



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/>

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL



On Monday 18th May the pupils participated in our latest "RISEN" Easter Mission Day, a day centred on finding new ways to spread the Gospel and celebrating the enduring joy of Easter. Grounded in the Diocese of Nottingham's themes of missionary discipleship and the core principles of Catholic Social Teaching, the day engaged children in a series of collaborative, faith-filled sessions. Pupils explored scripture through wonderful creative projects, such as crafting Ascension puppets, building an Emmaus

prayer road, and writing raps to reflect on the message of Easter. The day culminated in a beautiful, student-led Mission Celebration of the Word, where our young people shared their prayers, music, and artwork, truly bringing the joy of the Gospel to life for our entire school community.

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.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the children in Year 3 who made their First Holy Communion over the past two weekends at either St Mary's or Holy Spirit churches. They were truly joyful and reverent occasions, and we are so proud of how beautifully the children read, prayed, and participated in the Masses. They looked so smart and radiant in their Holy Communion outfits, and it was clear to all present how special this Sacrament was to them and their families. We pray that this will be the first of many times they receive Jesus in the Eucharist, drawing ever closer to Him in their faith journey. As a school family, we look forward to celebrating with all the First Holy Communicants at our 'Going Forth' Mass, planned for Friday 3 July at 10:00am in St Mary's Church, Marple Bridge.



ROUNDERS FESTIVAL SUCCESS



Year 6 pupils were delighted to take part in a fantastic Rounders Festival held at Mellor Primary School alongside children from local primary schools, including All Saints Catholic Primary School. The event was a wonderful opportunity for pupils to come together and enjoy some well-deserved fun and friendly competition following the hard work and dedication shown during SATs week. There was a brilliant atmosphere throughout

the afternoon, with excellent teamwork, sportsmanship and enthusiasm on display from all of the schools involved. It was lovely to see so many smiling faces and hear cheers of encouragement throughout the tournament. A huge congratulations to St Mary's, who were crowned tournament champions after an outstanding performance, winning all nine of their matches. The children represented the school with great pride, determination and respect throughout the event.

Well done to all the pupils who took part and thank you to the staff and organisers at Mellor Primary School for hosting such a successful and enjoyable festival.



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YEARS 3 & 4 TENNIS FINALS



On Tuesday, pupils from Years 3 and 4 proudly represented St Mary's in the Tennis Tournament Final held at Kingsway Tennis Club. Having successfully progressed through the earlier rounds, the team showed excellent skill, determination and teamwork against strong competition from other local schools. Throughout the event, the atmosphere was full of energy, encouragement and good sportsmanship. The children represented the school with real pride, demonstrating positive attitudes both on and off the court. It was a highly commendable performance, and the team should be proud of their achievement in reaching and competing in the final. Well done to all involved.

YEAR 2 ATHLETICS MEETING

On Wednesday morning, a group of Year 2 pupils took part in a fantastic athletics competition at Woodbank Park, competing against seven other local primary schools. The children demonstrated excellent energy, determination and teamwork across a range of running, jumping and throwing events, encouraging one another throughout the morning. They were also superbly supported by two of our Year 5 Sports Leaders, who helped to organise activities, support younger pupils and assist with the smooth running of the event. After a series of closely contested challenges, the team achieved an excellent result, finishing second out of eight schools. It was a brilliant achievement and a credit to all involved for their effort, attitude and sporting spirit.



MAY ATTENDANCE UPDATE



DID YOU KNOW? A two week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance you can achieve is 94.7%

At St Mary's we feel that, if learners are to get the greatest benefit from their education in school, it is important that they have good attendance and arrive punctually. The attendance over the month of May is to the right. Our school target is 97%. Congratulations everyone on your amazing efforts this month. As a school we have achieved a very good **97.28%** attendance.

May 2026 Attendance	
Rec	98.22%
Y1	95.06%
Y2	95.45%
Y3	98.6%
Y4	98.61%
Y5	97.02%
Y6	97.44%
Overall	97.28%

Nationally, attendance stands at 93.5%, so again, well done St Mary's for our strong attendance and thank you parents/carers for supporting strong attendance habits.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) UPDATE



At the moment, if children have been eligible and registered for means tested FSM, they have been entitled to this claim until the end of their time at primary school. As well as the free meal, families have also had discounts on trips, music lessons etc if their child has had FSM. From September 2026, the Government are changing the rules related to FSM. This means that all pupils from households in receipt of Universal Credit will be eligible to claim for a free meal. However, only those from households with an annual household income

of no more than £7,400 will be eligible for additional funding (Pupil Premium) in school. Furthermore, families will need to have their eligibility checked annually to retain the FSM benefits. Do look out for further details which will come home before July and do get in touch with any questions.

IS YOUR CHILD PREPARED FOR THEIR FIRST MOBILE PHONE

It's a question that so many parents struggle with, balancing the positives, the negatives, the need, cost and so much more. The problem with such a question is that there is no one-size-fits-all answer. Below is a link to a really useful article for parents, within the article the author uses the acronym *PREPARED* which takes away the complexity and allows parents to make decisions based on their own circumstances:

P - Purpose.

R - Responsibility.

E - Empathy and respect.

P - Perception of risk.

A - Adaptability and resilience.

R - Regulation.

E - Executive functioning.

D - Digital discernment.

Link: [Is your child PREPARED for their first phone?](#)



YEAR 2 SATS AND ASSESSMENTS



Since 2024, Key Stage 1 SATs (taken in Year 2) are no longer statutory, giving schools the option to administer them. At St Marys, we have chosen to continue using these assessments in 2026 as a valuable tool to support teacher judgement and to identify any areas where pupils may benefit from further support as they prepare to move into Key Stage 2.

We continue to place children's wellbeing at the heart of all assessment practice, ensuring that pupils feel calm, confident and proud to demonstrate what they know and can do. In the second and third weeks following the May half-term break, Year 2 pupils will complete their Key Stage 1 SATs in Reading and Mathematics as part of their normal classroom routines. The children are familiar with this approach, which helps to ensure the process is low-pressure and supportive, with many pupils simply viewing it as another part of their everyday learning. The tests are used to support, not replace, teacher assessments and form one part of the assessment picture of your child.

Looking ahead, Year 1 pupils will complete the Phonics Screening Check, and Year 4 pupils will undertake the Multiplication Tables Check in the coming weeks, both taking place during the week commencing 8 June.

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

	Key Event
	<i>Please note the dates and times detailed below are provisional and may be changed if necessary. New dates in bold.</i>
22 May	School closes for half term.
8 June	School reopens following the half term holidays.
8-12 June	Y1 Phonics Check and Y4 Multiplication Tables Check.
15 June	Year 2 celebration of the word 2:30pm. All welcome.
22 June	Year 1 celebration of the word 2:30pm. All welcome.
23 June	Sports Day Reception – Y6 1:15-3:00pm.
24 June	Nursery Sports Day and Parent Picnic 9:30am-12:30pm.
24 June	New Nursery and Reception Parents Induction Meeting – 6:00-7:00pm.
2 July	Transition Day (including Stockport Y6-Y7 transition).
3 July	Going Forth Mass for children on the Sacramental Programme. 10:00am in church followed by a class Communion breakfast in school. Children to wear their First Communion clothes. Full details to follow.
6 July	Year 3 celebration of the word 2:30pm. All welcome.
10 July	End of Year Reports issued to parents/carers.
14 July	Report Drop-in Session for parents 3:30-4:30pm.

Wishing you a safe and happy half term break. School reopens on Monday 8 June. Mr John Nish.