School Newsletter

With Christ, we live, love, learn and grow.

13.11.26 *Follow us on Instagram at: @stmaryschorley*

Dear parents and carers,

Anti-bullying week - Odd Socks Day on Tuesday

Next week is anti-bullying week with the theme: *Break the Silence*. We will have a whole-school assembly to discuss it on Tuesday morning. This year's message will encourage children, young people and adults across the UK to start conversations about bullying, speak up, listen and take action together. On Tuesday, children can come into school wearing odd socks – it is a great way to celebrate what makes us all unique in Anti-Bullying Week.

Click on this link: https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/anti-bullying-week-2026/parent-and-carer-pack to access an anti-bullying pack for parents and carers with lots of useful information should you wish to speak with your child about this subject.

Forest School for pre-schoolers not already at St Mary's

Next Thursday morning, we are inviting pre-schoolers not at St Mary's and to come with their carers and experience our Forest School with Mrs Rodgers. Please click on the link to book on if you would like to come, or if you know someone who might be interested, please forward the link to them.

https://chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk/events/2026-11-19-free-forest-school-taster-session

Remembrance Day 11.11.26

On Tuesday, we had a whole-school assembly to learn about Remembrance Day: what it is and why it is important we mark it each year. And, at 11.00 am on Wednesday 11th November the whole school stopped and held a one minute's silence to remember those who have died in wars and the impact on their loved ones. Thank you for your kind and generous support of this year's RBL Poppy Appeal.

In assembly, this afternoon, Theo in Y4 told us about his great grandfather who served in the Royal Navy during World War II. He showed us some photographs of him with his fellow sailors and on board his ship which was actually sunk; Theo's grandfather thankfully survived. Theo also shared his great-grandfather's collection of medals. Thank you, Theo!

Christmas Fayre - Friday 27th November

We are really looking forward to our annual Christmas Fayre, which will take place on **Friday 27th November from 3.45pm to 5.45pm.** This promises to be a wonderful community event and a great opportunity to begin the festive season together. As a reminder, there will be no after-school club on this evening.

To help make the fayre a success, we will be holding two non-uniform days. On **Friday 20th November,** children are invited to come in their own clothes in exchange for a voluntary donation of **toys or chocolates.** On **Friday 27th November**, children may again wear their own clothes in exchange for a voluntary donation of a **bottle** for our popular bottle tombola

Our Year 6 pupils are especially excited that Father Christmas will be visiting St Mary's and that they have the important role of being his helper elves for the evening!

A huge thank you to our PTFA for all their hard work and organisation. We are very grateful for their support and are sure it will be a fantastic evening for all our families. Please refer to the letter sent separately via Groupcall for full details. We hope to see you there.

Pupil Parliament Book Sale at the Christmas Fayre

Our Pupil Parliament representatives, Finley and Violet, have come up with a fantastic idea to help raise funds for future pupil-led projects and initiatives. They are organising a Book Sale at this year's Christmas Fayre!

In assembly, Finley invited children to donate a book that they no longer need or enjoy. The Pupil Parliament will then sell the donated books for £1 each at the fayre, giving everyone the chance to pick up some great reads while supporting the work of the Parliament.

If you are able to donate a book, we would be very grateful for your support. Thank you to Finley, Violet and all our Pupil Parliament members for their enthusiasm and enterprise. We look forward to seeing their stall at the Christmas Fayre!

CAFOD Visitors

A big thank you to the Representatives from CAFOD who came in to do workshops with the children in the juniors about Catholic Social Teaching and giving an assembly with the infant classes earlier this week.

Nasal Flu Vaccinations

The annual nasal flu vaccinations took place this week; they got through the whole school before 11am on Wednesday morning. If a child was absent or missed the vaccination, for any reason, the school nurses will be doing a catch-up round. Details will be sent out separately.

Pupil admissions September 2027

If you know of anyone looking for a place at St Mary's for September 2027, please let them know that they can come in and take a look at the school in action via appointment.

If your child is in their last year of pre-school/nursery you can now apply for their primary school place online via the Lancashire County Council School Admissions Portal.

https://schooladmissions.lancashire.gov.uk/prefs.php

It is quick and easy to do and you will receive email confirmation of your application.
VERY IMPORTANT: You must apply even if you already have siblings in a school. If you live in Lancashire you can include out of area preferences on your online application.

