



St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy

<http://www.st-marys-marplebridge.stockport.sch.uk/>

St Mary's Parish: <http://stmarysmarplebridge.org.uk/>

Holy Spirit Parish: <https://www.holyspiritmarple.com/>

Bulletin Number 1: Friday 6 September 2024

WELCOME BACK AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL



It has been lovely to welcome everyone back to another school year. I extend a special welcome to new families and staff who are joining us. Being part of a community, or rather family, is an integral part of what makes our school special, so I hope you will enjoy being part of the St Mary's family as much as I do. At the start of a new school year, there are always lots of reminders of key routines or procedures. However, do get in touch if you have any questions about communications issued this week.

There are various ways we communicate at St Mary's and these are detailed in our Communication Protocols letter sent to you on Wednesday. Please do take the time to read our Friday Bulletins as they try to summarise key information.

We have an exciting year ahead with lots going on. Please refer to the handy '2024-2025 Key Dates' schedule. We hope parents/carers will join us at as many of the events we have planned as possible. Working together really does make a difference. PTA events have been added and the updated version is attached and is also available in the [Parents' Letters section of the school website](#).

I would like to express my thanks to Mr Hill (caretaker) and our amazing staff. During the summer holidays

they have worked incredibly hard to decorate, clean and develop areas of our school ensuring they look the best for our children. Thank you.

On Tuesday, in our first collective worship of the new school year, we looked at our Golden Rules and brought into focus the most important rule – love! Based on the response of Jesus to the Pharisees criticising the actions of the disciples, children reflected that God's rules are the most important and that we should focus on our hearts first! Love forms the basis of where we want all our thoughts, words and actions to come from. Through a story about following rules, children were also reminded that Jesus' rule of love means loving others and treating them as we would want to be treated.

With your child, you might like to...

- Make your own 'Rules of Love' that will encourage a loving and accepting atmosphere at home. Perhaps your rules will include listening without judging, or saying I love you to each other at bedtime.
- Spend some time asking your child(ren) how they feel about the new school term. Perhaps you could pray together about what's ahead or make some special plans together to look forward to. At St Mary's we follow our St Mary's Way principles of being respectful, being responsible and being



DIOCESE OF
NOTTINGHAM

St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Lowry Drive, Marple Bridge SK6 5BR

headteacher@mmb.srscmat.co.uk

Company No 7937154



St Ralph
Sherwin
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

ready to learn. Our Golden rules and SANCTA values remind us how we can choose to follow that path so that we can 'journey with Mary to Jesus, for the greater glory of God'.

Next Monday, 9 September, we will celebrate as a school family the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Our Lady's birthday). As Catholics we honour Mary as the first and greatest saint. Mary is our missionary role model for living out our mission and SANCTA values. I ask that each child brings to school **one flower** that they can place around the statue of Mary in the Mary Garden as part of their class worship. Again, please refer to the 'key dates' schedule for class led collective worship that parents are invited to over the year.

WEDNESDAY WORD The latest version of the Wednesday Word can be accessed [here](#). Please enjoy spending some time sharing the Word with your children.

SAFEGUARDING Is everybody's responsibility and at St Mary's we all have a role to play. As part of our INSET day on Monday all staff have participated in up-to-date safeguarding training. Information about our safeguarding procedures and policy, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 are available on our website by [clicking here](#). If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact one of our Designated Safeguarding Leaders at the school.



OPERATION ENCOMPASS



As a school located in Stockport Local Authority, we work directly with Greater Manchester Police to support families where there are members who are victims of domestic abuse. This work is part of something called *Operation Encompass* and parents/carers can [click here](#) to find out more about how this works. Please remember, if you are living with domestic abuse, you can talk to somebody at school in confidence.

UK GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

We need to hold personal information about your child to support their education. Information about data protection, including privacy notices, is [available here](#).



BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS – THE ST MARY'S WAY

This Year We Will Be...

- **Respectful**
- **Responsible**
- and...



