



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 3: Friday 25 September 2026

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

This week, our whole school celebration of the word led wonderfully by Year 5, focused on the words "dialogue" and "peace", as we marked the International Day of Peace on 21 September. Reflecting on the Gospel of John 14:17, we explored how the Holy Spirit brings peace into our lives and considered how we can become peacemakers in our school and wider communities. Our mission this week is to listen to others, use dialogue to resolve differences and actively seek peace, rather than simply waiting for it to happen. We challenged our children to offer the sign of peace to those they meet, recognising that even a small act of kindness, friendship or forgiveness can make a difference. Our Family Peace Challenge is to find one simple way of bringing peace into your home this week. Perhaps by taking time to listen to one another, resolving a disagreement calmly, carrying out an act of kindness or simply sharing a peaceful moment together. As a school family, we are encouraged to be people who bring peace wherever we go.

BACK TO SCHOOL MASS

A reminder that next Monday, **28 September**, at **2:00pm** Father Benjamin (Assistant Priest at St Mary's parish) will be celebrating Mass in the school hall to mark the start of the school year. You are all warmly invited to attend, and we look forward to celebrating Mass as a whole school family to pray for and offer to God the work, successes and challenges of the year ahead.



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, 2 October 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!



.WELLSPRING – HARVEST COLLECTION 2026



At St Mary's, one of our SANCTA values is Support, and we believe that living out our Catholic faith means looking beyond ourselves and caring for those in our local community. This Harvest, we are once again supporting The Wellspring, Stockport, by inviting families to donate items that can help people experiencing homelessness or hardship in our local area. Our Harvest collection provides a practical opportunity for our children to put Catholic Social Teaching into action by recognising the dignity of every person,



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St Ralph
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sharing what we have and supporting those who may be facing difficult circumstances. As we give thanks for the food and resources we have, we are reminded that even a small act of generosity can make a meaningful difference to someone else. Thank you for helping our St Mary's community to live out our value of Support and be a source of hope and kindness for others.

The Wellspring's [Wish List](#) includes: sugar, coffee, cordial, biscuits, crisps, tinned meat, cereal, butter, pasta sauces and tinned tomatoes. Each class will have a collection bag from **Thursday 1 October until Friday 16 October**. If you are able, please send your child with an item from the [Wish List](#) to support this important cause.

On **Wednesday 30 September at 5:30pm**, we will be holding an information meeting for parents of Year 6 pupils about the SATs assessments. This session will provide an overview of the tests, explain how the children are supported and prepared in school, and offer guidance on how parents can assist their child at home. We encourage all Year 6 parents to attend so that you are fully informed and able to help your child feel confident and ready for this important stage of their learning as they journey through Year 6.



EARLY YEARS PHONICS EVENING



Also on **Wednesday 30 September, 5:30–6:30pm**, we will be holding a Phonics Information Evening for parents and carers of children in our Nursery and Reception classes. At St Mary's, we follow [Twinkl Phonics](#), a Department for Education validated scheme. During the session, Mrs Bradbury (EYFS Leader) and Mrs Frost (Reception Teacher) will explain what phonics is, how it supports children with their early reading and writing, and share practical ideas and resources to help you support your child at home. A separate information session for Year 1 parents will take place later in the year (please see the Key Dates letter for details).

HARRYTOWN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL OPEN EVENING

Mrs Pickles, the headteacher of Harrytown Catholic High School visited last week and met with children in Year 5 and 6. During the meeting she invited parents and children to their open evening on **Thursday, 1 October**, from **4:00pm until 6:30pm**. This is a fantastic opportunity to explore the school, meet the dedicated staff, and learn more about the excellent educational experience Harrytown offers. You and your children will have the chance to see the facilities, hear about the curriculum, and ask any questions you may have about the transition to high school. We encourage you, particularly parents of children in Years 5 and 6, to take advantage of this event to help make an informed decision about your child's future education. The Harrytown community look forward to seeing you there!



CAFOD HARVEST FAMILY FAST DAY 2026



Fast, pray and give

[this year's campaign here](#).

On **Thursday 1 October** we are asking that children come **wearing something green to accompany their school uniform** e.g. green socks, hair ribbon/bobble etc... 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](#)

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2026

The following **Friday, 9 October 2026**, 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** e.g. yellow socks, tie etc... 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 2026

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 1 October.



CYCLE AND SCOOT TO SCHOOL WEEK



We are excited to launch our Cycle & Scoot to School Week from Monday 5th to Friday 9th October, encouraging our children and families to choose active journeys to school wherever possible. Cycling and scooting are fantastic ways to start the school day feeling energised while also helping to create a healthier, greener community. The week also supports the launch of our School Streets initiative and our continuing Travel Tracker and WOW Schools projects with Living Streets. As part of the week, children can take part in our Pedal, Scoot & Shine! Decorate Your Ride Competition on Friday 9th October – simply decorate your bicycle or scooter and bring it to school to show off your creative designs! Throughout the year, our WOW Schools project will also celebrate children who walk, cycle or scoot to school at least once a week, with children working towards earning a WOW badge each month. Together, let's make our journeys to school healthier, greener and more active!

APPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL PLACES: SEPTEMBER 2027

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 2027 cohorts!

NURSERY: for children born between 1 Sept 2023 - 31 August 2024: closing date **31 March 2027**.

RECEPTION: for children born between 1 Sept 2021 - 31 August 2022: closing date **15 January 2027**.

SECONDARY: for children born between 1 Sept 2014 - 31 August 2015: closing date **31 October 2026**. [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 3 November 10:00am-11:30am or Thursday 5 November from 1:30pm-3:00pm.



EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES 2026



This week at St Mary's we celebrated European Day of Languages with the theme "*Languages Unite*". Children created colourful language tiles, choosing a positive word such as *Love, Peace, Friendship* or *Welcome*, translating it into a language of their choice and decorating their tile with the colours, flag and images of a country where that language is spoken. It was a wonderful celebration of the many languages and cultures within our school community, reminding us that although we may speak different languages, we can share the same messages of kindness, friendship and peace. The celebration beautifully reflected our commitment to Catholic Social Teaching,

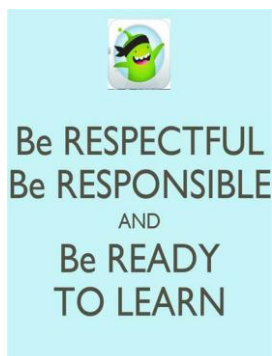
particularly the Dignity of every person, as well as our SANCTA values of *Support, Nurture, Challenge, Trust* and *Aspire*.

COFFEE AND CAKE SOCIAL

Our first Coffee and Cake social on **6th October 1.30-3.00pm** is fast approaching. These get togethers are for *all* parents/carers to attend and take the following format: The first half of the afternoon will be an informal meet and greet with Mrs Bradbury (wellbeing lead) and Mrs Norburn (SENDSCO) followed by your child joining us in the hall with a piece of learning to share with you for ten minutes. The second half of the session we are delighted to welcome Mrs Tanya Cross Stockport Schools Health & Well Being Adviser who will be speaking about online safety and up to date online advice to help keep your child safe online. A representative from the [One Stockport Family Hub](#) will be visiting and sharing information about their services for families.



THE SAINT MARY'S WAY



At St Mary's, we have the highest expectations of behaviour for our children. We don't take it for granted that children automatically know how to behave and get along with others so we actively and explicitly teach our children this through our behaviour curriculum: [The St Mary's Way](#). This curriculum outlines key behaviours and routines which help us ensure that the children at St Mary's are ready to learn, are respectful to all and are safe. As parents/carers are a child's first educators, it would be fantastic if you could take a look through this document in order to support our work at home, e.g. by promoting children say please/thank you, showing manners etc. Just like other areas of the curriculum,

we know that children won't just behave in the way that we expect because we teach it in the same way that they don't understand maths following input in a single lesson. We constantly reinforce expectations through our behaviour systems, assemblies and interactions around our school. Information about our approach to promoting positive behaviour is available [on our website](#). Remember, you can monitor your child's behaviour by keeping an eye on their daily Dojo points.

ADVENT TERM PARENTS EVENINGS

Our first Parents' Evenings of the year will take place on **Wednesday 14th and Wednesday 21st October, from 3:40pm to 6:30pm**. These 10-minute meetings are pastoral in focus, providing an opportunity to meet your child's new Class Teacher(s), discuss how they have settled into their new year group, and review targets for the year ahead. The booking system will go live at **6:00pm on Thursday 1 October**, and an email with the booking link will be sent to you at that time.



PTA NEWS - THE GREAT ST MARY'S BAKE OFF!



The children are invited to bring their Bake-Off entry to the school office on **Monday 5 October**. There are 6 different categories to enter: bread, biscuits/cookies, small cakes, brownies/blondies, free from and showstoppers. The entries will be judged by Dean, owner of All Things Nice and winners will be announced in the afternoon at 3:20pm. These delicious treats will then be on sale from the outside classroom on the bottom playground after school. Please be respectful and remember that we are a strict nut free school, this is a NUT FREE ZONE. ONE entry per child, which needs to be labelled with a description and your child's name. Happy Baking! Love the PTA.

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>	
28 September	Back to School / Welcome Mass 2:00pm in school.
30 September	Nursery and Reception Phonics meeting for parents 5:30 – 6:30pm.
30 September	Year 6 SATs meeting for parents 5:30-6:30pm.
1 October	CAFOD Harvest Family Fast Day – a touch of green with uniform - £1 donation.
2 October	YR & Y6 Special Friends Assembly. 9:30-10:30am.
5 October	PTA Great St Mary's Bake Off. 3:20pm. Details to follow.
9 October	World Mental Health Day. (Wear an item of yellow with their uniform - £1)
12 October	Year 4 celebration of the word at 2:40pm. All welcome.
14 October	Y6 Weight and Height checks.
14 & 21 October	Parents Evenings. 3:40 – 6:30pm.
21 October	PTA Sponsored Bounce.
23 October	Celebration Assembly 2:15pm. All welcome.
23 October	School closes for October half term.
2 November	School reopens following October half term.
6 November	Sparkle Disco. 5:00-6:15pm.
9 November	Year 3 celebration of the word at 2:40pm. All welcome.
11 November	Remembrance Service. 10:50-11:05am. All welcome.
23 November	Year 6 celebration of the word at 2:40pm. All welcome.

Wishing you all a wonderful and relaxing weekend, especially those returning from PGL.
Mr John Nish.