



NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2025



**Merry
Christmas!**

**From all the Staff,
Governors and Pupils. We
wish you the very best for
a happy and prosperous
2026**

MESSAGE FROM MR THOMPSON

Welcome to the Christmas 2025 edition of the school newsletter. As ever, it has been an action packed term with many opportunities available for your child to take part in. From a visit to Oxford University to support the local food bank, and from public speaking competitions to designing our House badges, pupils have been actively engaged in school life. Of course, every step they have been supported and encouraged by our wonderful staff who go above and beyond for all pupils, and I thank them for their commitment.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.

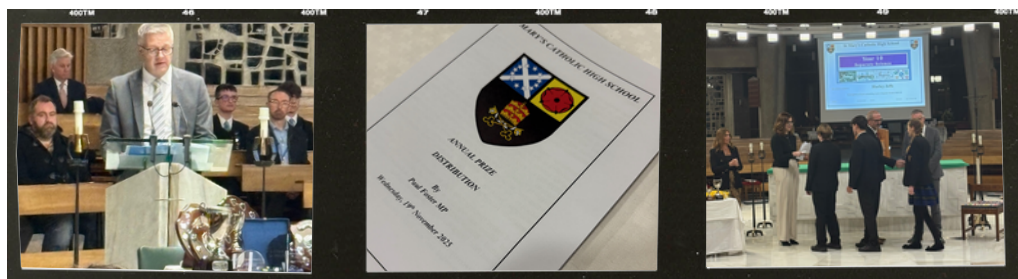
Mr Thompson
Headteacher

PRESENTATION EVENING 2025

On Thursday, 20th November, we had a wonderful evening celebrating the fantastic achievements of both current pupils and our Year 11 pupils who left in the summer. The support and encouragement from parents attending this evening adds value to this celebration of achievement and dedication in their academic journey.

We extend our gratitude to our Guest Speaker, MP Paul Foster who presented all our pupils with their certificates and special awards.

Any Year 11 leavers who were unable to attend the evening are encouraged to collect their certificates from school as soon as possible.



LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE



BEBRAS CHALLENGE 2025

Our pupils once again shone in this year's annual Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge, a national competition that introduces pupils to the problem-solving skills at the heart of computer science. The challenge presents pupils with a series of logical puzzles designed to test creativity, reasoning and resilience. We are delighted to share that every participant will receive a certificate recognising their hard work and enthusiasm.

A special congratulation goes to those who scored within the top 10% nationally, earning a prestigious Gold Award and an invitation to the next round of the competition—an additional online challenge hosted by Oxford University.

Our Junior Gold Award recipients are: Emily B, Oliver W, Emily K, Alex R and Logan O'K.

Our Senior Gold Award recipients are: Will C, Oscar I and Finlay M.

We are incredibly proud of all our pupils for their achievements in this national event.



REMEMBRANCE DAY PARADE

Our Head Boy and Deputy Head Girl proudly represented our school at a Remembrance event, alongside the Mayor of South Ribble, Councillor Paul Wharton-Hardman, Councillor Sean Bradbury of Farington Moss, and our Parish Priest, Fr Joe Bibby. We were also in attendance with pupils and the Headteacher from the Academy@Worden.

Together, we paused to honour the courage, scarifice, and service of those who gave their lives for our freedom.



YOUTH SPEAKS COMPETITION

At the beginning of December, Matthew, Jacob and Gracie represented St Mary's at the annual 'Youth Speaks' public speaking competition.

The team were fantastic and finished 2nd overall in the region, with Jacob picking up an individual prize of 'Best Chairperson' for performing at the highest level in his role. Well done to all!



WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

In support of World Mental Health Day we hosted a number of activities throughout school to highlight the importance of good mental health. Included in this we held lunchtime drop ins for pupils to have the opportunity to complete a variety of activities and learn about various strategies to deal with mental health issues. This was also supported by our own pupil Wellbeing Ambassadors.



SO...WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING THIS TERM?

