



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL



Happy New Year to everybody in the St Mary's family. It has been lovely welcoming everyone back to school this week after the Christmas break (despite the icy weather). I would like to extend a special welcome to the new children, and families, who have joined our Nursery this week. It has been lovely hearing about the fun and enjoyment the children have had over Christmas. I hope everyone has also had some time to relax as we have a busy term ahead. As always, there are lots of opportunities for parents/carers to become involved in school life so do keep an eye out for

key dates.

On Monday, our whole school community came together for a joyful and prayerful Mission Day to mark the conclusion of the Jubilee Year of Hope. Pupils took part in a wide range of reflective, creative and collaborative activities, all rooted in prayer and Catholic social teaching, which deepened their understanding of hope and its call to action. These rich experiences culminated in a superb Celebration of the Word, bringing together our learning from the day and inspiring us to look ahead with renewed purpose. As we move forward, we were challenged not only to be Pilgrims of Hope, but now to live as Ambassadors of Hope in our school, parish and wider community, echoing Pope Leo's recent words that hope is not passive but "a responsibility we carry for one another and for the world." The day culminated in a reflective celebration of the word where children shared their learning in word, drama, song and prayer. It was a powerful reminder of our shared faith and commitment to being signs of hope for others as we begin this new term together.



SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY



On Tuesday morning, our school joined with the parish to celebrate Holy Mass for the Solemnity of the Epiphany in church. The Mass provided a beautiful opportunity to reflect on the journey of the Wise Men and the revelation of Christ to all nations, reminding us of the light and hope that Jesus brings into our lives. The children participated with reverence and enthusiasm, offering thoughtful responses, prayers, and hymns, and engaging fully with the liturgy. Their attentiveness and

respectful presence enhanced the solemnity of the occasion, demonstrating their deep understanding of its significance and their commitment to living out our shared faith.

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



CHRISTMAS NATIVITY COLLECTIONS

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to parents, grandparents and friends of St Mary's for their incredible generosity following the Early Years and Key Stage 1 nativities. Thanks to your kind donations, an amazing **£905** was raised, which will go towards covering the performance licences and supporting wider school funds. Your continued support not only enables us to provide enriching experiences for our children but also reflects the strong sense of community that surrounds St Mary's. We are truly grateful for your generosity and partnership.



COMPANY DONATION THANK YOU



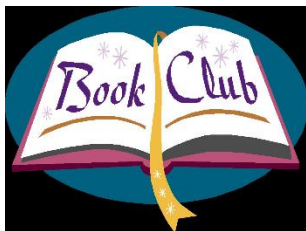
We would like to extend our sincere thanks to one of our parents, Mr Patrick Reynolds and his company, **NordSearch**, for their very generous donation of **£350** to our school. This kind contribution will be used to replenish and enhance our reading scheme books and our school library, ensuring that children continue to have access to a rich and engaging range of texts. We are extremely grateful for this support, which will have a lasting and positive impact on our pupils' love of reading and learning.

THE DINGLEY DELL UPDATE

We are delighted the amazing Gardener Joe has made lots of progress in transforming the Dingley Dell and making the whole woodland area accessible to all children. We now have an entrance off the field and its very own Welcome sign, soon to be decorated by the children. We are hoping for some better weather in the new year when the working party led by Dominic (one of our governors and regular gardening team) will continue with the building of steps down to the lower parts of the wood. We are hoping to have an official opening ceremony once all the work is complete.



ST MARY'S BOOK CLUB



This half term, we will be sharing a selection of book recommendations with the children across the school. These books have been chosen to spark curiosity, encourage a love of reading, and support children at different stages of their reading journey. Attached is a copy of the slides shared with the children. We hope this will support conversations about reading at home and help children feel excited about choosing their next book. Thank you for your continued support in helping us foster a love of reading. If you have any questions or would like further recommendations, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

REPORTING ABSENCES



Please remember it is important to communicate with us **every day** your child is absent from school by telephoning 0161 427 7498 – option 1. We have a safeguarding responsibility for every child, so this communication is vital to avoid home visits or further referrals. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

RECEPTION PLACES FOR SEPTEMBER 2026 – FINAL CALL

If you are applying for a school (Reception) place for next September, applications should be made by next Thursday, **15 January 2026** via the [Stockport Admissions website](#). Please note: *if your 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.



START OF TERM REMINDERS

School Uniform

It has been lovely to see the children returning to school looking smart in their winter uniform. We kindly ask parents to continue to check the uniform guidance on our school website to ensure children are attending in the correct uniform each day. Branded items can be purchased from Bulldog Fashions in Glossop. Please remember that school uniform includes **black school shoes**; trainers should be reserved for PE only.

PE Kit

Please ensure that your child has their PE kit in school from Monday if this has not already been sent in. PE lessons have resumed this week and children should have a white PE t-shirt, dark shorts and pumps or trainers. As many PE sessions take place outdoors, you may also wish to include leggings or joggers and a plain sweatshirt to keep your child warm during colder weather.

Hair

For comfort, safety and practicality, children with long hair are required to have it tied back during the school day. Please ensure your child brings a suitable hair bobble or clip so hair does not interfere with learning.

Jewellery

For health and safety reasons, children should not wear jewellery to school, including earrings of any kind. A simple analogue or digital watch (not a smart watch) is permitted. Thank you, as always, for your support in helping us maintain high standards and a safe learning environment for all.



ONLINE SAFETY – FAMILY GAMING DATABASE

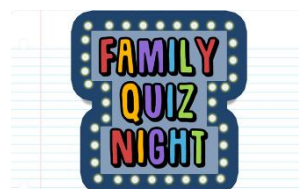


To support parents/carers in making informed choices about apps and games, we would like to share a helpful resource for families. Many parents may already be familiar with [Common Sense Media](#), which provides clear, unbiased reviews that go beyond age ratings. When it comes specifically to gaming, an equally valuable – and often overlooked – resource is the [Family Gaming Database](#). This excellent website offers detailed, family-friendly information and reviews, with over

3,400 video games and **nearly 200 board games** already included. It is a useful tool to help parents understand game content, features and suitability, supporting safe and positive gaming at home.

PTA FAMILY QUIZ NIGHT

Don't miss our **Fun Family Quiz Night** on **Friday 30 January** from **6:00pm – 8:00pm** in the **School Hall**! Enjoy a lively evening with **child-friendly quiz rounds** created and hosted by our brilliant Year 6 children. There's something for everyone, with a **reasonably priced bar**, delicious **pizza and hotdogs**, and a **tuck shop** to keep the fun fuelled. Tickets are just **£4 per family**. Grab your tickets now via the [PTA website](#) and secure your spot for a fantastic family evening.



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>
19 January	Year 2 celebration of the word at 2:30pm. All welcome.
19-23 January	Year 5 (and Y6 mop up) Bikeability.
29 January	Great Athletes Workshop. Team GB Olympian visit.
30 January	PTA Family Quiz. 6:00-8:00pm.
4 February	PTA AGM 6:00pm in the school hall.
5 February	Coffee and Cake Social Time. All welcome. 1:30-3:00pm in the school hall.
6 February	Young Voices at the Co-Op Live Arena. Concert at 7:00pm.
9 February	Year 1 celebration of the word at 2:30pm. All welcome.
13 February	End of half term Celebration Assembly. 2:15pm. All welcome.
13 February	School closes for half term.
23 February	INSET Day. School closed to pupils.
24 February	School reopens to pupils.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend. Mr John Nish.