This week, we have used our assemblies to remind children about our SANCTA values as well as our behaviour expectations. These are summarised, very simply, with three basic rules: **be respectful, be responsible and be ready to learn**. We have seen some exemplary behaviour this week, as well as across last year, but we want to continue to develop this. Our [website has further information](#) about our approach to promoting positive behaviour along with our current [Behaviour Policy](#) and [summary](#). However, we need parents/carers to work in partnership with us. This means reaffirming our expectations about behaviour both in and out of school (including online

activity).

MEET AND GREET CLASS TEACHERS

On **Tuesday 10th** and **Thursday 12th September** from **3:30pm until 4:00pm**, parents/carers are invited to attend a meet and greet session in their child(ren)'s classroom(s). This is a further opportunity to visit your child(ren)'s classroom(s) and meet with their class teacher at the start of the school year following on from the drop-in sessions held in July.



FOOD ALLERGIES



Please be aware that an increasing number of pupils in school have severe food allergies. The number of pupils with EpiPens on hand, in case of anaphylactic shock, is increasing. Training provided on our INSET day provided a refresher regarding medical needs for all staff. We are already a nut-free school, but it can be easy to forget. **No nuts, hummus, seeded breads or related items are permitted in school, so please bear this in mind when planning packed lunches. We cannot stress the importance of this, and we thank you for your co-operation and support in this matter.**

INHALERS

Before the summer break, any inhalers that were almost out of date were sent home. If your child requires an inhaler and we do not currently have this in school, please pop into the office with a new inhaler and spacer as soon as possible.



BIRTHDAYS

As we are a healthy school, we ask that the children do not bring in sweets to school on their birthday. Due to the increase in allergies also, we feel this is the correct decision to take. As last year, each class will introduce their own birthday traditions to celebrate each pupil's birthday. **To support this drive, we would like to ask that your child(ren) continue to wear their own clothes when it is their birthday. We feel this will allow them to feel extra special and will allow the school community to wish them a 'happy birthday!' If their birthday is at the weekend, or in the school holidays, they can choose to wear non-uniform on the Friday before, or the Monday after. If they celebrated their birthday in August, they can choose a day to wear their own clothes in September.**



HEALTHY SNACKS



On the theme of healthy schools - a gentle reminder about snacks. Children in Key Stage 2 (years 3 -6) will need to bring in a snack for morning break time. This should be a piece of fruit or vegetables, such as carrot/cucumber sticks. The children in Key Stage 1 receive free fruit and vegetables in the morning, as part of the government scheme, however they can bring in a snack of fruit/veg if they wish. If in doubt, check that the snack generates no litter or wrapping other than peel or a core!

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The children all look very smart in their uniforms on their return to school. Please ensure all items: coats, jumpers, ties, shoes, shirts etc. as well as PE kits are all clearly labelled. If you use a biro in the short term, remember to repeat this after doing the washing! Uniform items including school book bags are available from [Bulldog Fashion](#), Glossop. Uniform swaps are also held in school each term. Details of our [school uniform policy](#) can be found on the [school website](#).



MORNING ARRIVAL



the playground door opens at 8:40am and closes promptly at 8:50am when the school day starts and registers are taken. If your child arrives after this time, please accompany them to the school office. All late arrivals must be signed in via the office, so that we can keep an accurate register.

SCHOOL ABSENCE

School attendance is a national priority. At St Mary's attendance is very strong with average attendance last year standing at 96% above the national average of 93%. However, we really need your help to reduce the number of children with attendance below 90%. Please note that school must be notified of all absences before 8:50am as part of our safeguarding procedures. Please email Mrs Towell AND Mrs Major if you are unable to get through on the phone. The government have again [issued the following guidance regarding illness in children](#). Please note that absence during term time can only be authorised exceptional circumstances, such as the death of an immediate family member. Holidays during term time, regardless of the circumstances cannot be authorised. All absence requests must be made on [this leave of absence request form](#) available from the school website. [2024-2025 term dates are available here](#).



