



December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Christmas Closure and New Year Re-Opening**

A reminder that school closes for the Christmas holidays on Friday, 22 December.

On the last day we will be taking the pupils to St Mary's Church to give thanks for the blessings of this term. Father Joe will lead our end of term Celebration Mass and, as usual, the pupils will be walking to Church in their form groups, accompanied by members of staff on the entire route.

The Service is due to start around 12:15 pm and, if able, you are most welcome to join us in the Church. The pupils will be dismissed from the Church at the end of the Service. We had planned for a 1:30pm finish, however, due to a funeral taking place later that afternoon, pupils will now be dismissed from 1:15pm. We would ask that all those leaving the site do so swiftly, in order for the dignity of the funeral service to be respected. For the small number of pupils who take the service bus home, we have arranged for the buses to collect from St Mary's Church on Broadfield Drive, Leyland at 1:30 pm.

We reopen on Monday, 8 January at 8:40am. Please note that this is a normal school day for all, so regular timetables will be followed.

## **School Term and Holiday Pattern**

For your information, the school term dates for 2024/25 have been confirmed by the Governing Body and are on the back of this letter.

## **Free School Meal Vouchers**

Once again, the government have provided funding for schools to be able to provide Free School Meal vouchers for eligible families over the Christmas holidays. If you feel that you are eligible for these vouchers, but have not received them, please do contact school through the usual means.

## **Food Bank Donations**

Many thanks for all your support by sending in donations for the local food bank at St Mary's Church. We delivered a mini-bus full of goods and are very grateful for your contributions at this time of year. The food bank has experienced a dip in donations this year, so every tin and packet which has been brought in by your child will go a long way to boosting their supply.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

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HEADTEACHER MR P THOMPSON

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## **School website**

Over the Christmas break, the school's website will be upgraded with a new look and, hopefully, easier access to navigate to the pages which matter to you. Any feedback on the new site would be valued.

## **Parent Governor Election**

Thank you to all parents and carers who voted in the recent Parent Governor Election. It was a closely fought contest with the final result being: Mrs Nadine Turner (total votes 97), Mr Roy Kershaw (total votes 84). On behalf of myself and the Governing Body, I'd like to pass on congratulations to Mrs Turner who has been elected for 4 years, and express thanks and gratitude to Mr Kershaw for his expression of interest.

## **Year 11**

Our senior pupils have recently sat their mock exams. We know they have worked hard in preparation and we commend them for the way in which they have approached these exams and how they conducted themselves in the exam hall. This bodes well for the final exams in the summer! On Wednesday, 24 January, we will be holding our Year 11 Progress Evening (3:30-6:30pm). Please do all you can to attend on the night and gain valuable updates on your child's current performance, plus crucial pointers on how they can make further progress in the final months.

## **Year 10**

The Year 10 post-16 Mock Interviews will be held on Tuesday, 6 February. This is an important event for all the pupils and reminds them that they will be school leavers in just 18 months. Every pupil in Year 10 must have completed a Personal Statement by Friday, 19 January, and returned these to their form tutor. These statements will be sent off to the prospective interviewer in good time before the event, so please encourage your child to have their statement ready upon our return. These mock interviews are an excellent way of preparing for the college or apprenticeship interviews which pupils will be undertaking before they leave school.

In addition, we are delighted that this year pupils in Year 10 will be taking part in a full week of work experience. This will take place from Monday, 18 March to Friday, 22 March. Pupils are asked to source their own suitable placement by Monday, 15 January, but help and advice is available from our Career's Adviser, Mrs McVey, if necessary; [e.mcvey@lsmchs.com](mailto:e.mcvey@lsmchs.com)

## **Year 9**

As we enter the New Year, attention in Year 9 turns to the Option's process. You will be able to discuss this further with staff at the Year 9 Progress Evening on Wednesday, 28 February, However, the week before, Wednesday, 21 February, Mr Meldrum will be holding 2 sessions to explain the Options process in more detail. These will be held in the Drama Theatre at 5pm and 6pm. Parents are free to join us for either of these sessions.

## **Year 8**

Information has been distributed to Year 8 pupils about the Pilgrimage to Liverpool in July next year. This may seem a long way off, but we would encourage as many members of the year group to sign-up as they will enjoy a fabulous experience. The total is £150 and a payment plan to spread costs is available. In addition, if any family is struggling to meet the full price, please contact school to see what help may be available.

## **Year 7, 8, 9 & 10**

Even further ahead into the distance are two proposed trips to Italy which will soon be launched for the next academic year (2024/25). The first is a Catholic Ethos trip to Rome, whilst the second is a Geography/Food trip to Sorrento. Please keep a close eye on our social media feeds for when further details are published, and we ask for expressions of interest.

### **EduLink**

EduLink is a new platform we are using to help improve the way you can communicate with us. It is an excellent system to allow you to inform us of doctor/dentist appointments, but also for you to keep your child's medical records up-to-date. Unfortunately, there have been occasions recently where pupils have been prevented from attending trips due to lack of up-to-date information. Please check the website here for more information: <https://lsmchs.com/news/2023-09-12-edulink-one>

### **Uniform & Attendance Expectations**

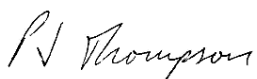
We take great pride in the appearance of St Mary's pupils, so to make sure this continues, please be reminded that jumpers remain a compulsory element of school uniform up until the Easter holidays. Please can you also ensure that your child wears black shoes, not trainers, upon their return in January.

Similarly, excellent attendance is the cornerstone of any child's education. Can I stress that you continue to work with us to ensure that your child is in school, on time, every day, and that minor ailments which, for example, would not be enough for an adult to be off work, aren't used as a reason to not attend school.

### **Thank You**

As we draw to the close of this term, I would like to thank you for your continued support for the school and all its dedicated staff. As ever, it is very much appreciated. May I wish you all a very peaceful Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr P Thompson

Headteacher



**St Mary's Catholic High School, Leyland**

**TERM DATES**

**2024/2025**

**Autumn Term 2024**

Staff Inset Day	:	Monday 2 September 2024
Staff Inset Day	:	Tuesday 3 September 2024
Re-open on	:	Wednesday 4 September 2024
Mid Term Closure	:	Monday 21 – Friday 25 October 2024 (incl)
Closure after school on	:	Friday 20 December 2024

No. of Openings: 73 + 2 INSET days

**Spring Term 2025**

Staff Inset Day	:	Monday 6 January 2025
Re-open on	:	Tuesday 7 January 2025
Mid Term Closure	:	Monday 17 – Friday 21 Feb 2025 (incl)
Closure after school on	:	Friday 4 April 2025

No. of Openings: 59 + 1 INSET day

**Summer Term 2025**

Re-open on	:	Tuesday 22 April 2025
May Day Closure	:	Monday 5 May 2025
Mid Term Closure	:	Monday 26 – Friday 30 May 2025 (incl)
Closure after school on	:	Friday 18 July 2025
Staff Inset Day	:	Monday 21 July 2025 (as twilights)
Staff Inset Day	:	Tuesday 22 July 2025 (as twilights)

No. of Openings: 58 + 2 INSET days

Total No. of Openings: 190 + 5 INSET days