



# 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 2: Friday 19 September 2025**

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

This week our Catholic Life theme is *patience*. We have been encouraging the children to reflect on how patience is a gift from God that helps us to grow in understanding and kindness. In our celebrations of the word and class prayer, the children have been thinking about times when patience is needed – whether in friendships, family life, or when facing challenges – and how we can show trust in God's timing. Patience is about waiting and trusting in God at work in our lives. Patience is often difficult to put into action, especially when we are used to having everything on demand. Learning to be patient can help us to be more content and to be at peace when situations are outside of our control. Our mission this week has been that when we have had to wait for something, we have used the time to pray for the virtue of patience.



## WELCOMING OUR NEW PRIESTS ST MARY'S



We are delighted to welcome Father Greg (Parish Priest) and Father Benjamin (Assistant Priest) to our parish and school family. Following the Bishop's recent announcement that St Mary's Church will remain open, we are especially thankful for their ministry and support as we move forward together. We look forward to working closely with them to strengthen the partnership between school and parish and to share the joy of faith with our children. **FATHER GREG WRITES** – 'As Fr Benjamin and I begin our ministry among the parishes of Buxton, Chapel-en-le-Frith, New Mills, and Marple Bridge, we want first of all to thank you for the warmth of the welcome we have already received. It is a real joy for us

to be here, and we are very much looking forward to getting to know you in the weeks and months ahead. You can read our biographies on the parish websites if you wish. Every new appointment brings with it both excitement and a little trepidation — but above all it is an invitation to trust that the Lord is at work. We come among you not with ready-made plans, but with open hearts, eager to listen, to learn, and to share in the life of our parishes. We know that many have worked hard to sustain the life of faith here over the years, and we are grateful to be joining such a living tradition. Please pray for us, that our ministry may be rooted in prayer, and shaped by the Gospel. We promise to keep you in our prayers each day, and together we place all that lies ahead into the hands of the Lord, asking His blessing on our parishes, our families, and all who live and work in this beautiful part of the world. With every blessing, Fr Greg & Fr Benjamin.'

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

## SPECIAL FRIENDS ASSEMBLY

We are delighted to invite parents, especially those of children in Reception and Year 6, to our *Special Friends Assembly* on **Friday, 26 September at 9:30am**. This much-loved event, organised by our dedicated Early Years Team, celebrates the special bond between our Reception children and their Year 6 "special friends." These friendships play an important part in helping our youngest pupils settle happily into school life, while also giving our older children the opportunity to live out the SANCTA values of nurture, support, and trust. Following the assembly, we will be hosting a **Macmillan Coffee Morning** in support of the national appeal. Refreshments and cakes will be available, with all donations going to this important cause. We warmly encourage families to stay, enjoy a coffee, and join us in raising funds for Macmillan. We look forward to sharing this special occasion with you!



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## THE IMPORTANCE OF READING



At St Mary's, reading is a key priority. Research consistently shows that children who read for enjoyment every day not only achieve better results in reading tests, but also develop a richer vocabulary, stronger general knowledge, and a deeper understanding of the world around them. Most importantly, children who develop a love of reading are the ones most likely to achieve their ambitions. Quite simply: *if your child reads, they will succeed!* Building the habit of reading takes encouragement and support. Alongside reading aloud to your child, we strongly encourage families to engage in Book Chat. Book Chat is the informal conversation that naturally accompanies sharing stories together – talking about characters, predicting what might happen next, or reflecting on how a book makes us feel. These moments help children to build language skills, comprehension, and, above all, enjoyment. At school, Mrs Thompson leads our reading provision (whilst Miss Poole is on maternity leave) and organises a wide range of activities throughout the year to spark

children's enthusiasm for books. With your support at home and our work in school, we can nurture confident, curious, and passionate readers.

## MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Thank you to those who followed up on our request to update asthma inhalers at the beginning of the year. If your child has any other medical conditions of which we should be aware, or there is new information to share, please call into the school office as soon as possible.



## CAFOD HARVEST FAMILY FAST DAY 2025



Fast, pray and give

On **Friday 3 October** we are asking that children come **dressed in something green** e.g. jumper, t-shirt and donate £1 in aid of Family Fast Day. As you know, CAFOD is a fabulous charity that supports and reaches out to people who are affected by poverty. This year the theme is the 'carving a better future for the world' and we think it is important that we get involved and show our support where we can. You can [read more about this year's campaign here](#).

## WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2025

The following Friday, **10 October 2025**, we will be celebrating World Mental Health Day at St Mary's, and we are asking all children to wear an **item of yellow with their uniform** and to donate £1. This will form part of our contribution to the Healthy Young Minds organisation. This is a wonderful charity which does so much to support children and young adults. During that week, the children will have a special focus on mental health as part of their learning.



## DOODLE BACK TO SCHOOL CHALLENGE 2025



Our children are taking part in the *Doodle Back to School Challenge*, designed to help them settle back into routines while building confidence in maths and English. By spending just 10 minutes a day on **DoodleMaths** and **DoodleEnglish**, pupils can fill gaps in knowledge, develop healthy learning habits, and even earn a special virtual badge! There are also exciting prizes on offer: our school will be

entered into a national competition, with the chance to win a bundle of games worth £75. Research shows that short, regular use of Doodle makes a big difference: 10 minutes a day adds up to five extra hours of learning each month. We encourage families to support children in taking part and to celebrate their achievements along the way. The Back-to-School Challenge commences today and runs until 2 October.

## YEAR 6 RESIDENTIAL TO PGL



This week, our Year 6 pupils enjoyed their residential trip to PGL in Shropshire, taking part in a wide range of activities including climbing, canoeing, zip-lining, aero ball and team-building games. The children showed exemplary behaviour, resilience, and a positive attitude throughout the visit, supporting one another and embracing new challenges with confidence. We are very proud of the way they represented St Mary's. I thank all Year 6 parents for their support of the visit and also to our amazing staff for giving so freely and willingly of their time away from home and their families this week. I think there will be plenty of sleep this weekend!

## APPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL PLACES: SEPTEMBER 2026

We may still be welcoming our new Nursery and Reception pupils into the St Mary's family for this year but applications are already open for our 2026 cohorts!

**NURSERY:** for children born between 1 Sept 2022 - 31 August 2023: closing date **31 March 2026.**

**RECEPTION:** for children born between 1 Sept 2021 - 31 August 2022: closing date **15 January 2026.**

**SECONDARY:** for children born between 1 Sept 2014 - 31 August 2015: closing date **31 October 2025.**

**All school applications are managed by Stockport Local Authority via this link.**

Prospective St Mary's parents are most welcome to attend our open events on Tuesday 5 November 10:00am-11:30am or Tuesday 12 November from 1:30pm-3:00pm.



## GARDENING VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



We would like to invite parents and grandparents to join us on Wednesday mornings to help care for our school grounds alongside the children. This is a wonderful opportunity to work with the pupils, encouraging them to learn about nature, responsibility, and pride in their environment.

We are very fortunate to already have a number of dedicated and valued volunteers who give their time so generously - their support makes a real difference and is deeply appreciated. We would love to welcome even more helpers, whether on a regular basis or just occasionally. If this is something you'd be interested in, please contact the School Office or Dominic Bowler ([dbowler@mmbsrscmat.co.uk](mailto:dbowler@mmbsrscmat.co.uk)) for further details.

## 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. New dates in <b>bold</b>.</i>	
22 September	Flu vaccinations YR – Y6.
22 September	Year 5 celebration of the word at 2:30pm. All welcome.
26 September	YR & Y6 Special Friends Assembly plus Macmillan Coffee Morning 9:30am.
29 September	Back to School Mass 2:00pm in school.
1 October	Nursery and Reception Phonics meeting for parents 5:30 – 6:30pm.
<b>3 October</b>	<b>CAFOD Harvest Family Fast Day – Wear something green - £1 donation.</b>
6 October	Jubilee Mission Day.
6 October	PTA St Mary's Bake Off. 3:20pm. Details to follow.
8 October	Gladiator Workshops.
<b>8 October</b>	<b>Coffee and Cake Social Time with Mrs Norburn and Mrs Bradbury 1:30-3:00pm</b>
<b>10 October</b>	<b>World Mental Health Day. (Wear an item of yellow with their uniform - £1)</b>
13 October	Year 4 celebration of the word at 2:30pm. All welcome.
<b>15 October</b>	<b>PTA Sponsored Bounce.</b>
15 October	Y6 Weight and Height checks.
15 & 22 October	Parents Evenings. 3:40 – 6:30pm.
24 October	Celebration Assembly 2:15pm. All welcome.
24 October	School closes for October half term.
3 November	School reopens following October half term.

**Wishing you all a relaxing weekend- especially those returning from PGL! Mr John Nish.**