ART AMBASSADORS



It has been a very busy time for the new Art Ambassadors. They have been keen to get involved in the extracurricular activities. Maisie T in Year 8 and Will S in Year 10 have organised a Year 7 Art club at a lunchtime on Thursdays. Both Maisie and Will have demonstrated new skills and techniques to the younger pupils. It has been very popular club and some lovely work has been produced. They hope to organise more KS3 clubs next term.

The Art Ambassadors have also been creating Christmas card designs to sell at the school's Christmas market, at lunchtimes and afterschool. They have decided to recycle buttons to create some colourful and unique designs. The Art Ambassadors sold these themselves at the markets on the 10th of December.

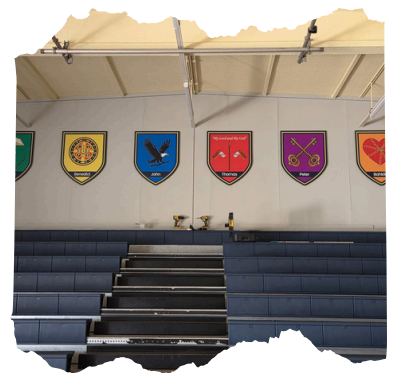
HOUSE NEWS

St Mary's pupils spent the last academic year getting involved in a variety of House activities, including a particularly popular MarioKart Tournament in the summer term! One House competition which is visible to anyone who visits the school are the new House crests. Lots of pupils entered our competition from all year groups and the lucky winners have had their crests created (in addition to receiving a prize!) Congratulations to Maisie S, Nathan R, Matthew G, James I, Abbey T and Lacey C. The crests are now proudly on display in the Drama Theatre. Please do take a look next time you are in school!

Last academic year, St Thomas won the overall House competition and were rewarded this term by being able to leave school early on the Friday before half term. There are lots of House competitions planned for the academic year ahead, so please do encourage your child to participate! They are a great way to gain merits for your House, in addition to all the merits earned by pupils for the excellent work they do in and around school.

Since September a number of House competitions have already been completed. Pupils in some science classes in Year 8 and Year 9 were invited to take part in the Biology week Biolobee; a national spelling competition. Well done to our in school winners: James C (Year 8) and Abi C (Year 9). Pupils received a Biolobee certificate and prize in their Year group assemblies. Pupils across school have also competed in the cross country competition and the top 20 pupils per year group all received merits for their Houses. Well done! Other pupils have submitted entries to the Archdiocese of Liverpool Christmas card competition. While unfortunately not making the semi-finals, praise should go to Matthew G, Lilia H, James H and Brooke L for their high quality submissions!

We look forward to running more competitions as the year progresses. If pupils have ideas for House competitions they would like, then as always, feel free to speak to Dr Tyrer!





SPOT LIGHT ON: CAREERS

LUNCHTIME DROP INS

Throughout the Autumn term we have hosted lunchtime college drop ins. These have been open to all our pupils in Years 9 - 11 to support them with their post-16 options.

This also gave Year 9 pupils an opportunity to find out more information for their future to support them with their GCSE option choices.

What a fantastic opportunity for our pupils to ask excellent questions to aid them with their future!



CAREERS FAIR 2025!

In November we hosted a wonderful careers fair with a variety of exhibitors from colleges to local businesses, alongside information about apprenticeships.

Local colleges included Runshaw, Cardinal Newman, Wigan & Leigh, Preston College and a wide range of local businesses including Lloyds, Bowker BMW, Aspens Caterers and DWP.

It was great to see so many of our pupils discussing their next steps when they leave St Mary's. We are already planning more careers events in the spring term for our Year 11 pupils!

If you would be interested in supporting our schools Careers Education through careers fairs, mock interviews or even short presentations about your job/business, please contact Mrs McVey at the school on careers@lsmchs.com



CAREERS AT ST MARY'S

Via our school careers programme, we offer providers numerous opportunities throughout the school year to speak to pupils and/or their parents. Within our Personal Development curriculum we have bespoke careers units of study running from Year 7 through to Year 11 targeting key age-appropriate content. All pupils have the opportunity to discuss their career prospects with our careers advisor Mrs McVey who can be found in the office opposite the library.