School places are not allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. All applications received up to the closing date are given equal priority, but if you miss the deadline, a late application may reduce your chance of getting your preference of school. The national closing date for primary applications is 15 January 2027. Between now and 15th January all applications are processed and all preferences are considered against the school's published admissions policy for school year 2027 - 2028.
https://chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk/our-school/admissions

Please remember that admissions to St Mary's, or any Catholic primary schools, also require the completion of the separate **supplementary information form (SIF) - available at https://www.chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk/our-school/admissions

School and mobile phones

The Department for Education has strengthened its guidance on mobile phones in schools, encouraging schools to move beyond a 'not seen, not heard' approach and towards keeping phones inaccessible throughout the school day. The aim is to reduce distractions, support learning and encourage positive social interaction.

For parents and carers of **Year 6 pupils** who may be travelling independently to and from school in the summer term and then when they move up to high school, it may be worth considering alternatives to smartphones. The **Smartphone Free Childhood** website provides information about simpler phones that allow children to stay in touch and be trackable without access to social media and many of the distractions associated with smartphones: Smartphone Free Childhood – Alternatives to Smartphones.

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/strengthened-guidance-to-take-the-next-leap-to-phone-free-schools

Attendance

Chorley, St Mary's Attendance League 2026/2027 w/e 13.11.26



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

WEEKLY CLASS ATTENDANCE LEAGUE TABLE (ACADEMIC YEAR 2026/2027)

Week Number:	Week 9	Date/Period:	09/11/2026 - 13/11/2026	School Target:	97.0%

Rank	Class Name	This Week %	Last Week %	Change	Trend	Target Met? (97%+)
1	Year 3	98.08%	98.65%	-0.57%	▼ Down	★ Target Met
2	Year 6	97.94%	98.03%	-0.09%	▼ Down	★ Target Met
3	Year 4	97.27%	96.99%	0.28%	▲ Up	★ Target Met
4	Year 5	97.16%	96.90%	0.26%	▲ Up	★ Target Met
5	Year 1	97.09%	97.11%	-0.02%	▼ Down	★ Target Met
6	Year 2	96.60%	96.98%	-0.38%	▼ Down	Below Target
7	Reception	94.80%	94.59%	0.21%	▲ Up	Below Target
	School Average	97.0%	97.0%	-0.0%	Same	Below Target

Unfortunately no 100% attendance this week!

At primary school, children who have high attendance (95-100% attendance) in Year 6 are 30% more likely to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths compared to similar pupils who miss just 2-4 weeks of school (90-95% attendance).

How does our attendance compare against other schools?

How do we rank against other Lancashire schools? In the academic year, 2024/ 2025, we were ranked **4th out of 479 schools – the top 1% club**!. Currently we sit in **40th** position. Given what we have achieved previously, I am sure that we can improve on that.

