



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 12: Thursday 4 December 2025

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL



As we step into the first week of Advent, we enter a sacred season that gently calls us to slow down and look beyond the busyness that often surrounds this time of year. In the midst of Christmas preparations and excitement, Advent invites us to pause, reflect, and prepare our hearts and lives for the coming of Jesus. On Monday afternoon, our school family gathered together for a thoughtful and prayerful celebration of the word, beautifully led by our Faith Friends from each year group. Their guidance helped us reflect on the themes of hope, peace, joy and love that shape this

holy season and the symbolism of the Advent wreath. Through prayer, Scripture and song, they reminded us of the deeper meaning of Advent and encouraged us to approach these weeks with openness and faith. We are incredibly proud of their leadership and grateful for the way they inspired our community to begin Advent with renewed purpose and anticipation.

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

YEAR 3 AT THE FESTIVAL OF CAROLS

On Tuesday evening, our Year 3 children proudly represented St Mary's at the Stockport Festival of Carols at St George's Church, Heaviley. Joining pupils from seven other schools, they sang with confidence, joy and reverence, filling the church with beautiful music that captured the spirit of the season. Their behaviour, enthusiasm and teamwork were exemplary, and they looked so smart! It was wonderful to see them taking part in such a special community celebration. A huge well done to all of our Year 3 singers for making the occasion so memorable and getting us into the festive spirit on a cold and dark December night.



KAPLA WORKSHOPS



This week, thanks to the support of our amazing PTA, the children enjoyed two fantastic days of creativity and collaboration during our KAPLA workshops on Wednesday and Thursday. Using thousands of precision-engineered wooden planks, the children worked in teams to design, problem-solve and construct impressive structures - beautifully linking to our Design and Technology curriculum. Throughout the sessions, they demonstrated excellent teamwork and perseverance, living out our SANCTA values as they supported one another, rose to each challenge, aspired to refine their designs and took great pride in what they achieved. The hall was filled with excitement, focus and imagination, and the children's final creations were truly inspiring to see. A little glimpse can be seen to the right. Thank you to all volunteers.

RECEPTION PLACES FOR SEPTEMBER 2026

If you are applying for a school (Reception) place for next September, applications should be made by the **15th January 2026** via the [Stockport Admissions website](#). Please note: *if you child attends St Mary's Nursery, this does not guarantee your child a place in the school.* You will need to complete the application form using the link above by the closing date.



**DIOCESE OF
NOTTINGHAM**

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**St Ralph
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Catholic Multi Academy Trust

INSET DAY



A reminder... **tomorrow, Friday, 5 December**, our school will be closed to children as staff gather for an INSET day focused on the Catholic life of the school and the embedding of the new Religious Education Directory (RED) and Prayer and Liturgy Directory (PLD) issued by the Catholic Education Service and the Bishops of England and Wales. These documents guide how we teach Religious Education and celebrate worship in Catholic schools.

DOODLE WINTER (ADVENT) CALENDAR

The *Winter Calendar* is underway in Doodle, a seasonal event where your child can earn festive in-app rewards by doodling 'little and often'! Between the 1st-24th of December, your child can open the calendar doors by completing at least one exercise a day in Doodle Maths and/or Doodle English. They'll find festive goodies hiding behind each one – and if they open them all, they'll receive a virtual Winter Calendar badge!



EYFS NATIVITY



Our Nursery and Reception children are excited to invite you to their '**Clip Clop Nativity**' on Thursday 11 December, with performances at **10:30am** and **2:00pm**. To ensure everyone's safety and to stay within our hall's capacity, we kindly ask that each child is accompanied by no more than two adults for each showing. Older siblings in school will be able to enjoy the production during the dress rehearsal.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Our post box is out! We will do ONE delivery in the last week of term and ask all cards to be posted by **Monday 15 December**. Please remember: each card must have the child's name and class clearly written on the envelope to ensure correct delivery.



CHRISTMAS MUSIC CONCERT



Some of the children who have received individual/group music tuition will be performing for the school on **Thursday 11 December at 9:00am**. If you are free, you are more than welcome to join us for a few festive renditions and to celebrate the children's hard work in music. The concert will last approximately 1 hour.