CHAPLAINCY

BLACKPOOL WALK OF FAITH

Our annual Year 7 and Year 11 'Walk of Faith' was another great success. We were truly blessed with mild weather (no rain for once!) and a delightful chip supper. This popular trip continues to strengthen friendships between peers and staff, all while enjoying the stunning display of the Blackpool lights!



DEMENTIA CAFE

Our Advent Dementia Café was a wonderful success, warmly attended by our patrons and joyfully supported by our fantastic Year 7 Dementia friends. Attendees enjoyed a delightful mix of games, engaging conversations, and festive Christmas musical ensembles. A truly memorable time was had by all!



FOODBANK SUPPORT

The build up to Christmas is always very exciting and equally very busy. However, with the ongoing economic crisis, there are many families within our local area who will struggle this Christmas time.

As a school family, we wanted to support our local Foodbank at St Mary's community centre. Pictured are many bags and boxes containing Christmas treats for the receiver to enjoy. Special thanks to pupils and staff who donated food items, along with the Chaplaincy team for organising the food items.



RAINFOREST ALLIANCE & VEGAN/HALAL SWEET SALE - JUBILEE OF HOPE

Two of our Year 9 Chaplaincy and Gold Faith in Action pupils set out to raise awareness about the importance of choosing environmentally friendly products. They centred their charity event on promoting the Rainforest Alliance. While many people recognise the Fairtrade logo, fewer know that products carrying the little green frog seal show that farms and companies are committed to protecting healthy forests, supporting farmer livelihoods, upholding human rights, ensuring responsible environmental practices, and strengthening climate resilience. The pupils carried out thorough research, contributed to the weekly prayer and liturgy sheet, and actively promoted the event. Their efforts helped raise a total of £137 for CAFOD. All chocolate purchased for the event were Rainforest Alliance certified, as well as sweets being Halal and Vegan friendly. A treat accessible for all to enjoy!

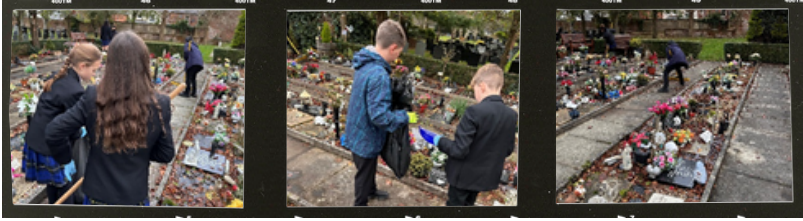
CHRISTMAS CRAFT CLUB

Our Faith in Action group has been busy after school creating a variety of Christmas crafts that will be sold to raise money for CAFOD. Supporting CAFOD during Advent is especially meaningful, as it helps us live out our Advent call to share hope and compassion. The funds raised will go directly towards CAFOD's work supporting vulnerable communities and promoting global justice, reminding us that our preparation for Christmas includes caring for our brothers and sisters around the world.





IN OTHER NEWS...



CEMETERY CLEAN

The Faith in Action team spent an evening after school clearing leaves from the headstones at St. Mary's Cemetery. The pupils found the experience so rewarding that they've committed to making this a monthly activity.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY VISIT

In October, 30 Year 11 pupils were lucky enough to visit Oxford University where they engaged in lectures and were treated to a tour of Queens College and a lunch within their canteen. The pupils were fantastic and the University stated they were some of the best and well mannered pupils who have visited. A proud moment for St Mary's.



ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

'Tis the season to spread joy and cheer! On Wednesday 10th December, led by Mrs Watson & Miss Gannon, our wonderful pupils from Years 7 to 11 provided a symphony of carols, dance, festive tunes and poetry to parents, grandparents and the local community. It was fantastic to celebrate the spirit of Christmas and support the amazing talents of our pupils.



