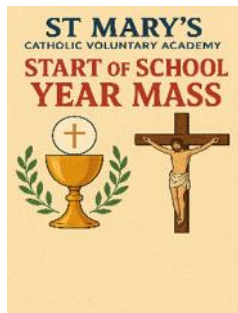




## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

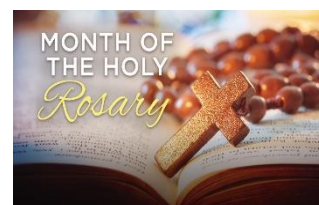


On Monday, we celebrated our Start of Year Mass together as a school family. We were delighted to welcome Father Benjamin, the Assistant Priest at St Mary's Parish, who joined us in prayer as we asked for God's blessing on the year ahead. In his homily, Father Benjamin encouraged us to ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in our words and actions, helping us to make choices that reflect the love of Jesus. This linked beautifully with our Word of the Week, 'Listen', as we reflected on the importance of paying attention to what others are saying, listening with respect and trying to understand different points of view.

Members of our newly formed 19-strong SANCTA Squad helped with the planning and led the Mass with confidence, reverence and care. They were a real credit to the school, demonstrating excellent reading and leadership skills. The whole school joined together in beautiful singing and prayerful participation, making the Mass a joyful and reverent start to our new school year.

## MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY

October is the month of the Holy Rosary and Bishop Patrick has once again set us a mission of praying one decade of the Rosary (one Our Father, ten Hail Mary's and one Glory Be) each weekday during October. You can track your progress using this [chart](#). We will be help with this by setting aside time in one class worship per week during October to say a decade of the Rosary and also each Monday members of our SANCTA Squad will lead a Rosary Club at lunchtime.



**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



One of the much-loved traditions at St Mary's is pairing our Reception and Year 6 children as Special Friends. This unique bond helps our youngest pupils grow in confidence as they settle into school life, knowing they have an older child to look out for them and offer a reassuring smile. For the Year 6 children, being a Special Friend is seen as both an honour and a responsibility, something they eagerly anticipate, often for many months in advance. This morning we held a joyful assembly where the pairs or trios were officially introduced. Throughout the year, the children will have opportunities to spend time together, whether playing, learning, or enjoying special events like the summer picnic. Congratulations to all our new Special Friends. Afterwards, it was a real pleasure to share coffee and biscuits with parents, while the Special Friends got to know each other.

## YEAR 5 MIXED NETBALL TOURNAMENT

Eleven Year 5 children represented our school at a High 5 netball tournament last week. The team showed determination, teamwork and sportsmanship throughout the event. They played against several schools, including some older and more experienced children. Our two teams finished in joint 5th place, demonstrating excellent effort in every match.



## YEAR 6 RESIDENTIAL TO PGL



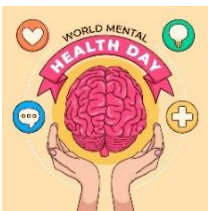
Last week, our wonderful Year 6 pupils enjoyed their residential trip to PGL in Shropshire, taking part in a wide range of activities including climbing, canoeing, trapeze, the giant swing, rifle shooting and team-building games. The children showed exemplary behaviour, resilience, and a positive attitude 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 last week.

## 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, 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.



## WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY 2026



Next **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.

## 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!



## SEPTEMBER HOUSE POINTS

Please see the totals for the month of September. Our Lady of Lourdes House are currently in the lead but there is a long way to go until the end of the term...

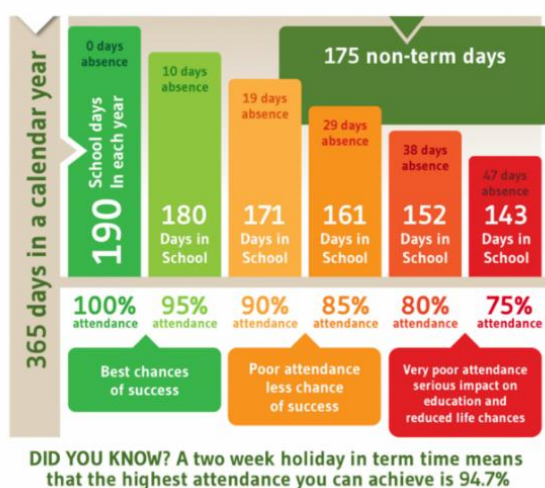
| Walsingham | Fatima | Lourdes      | Knock |
|------------|--------|--------------|-------|
| 1,342      | 1,346  | <b>1,424</b> | 1,191 |



## HOUSE NAMES

A reminder to families of our refreshed House names linked to sites where St Mary (Our Lady) has appeared: **Red** – Our Lady of Walsingham; **Blue** – Our Lady of Lourdes; **Yellow** – Our Lady of Fatima; and **Green** – Our Lady of Knock. On Tuesday, Mrs Rourke spoke to the children about Walsingham, sharing her experience of travelling there each year on pilgrimage with the Pilgrims Cross. This was particularly fitting as we had recently celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Walsingham on 24 September. It was a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn more about the significance of Walsingham and the important place of pilgrimage and Our Lady within our Catholic faith. More details regarding the Pilgrims Cross can be found here: [Pilgrim Cross – An Easter walking Pilgrimage to Walsingham](#)

## SEPTEMBER ATTENDANCE UPDATE



At St Mary's we believe that, if children 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 September is to the right. Our school target is 97%. Congratulations everyone on your amazing efforts last month. As a school we have achieved a superb **97.3%** - fantastic! Nationally, attendance currently stands at 95.3%, so again, well done St Mary's for our strong attendance and thank you parents/carers for supporting

| September 2026 Attendance |              |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Rec                       | 95.9%        |
| Y1                        | 95.9%        |
| Y2                        | 96.6%        |
| Y3                        | 96.6%        |
| Y4                        | 98.9%        |
| Y5                        | 98.1%        |
| Y6                        | 98.8%        |
| Overall                   | <b>97.3%</b> |

strong attendance habits.

## 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.



## COFFEE AND CAKE SOCIAL



Our first Coffee and Cake social on Tuesday **6<sup>th</sup> October 1.30-3.00pm** is fast approaching. These get togethers are for *all* parents/carers to attend. Donations towards coffee and cake will go to Macmillan Cancer Support charity. Tuesday's get together will culminate in an Early Years and Key Stage 2 hymn practice which you will be able to listen to whilst you enjoy your refreshments. This is also a chance for an informal chat with Mrs Bradbury as Senior Mental Health Lead and Mrs Norburn, SENDCO. A representative from the [One Stockport Family Hub](#) will also be attending and sharing information about their services for families. Come along and meet our parents within St Mary's community. We look forward to getting together and strengthening all links within St Mary's.

## ADVENT TERM PARENTS EVENINGS

Our first Parents' Evenings of the year will take place on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> 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 via Arbor went live at **6:00pm yesterday** and an email with the booking link was sent to you at that time. If your child has SEND a separate appointment has been made for you via the School Office.



## 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 <b>bold</b>.</i> |
| 5 October       | PTA Great St Mary's Bake Off. 3:20pm. Details above and see attached poster.                                                     |
| 6 October       | Coffee and Cake with Mrs Norburn 1:30-3:00pm. All welcome.                                                                       |
| 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.                                                                           |
| 24 November     | School Photos.                                                                                                                   |

***Wishing you all a wonderful and relaxing weekend and happy baking! Mr John Nish.***