IT'S PANTO SEASON... OH NO IT'S NOT! OH YES IT IS!

Our whole-school visit to see *Cinderella* at the Romiley Forum is now just around the corner, taking place next Monday, 8 December. Excitement is building across the school as this much-loved pantomime trip is always a highlight of our Christmas celebrations. The outing provides the children with a wonderful opportunity to experience the magic of live theatre, filled with laughter, fun, and festive cheer—a special tradition that brings our school family together to celebrate the season. We are very grateful to all parents who have returned permission slips and made payments so far. For any outstanding contributions, the trip payment of £15.50 per child is still available on Parent Pay. Thank you for helping us ensure that every child can take part in this memorable and joyful event..



TERM DATES 2026 – 2027



The term dates (holiday list) for 2026-2027 have now been published and are attached. They are also [available here on our school website](#).

OUTDOOR PE KITS

Winter has arrived but the children will continue to do PE outdoors where possible and safe to do so. Please can you ensure that your child has tracksuits bottoms and a warm long sleeve jumper.

SANTA DASH – MONDAY 15 DECEMBER



On Monday **15th December**, the children will be taking part in our first St Mary's Santa Dash, running throughout the morning, with one class at a time completing the course. Along the route, the children will enjoy a range of festive activities. Please send your child into school wearing active wear and trainers, with a little festive sprinkle added – a Santa hat, some tinsel, or any small seasonal accessory is perfect! The event will be led by Mrs Wall, our PE specialist from SHAPES, and will be an exciting inter-house competition – so there's everything to play for! We're looking forward to a fun and energetic festive morning!

MARPLE PARK RUN – VOLUNTEERS WANTED

We were delighted to hear from Alan Stevenson, one of the Run Directors at Marple Parkrun, who has invited members of our school community to get involved in this fantastic weekly event. Marple Parkrun takes place every Saturday morning at 9:00am—along with special runs on Christmas Day and New Year's Day—and welcomes everyone to run, walk or jog the beautiful 5k course.



As a volunteer-led event, Parkrun relies on around 20 helpers each week, with most roles taking no more than 90 minutes and many being quick and easy to learn. Support is always on hand, and roles that involve uploading results simply require a mobile phone with data. If you're interested but unsure what to expect, Alan encourages you to pop down one Saturday to meet the team, see the event in action and enjoy the warm, welcoming atmosphere. You can find out more at the [Marple Parkrun website](#).

WELCOME BACK MISS POOLE



This week, we were delighted to welcome Miss Poole back from her maternity leave. It has been wonderful to see her return to school with such energy and enthusiasm, and the children have been very excited to have her back in class. We would also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Mr Tupman for the fantastic work he has done while covering her absence. His commitment, care and positivity have been greatly appreciated by pupils, staff and families alike. We wish him every success in his next steps and are grateful for everything he has contributed to St Mary's. I would also like to thank Mrs Thompson and Mrs Bramhall for their sterling work as Acting Deputy Headteacher and Key Stage 1 Leader respectively during Miss Poole's leave. The talent and experience of the St Mary's staff is truly exceptional, and we are blessed to have such an amazing staff team.

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 bold.</i>	
5 December	INSET Day. School closed to children.
8 December	Cinderella Pantomime at Romiley Forum.
9 December	St Martin's Christmas Tree visit.
10 December	General gardening maintenance. 9:00-11:45. All parents/grandparents welcome.
11 December	Christmas Music concert 9:00-10:00am.
11 December	Nursery and Reception Nativity 10:30am and 2:00pm.
14 December	Carol Service at Holy Spirit Church, Marple at 4:00pm. All welcome.
15 December	St Mary's Santa Dash
16 December	Year 3 carol singing at Marple Lodge Care Home.
17 December	Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity 10:00am and 2:00pm.
18 December	Christmas Dinner.
19 December	Carol Service 1:30pm-2:15pm in the school hall. All welcome.
19 December	School closes for the Christmas holidays.
5 January	School reopens following the Christmas holidays.
6 January	Mad Science after school club starts 3:20-4:20pm.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend. Mr John Nish.