SCHOOL LUNCH MENU



Please find attached to this email a copy of the school lunch menu, as previously noted, **we can only accommodate changes to a lunch pattern at the start of each half term**. Please note that the menu may occasionally change due to supply chain issues. This term's menu is attached for your reference.

HOME LEARNING (HOMEWORK)

Our Home Learning Policy is very simple and straight forward! The priority is READING. There are also daily little and often Doodle tasks in maths and English but the main thing we request is that parents/carers read with children at home and log this in your child's reading record. Please speak to your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding daily reading or Doodle. Our teachers will also post extension activities to support learning at home. Parents/carers can find out information about their child's learning [here](#).



ASDA CASHPOT FOR SCHOOLS



Asda has launched an exciting new initiative called 'Cashpot for Schools', aimed at supporting local schools. By participating in this program, shoppers can help raise funds for St Mary's every time they shop at Asda and use their Asda Rewards app. For every £1 spent, Asda will contribute towards a 'cashpot' that goes directly to the school, allowing us to invest in resources, equipment, and activities that enhance children's learning experiences. Asda are offering to donate 0.5% of the value of any shop **until 30 November 2024**. It's a fantastic way for families and the community to come together and make a meaningful difference in education while going about their everyday shopping. [More details here](#). Please support this initiative if you can to raise money for our school at no cost (apart from your shopping) to you!

CYCLE (OR SCOOT) TO SCHOOL WEEK 2024

From **23-27 September 2024**, we will be celebrating Cycle (or scoot) to School Week! This exciting initiative encourages children to embrace a healthier, more eco-friendly way of traveling to school. By cycling/scooting, children can reduce their carbon footprint, improve their fitness, and enjoy a refreshing start to the school day. We encourage all families to get involved, whether you're an experienced cyclist or just starting out. Remember to wear helmets and follow road safety guidelines. Let's make this week a fun and positive experience while supporting our planet and building a healthy habit for the future!



SCHOOL PARKING



A polite reminder and request... As school returns, the surrounding roads around St Mary's are likely to be busier. Please share with family members our agreed parking rules: if another person is picking up/dropping off your child, you may need to share the following points. Please **do not park on Lowry Drive** and ensure safe parking on neighbouring roads, avoiding parking over drives. Please avoid mounting the kerb, parking in the bus bay and parking on the corners of Lowry/ Constable/ Hogarth. Thank you for your ongoing support. Please see the attached 'did you know' leaflet regarding parking around school sites issued by Stockport Council.

THE MONTH (OR SO) AHEAD...KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event
<i>Please note the dates and times detailed below are provisional and may be changed if necessary.</i>	
10 & 12 September	Meet and Greet Class Teachers (3:30pm – 4:00pm in classrooms).
17-20 September	Year 6 residential visit to PGL Boreatton Park, Shropshire.
23 September	Year 5 Collective Worship at 2:30pm in the hall. All welcome.
25 September	Online Safety Workshop for parents. 7:00pm – 8:00pm in the school hall.
27 September	Special Friends Assembly – Reception and Y6. 9:30am in the hall.
30 September	Back to school Mass with Fr Bill. 2:00pm – 3:00pm in the school hall. All welcome!
2 October	EYFS (Nursery and Reception) Phonics workshop for parents 5:30pm – 6:30pm.
4 October	CAFOD Family Fast Day – Wear something green - £1 donation.
7 October	Year 4 Collective Worship at 2:30pm in the hall. All welcome.
7 October	PTA Great St Mary's Bake Off! 3:20pm.
11 October	World Mental Health Day. (Wear an item of yellow with their uniform - £1)
16 October	PTA Sponsored Bounce.
18 October	Coffee and Cake with Mrs Bradbury and Mrs Norburn 1:15pm in the hall.
18 October	School closes for the October half term break.
28 October	School reopens following the October half term break.

Thank you for a fantastic first week of the school year. Wishing you all a restful weekend!
Mr John Nish and Miss Alice Poole.