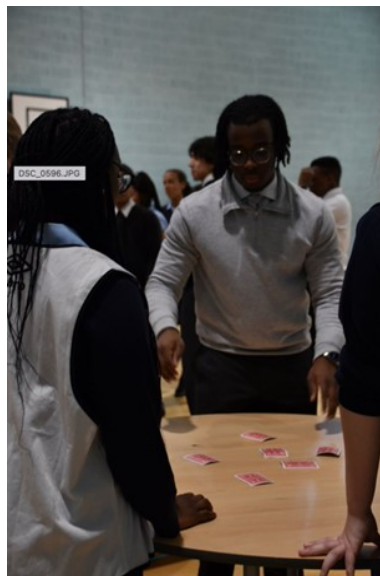
The comradery seen last week is a true display of the values our school prides ourselves upon – seeing how every year group came together with respect for another, performing as a solid unit and forming new and solid connections to emphasise the unified nature of the form system throughout each year group, where form groups are not only relevant within each of their respective years but as a whole school unit – flourishing with one another.

Led by our Sixth Form Senior Prefects and other members of the sixth form. The event was a roaring success that will become a staple within our yearly calendar

As a competition, there must be a winner. While every form will receive house points because of their strong participation.

Yet the winners bringing home the greatest number of house points is **form R**, with a total time to complete all the activities of 550 seconds, only just beating our second-place form M by 16 seconds.

Student Report by Tobias R (Senior Prefect)



Rank	Form
1st	R
2nd	M
3rd	T
4th	K
5th	J
6th	B
7th	A

Artist in Focus

ARTIST IN FOCUS: Gabrielle L, Year 13



Why do you study or love Art?

Tell us about your journey and who you are...

I have been encouraged with Art ever since my sister introduced me to drawing. My journey has evolved throughout my school journey trying realism, digital drawing and printmaking.

Who inspires you?

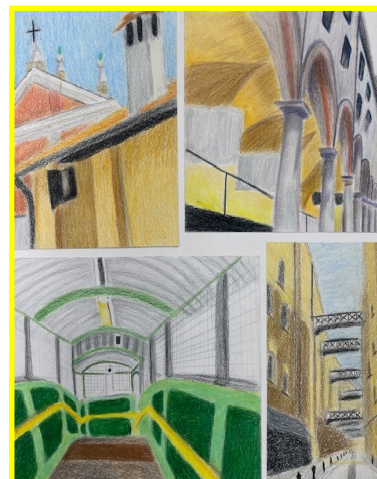
My grandfather is my current inspiration he was an architect and was a very key role model in my life before he passed away.

Where do you want to go and what do you want to do when you leave St Mary's?

I want to acquire an apprenticeship relating to film and TV, and if I am unable to do this I want to go to university to study film making. I will definitely keep art in my life as a hobby.

What advice would you give aspiring artists here at St Mary's?

Keep it as a hobby alongside school work, it will help inspire your school work and keep you motivated to keep creating even when it gets very difficult and you run out of inspiration.



Introducing our new staff

Welcome our new staff!



Mx P Harritt **Sixth Form Manager: Year 12**

My name is Phoenix and I'm proud to have joined the staff team here at SMCS as the Sixth Form Manager for Year 12.

My first term here has been a delight, mostly owing to the fantastic staff team I work with, and the 94 wonderful students in my charge.

This role marks a return to the education sector for me after an eight year break. I spent five years teaching in Milton Keynes and Oxford when my children were younger, before realising I needed a less all-consuming job.

As my role is now pastoral, I am able to focus on all my favourite elements of working in education; supporting the learning and well-being of my cohort and also being a Duke of Edinburgh leader and assessor.

My two children are now young adults, with my eldest away at university, so I have a great understanding of this age group and look forward to being right by Year 12s' side all the way through their Sixth Form.

Outside of work I am heavily involved in the running community, as a committee member of my local running club, a run director at junior parkrun and an obsessive park runner. I'm also a regular pacer for marathons and half marathon races including the London Marathon and Great North Run. The photo is of me with my pacer flag and medal after finishing the Yorkshire Marathon last month. I'll never be the fastest runner in the pack, but I've found I have a real talent for accurate pacing.

I'm a big believer in everyone finding their thing, and demonstrating to my students that there is a passion and talent out there for everyone.

Aside of all things running-related, if the weather is nice I'm probably outside with my collie, if not I'm probably indoors baking, or curled up under a blanket with one of my five cats on my lap.

Careers Bulletin at St Mary's

INTERESTED IN WORKING AT STANSTED AIRPORT?

Join our Exploring the Aviation Industry Course

10 days free training at Stansted Airport

Level 1 Certificate in Exploring the Aviation Industry

Learn how airports operate

Learn the skills needed in a variety of airport jobs

Fast track opportunities to hundreds of airport vacancies



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The season of Advent is about to begin!

Advent starts on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. It marks the start of the Church's new liturgical year, and the Church shifts into a new Lectionary Cycle for Sundays, with 2023-24 returning to Cycle B, the Gospel of St. Mark.

Advent comes from the Latin *Adventus*, meaning 'arrival' or 'coming'. It is a time of preparation for the coming of the Lord.

In this season, we recall two central elements of our faith: the final coming of the Lord in glory and the incarnation of the Lord in the birth of Jesus.

The liturgical vestments priests wear during the season are purple, matching the candles lit on each Sunday of Advent. Purple is a colour typically associated with penance. The exception is the third Sunday — Gaudete Sunday — when priests wear pink vestments — the colour of rejoicing.



Sunday, 3rd December, First Sunday of Advent

On the First Sunday of Advent, we light the first candle, which is the symbol of HOPE.

It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ.

It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.



We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

Click Here For Latest Vacancy Information

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

Year 12 and Year 13

Attention Year 12 and Year 13

THE ART DEPARTMENT IS CLEARING THE DARKROOM!

If you were a GCSE Art student PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH MISS NAIRN to collect your Art Work.

We now need the dark room to offer Photographic and Screen printing processes.

ANY WORK NOT COLLECTED WILL UNFORTUNATELY HAVE TO BE THROWN AWAY.

Please do get in touch with any former pupils who might want their work, please email info@stmarys.net and this will be forwarded to me to organise pick up.



With many thanks,

Miss Nairn and the Art Department.



Movember

Can you support Mr Wright, who is participating in Movember 2023, raising money for depression and prostate cancer.



You can support Mr Wright on his Just Giving page: [Here](#)



Upcoming Free Online Parent/Carer Webinars and Events in Hertfordshire

Wednesday
6th Dec

Supporting Children/Young People who Struggle to Attend School

Seeing your child overwhelmed and unable to attend school can be distressing for any parent/carers and it is easy to feel lost and alone. The aim of this early intervention workshop is to share helpful tools and strategies to support your child.

9:30am -
11:00am

Tuesday
12th Dec

Chat and Connect Session: Emotionally Based School Avoidance

This monthly, regular online drop-in offers an informal space to share and connect with other parents/carers who have similar experiences supporting their child's mental health. Topics change monthly based on the needs/feedback of the group.

6:30pm -
8:00pm

To book, please click on the workshops above or visit nessieined.com