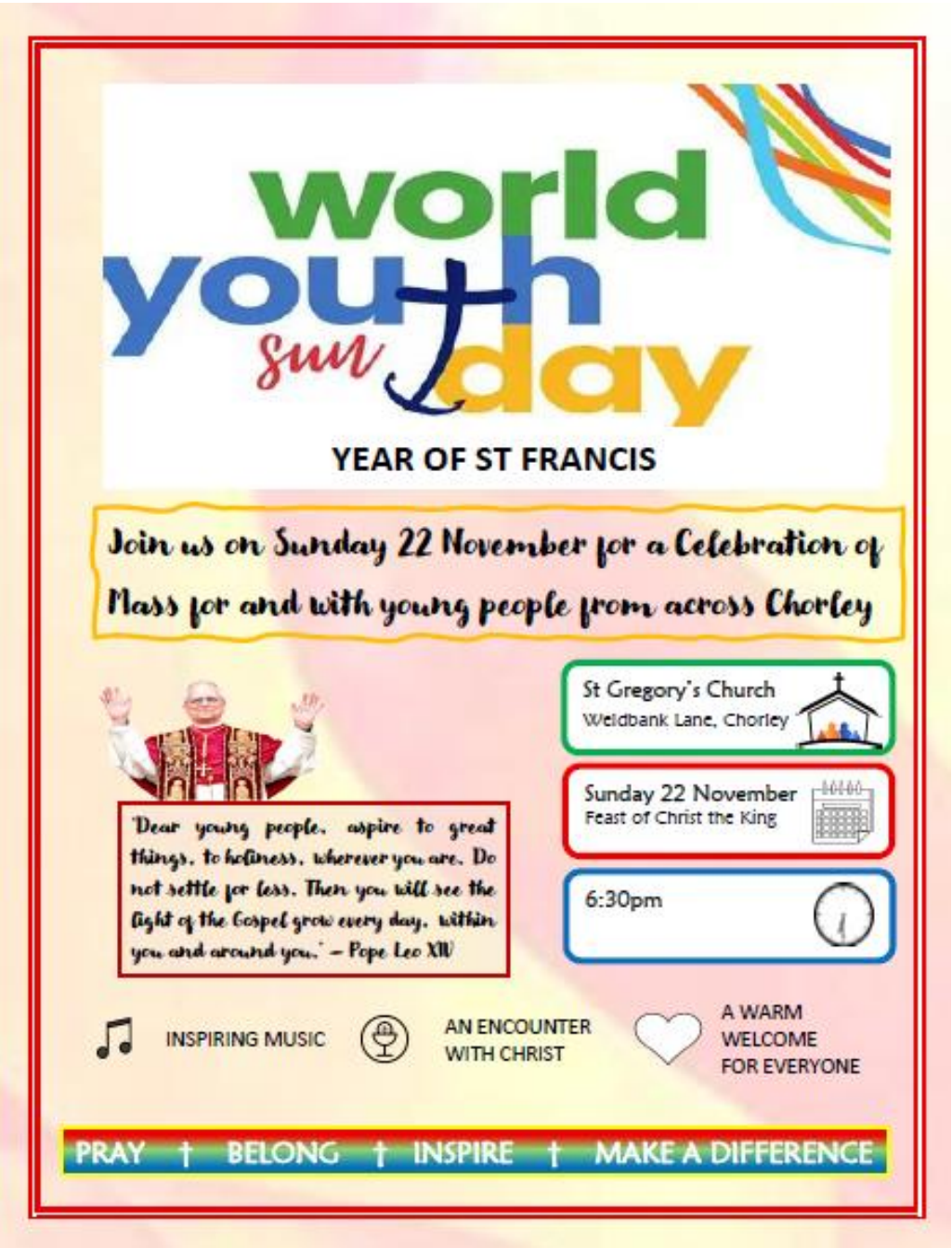
Free School Meals – Are you missing out?

Find out if you are eligible and find out how to apply – follow this link.
https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/free-school-meals/?page=2

STAR OF THE WEEK w/e 13.11.26

Class		Name	Star of the week for... & Value of the week of BELONGING
Nursery	s	Maeva	Great at turn -taking
	v	Ottilie	Always encouraging others
	Dojo	Arley	
R	s	Tyler	Super blending in phonics
	v	Romee	Helping others especially on tidying up!
	Dojo	Elsey	
Y1	s	Martha	Great understanding and answers in class discussion
	v	Myles	His gentleness with friends on the playground
	Dojo	Martha	
Y2	s	Anais	Excellent listening – especially in mathematics
	v	Hannah	Showing compassion for her friends
	Dojo	Amara	
Y3	s	Katie	Excellent spelling and being a fabulous narrator
	v	Olivia	Being supportive to her classmates
Y4	s	Coby	Great innovated story map
	v	Ralphi	Being a good understanding friend
Y5	s	Leo	Excellent work and determination in mathematics
	v	Layla	Compassion in understanding others and always being supportive
Y6	s	Tommy	Amazing start to his story inspired by *The Wizard of Oz*
	v	Arlo	Always looking out for his friends.

Youth Mass at St Gregory's on Sunday 22 November.



Yarrow Schools Alliance – for teacher trainees

St Mary's is proud to have been a member of the Yarrow Schools Teaching School Alliance (YSA) for over a decade now. Over those years, we have welcomed a number of trainee teachers on placement here at school. Many of these teachers have gone on to work in schools in Chorley and the local area and have forged successful teaching careers. It is an excellent way into primary teaching. There are a number of routes into teaching but those who have taken this particular path speak very highly of it.

The teacher-training programme provided by the YSA is for those who want a career in teaching and already have a degree level qualification. The programme lasts for one year and involves two long-term placements in Chorley area primary schools alongside high quality training and support provided by the YSA. At the end of the programme, participants emerge as qualified teachers.

If you are interested, or you know anyone else who might be, please contact Rob Horne at r.horne@st-georges.lancs.sch.uk. Alternatively, you can call me for a brief chat and I can tell you a little bit about.

13.11.26