Community Involvement

CHRISTMAS BINGO/MARKETS

WOW! What a turn out we had from our families and members of our local community for our annual Christmas Bingo and our second Christmas Markets! These events were hosted by our incredible Hospitality Ambassadors who supported ticket sales, the raffle, refreshments and checking numbers for our lucky winners!





NAME: Mr Smalley

SUBJECT: English

HOBBIES: Playing football and cricket, spending time with friends.

INTERESTING FACT: I spent a year working for Manchester United's media department and met the likes of Jose Mourinho and Marcus Rashford.

ADVICE FOR PUPILS AT ST MARY'S: Always try to be the best version of you and amazing opportunities will fall your way!

NAME: Mr Allen

SUBJECT: History

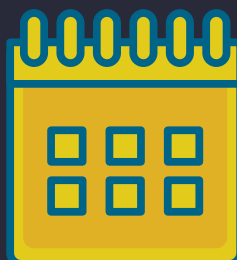
HOBBIES: I like to act and have taken part in a few (amateur) theatre productions recently. I also like swimming and family history.

INTERESTING FACT: Before becoming a teacher, I used to work for an MP in their office.

ADVICE FOR PUPILS AT ST MARY'S: Always push yourself to do your best, even when it seems hard. Your efforts will always pay off.



IMPORTANT DATES



Monday 05/01/26 - School reopens after the Christmas break

Wednesday 21/01/26 - Y11 Parents' Evening

Monday 02/02/26 - Dementia Cafe

Friday 06/02/26 - Y9 SEND Coffee morning

Wednesday 11/02/26 - Band Night, 6pm

Friday 13/02/26 - School breaks up for Spring half term at 3pm

Monday 23/02/26 - School reopens after the half term break

Tuesday 24/02/26 - Y9 Options Evening, 6pm

W/C 02/03/26 - Careers week

Wednesday 04/03/26 - Y9 Parents' Evening

Friday 06/03/26 Non Uniform - Easter Bingo donations

Thursday 19/03/26 - Easter Community Bingo

Wednesday 25/03/26 - GCSE Performance Evening

Tuesday 31/03/26 - Celebration Mass at church

Wednesday 01/04/26 - School breaks up for Easter at 1.00pm

Monday 20/04/26 - School reopens after the Easter holidays.



Arbor

With so many exciting enrichment opportunities being visited outside the classroom, we must remind all parents that all medical information needs to be updated on a regular basis. This can be done via Arbor.

Unfortunately, a number of pupils missed a recent educational visit due to incorrect medical information

It is essential that you sign up for Arbor as soon as possible, if you haven't done so already.

If you have any questions or difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact the school office.





PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT DIARY

BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS TO LET OUR LIGHT SHINE

Throughout the 2025 Autumn term, we have focused and raised the profile of a wide variety of topics within school some of which can be found below:

- European Day Of Languages
- Bonfire Night Safety (Lancashire Fire & Rescue)
- Remembrance Sunday
- Anti Bullying Week
- Parliament Week
- Mental Health (Compass Bloom)
- Year 11 College Assemblies



As part of our Personal Development programme, we have focused on key concerns that involve our school community whilst also raising awareness of key issues for example disabilities with our school community.

Through assemblies and bespoke activities within our Personal Development lessons, we have been able to promote this important message.

We would like to thank all members of the school, both staff and pupils who have contributed to raising awareness.

During the first term of Personal Development, pupils completed bespoke lessons on Anti Bullying week and UK Parliament week. Within Anti Bullying week pupils explored the topic of bullying, discussing various types and the schools process into reporting any incidents.

Following this, pupils engaged in Parliament Week, debated a wide variety of issues and then contributed to a pupil vote on a specific topic.

Pupils were fantastic within each session and the lessons learned will support them moving forward.



Our Personal Development is constantly evolving and changing to meet the needs of our pupils. As parents/carers, if you believe there is something that we should address in our lessons, please contact Mr Weaver at PD@ismchs.com

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE