



# School Newsletter

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

19.12.25

Dear parents and carers,

It is the last newsletter of 2025. We have come to the end of the long, busy autumn term; nearly three months have passed since we started the term. This afternoon, we celebrated with a whole school Christmas service in the hall prepared for us by Mr Hodge. It featured readings from the different Nativities and songs from the different performances of the EYFS, KS1 and KS2.

The children and staff have all worked hard over the last few months and I think that they are all ready for a bit of downtime as I am sure we all are. So, on behalf of everyone at St Mary's, **I wish you all a happy and holy Christmas and a very happy new year.**

We look forward to seeing you all again on **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026**.

**Message from Matthew Simpson, Chair of the Governors on behalf of the Governing Board**

*As another successful term draws to a close, I would like to thank everyone for their ongoing contribution and commitment to the school. With all the recent festive activities at school - and only six more sleeps to go - I'm sure the children (and the rest of us) are all now ready, and extremely excited for, the break. On behalf of the governing board, I would like to wish you all a very happy and enjoyable Christmas and all the very best for 2026.*

**KS2 Christmas Performance Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December at St Mary's Church**

On Monday evening, the children from Years 3 to 6 told the story of the first Christmas in their Nativity production in Church. It was a beautiful performance with a narration and a selection of traditional hymns and songs. Thank you to the staff for preparing the children so well and to the children for their wonderful singing, narrating and acting.

Thank you to Father Marsden for hosting us at Church and thank you, parents and families for supporting in great number.

Thank you indeed all, for your great support in turning out to see all of the performances over the last couple of weeks. The children are a credit to you and the school, as always.



## Collections at the end of performances



Many thanks for your **very generous** donations at the end of the recent Christmas performances. You donated nearly **£952 in total** and this has already paid out. Donations of £250 each were made to St Catherine's Hospice, Derian House and Meningitis Now and £202 was donated to St Mary's Church towards the heating. Thank you very much for your wonderful generosity.

## PTFA News

Thanks you parents, carers and families for your generous support at the recent Christmas Fair; you raised **£1750**. This is a fantastic total, thank you very much. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the PTFA for providing the Christmas gifts for children in all the classes and for their contribution to the coaches for the theatre trips.

## Theatre Visits

I am sure your children will have told you but they thoroughly enjoyed their theatre visits this week. Nursery, reception, Y1, Y2 and Y3 classes went to the Lowry Theatre in Salford to watch a production of Roald Dahl's *The Enormous Crocodile*. The Y4, Y5 and Y6 classes went there to watch a production of the C.S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

The children also enjoyed the 360 immersive experience of Lowry's *Going to the Match*. <https://thelowry.com/lowry-360-5htn> and the opportunity to see some of Lowry's art work which is currently on display.

Thank you to all the volunteers who came along on the both visits – it is greatly appreciated and thank you once again to Mrs Nicklin and Mrs Wilson for putting the visits together and to Mr Eames who helped make the experience so enjoyable.

## Christmas Lunch

The children and staff feasted on a magnificent Christmas lunch today. A big hats off and thank you to the kitchen staff, Rachel, Katie and Lynn, who worked so hard to make it such a success. It was the first ever Christmas lunch that Rachel has been responsible for and she pulled it off to a tee. Well done and thank you to the whole team.

## Christmas Parties

The children across school enjoyed their Christmas parties, this week. Thank you to the PTFA for funding selection boxes and story books for the children to enjoy. A very special thank you to Father Christmas who once again made a special trip to St Mary's to visit our children and hand out some early presents. Although he could not make it all to the junior classes (he managed to pop into Y3!), he did leave each class a gift! He worked very hard yesterday morning, visiting all the nursery and

infant classes: he spoke with the children and told them about the 'untidy children' list he is keeping this year. Thank you Father Christmas – what a great job you did!

### **Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Charity Christmas Collection**

Thank you so much for your generous donations to this charity. The items were collected on Monday afternoon.

### **Ukraine Shoebox appeal**

Thank you so much for your support of the *International Aid Trust's Shoebox Appeal* in support of Ukraine. We delivered a number of shoeboxes to the International Aid Trust store on Pall Mall this afternoon and were told that they will be going out with the next shipment which leaves this weekend.

### **CHRISTMAS 2025 MASS TIMES - ST MARY'S RC CHURCH CHORLEY**

24<sup>TH</sup> WED 16.30 CHRISTMAS EVE – carols 16.00

25<sup>TH</sup> THURS 09.30 CHRISTMAS DAY

*Happy and blessed Christmas and a healthy and safe New Year 2026. God bless. Fr Marsden and Parishioners*



### **KS2 Mass to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany Wednesday 7 January**

When we return next month, children in Y3,4,5 and 6 will be visiting church on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January, they will attend Mass to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. They can be dropped off from 0845. Children who attend Breakfast Club walk up to Church as usual accompanied by members of staff.

### **Sign Language - Sign of the Week**

This week's sign is 'Father Christmas.' Ask your child to demonstrate it to you!



## Primary School Admissions September 2026

If your child is in their last year of pre-school/nursery you can now apply for their primary school place at: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/starting-primary-school/> for a September 2025 start.

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 2026**. Between now and 15<sup>th</sup> January all applications are processed and all preferences are considered against the school's published admissions policy for school year 2026 - 2027.

<https://www.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> \*\***

## Foodbank

Following on from the fabulous support shown for our Harvest Service, we are reinstating the drop-off box in the main entrance for donations for the **Living Waters - Storehouse** food bank.

You can use this for further donations of tinned/packed goods or other items such as toiletries (shampoos/bubble bath) or even gift sets as the Christmas season approaches. Thank you.

## ParentPay

ParentPay - please ensure accounts are up to date for end of term. Thank you.

## Tax-free childcare

One of our governors shared some information with me a couple of years ago to pass on to parents and carers - here is a reminder, in case your circumstances have changed.:

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare. This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled (up to £4,000 a year). For every £8 you pay into this account, the government will pay in £2 to use to pay your provider.

You can get Tax-Free Childcare at the same time as 30 hours free childcare if you're eligible for both. You can use Tax-Free Childcare for: childminders, nurseries and nannies and after school clubs and play schemes. <https://www.gov.uk/tax-free-childcare>

## Smartphone Free Childhood

## Fact of the Week



### FACT OF THE WEEK

Excessive screen time can reduce verbal interaction, delaying language development

You will notice around school a QR code inviting parents and carers to the St Mary's Smartphone Free childhood Whatsapp group. Here is the link again:



You're not alone in wanting to create a childhood free from smartphones and social media.

Join the St Mary's Smartphone Free Childhood WhatsApp community for tips and support because screens can wait - childhood cannot!

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/>

*Smartphone Free Childhood – 'We're united for childhood - Join the growing movement of families who believe childhood's too short to scroll away.'*

## Message from Chorley St Mary's Beavers, Cubs and Scouts groups

Chorley St. Mary's currently have spaces in their Beaver and Cub sections, and some availability in the Scout section. We meet at the Scout Hut on Hodder Avenue, PR7 3PB on Friday evenings during term time. Beavers and Cubs meet from 5 30 to 6 45pm, and Scouts from 7 till 8 30pm. We have a wide and varied programme and have a lot of fun in our Scouting activities. Please email [jacqueline.malone@chorleyscouts.org.uk](mailto:jacqueline.malone@chorleyscouts.org.uk) for more information.

**STAR OF THE WEEK w/e 19.12.25**

<b>Class</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Star of the week for... &amp; Value of the week of PEACE</b>
Nursery	s	Millie	An enthusiastic approach to learning
	v	Nova	Letting her super peaceful nature shine at all times
	Dojo	Oliver B	
R	s	Ottilie	Super work all week in reception class – well done!
	v	Rosie	Showing peace and calm in all she does.
	Dojo	Ozias	
Y1	s	George W	For enjoying an exciting week in school.
	v	Ellie	For sacrificing her party prize and giving it to her friend.
	Dojo	Lilly	
Y2	s	Eden	For a superb effort during his traditionnal twisted tale story.
	v	Olivia W	For always showing holiness during worship time.
	Dojo	Eleanor	
Y3	s	Penelope	For trying really hard with the presentation of her work
	v	James M	Always keeps the peace in Year 3.
Y4	s	Lilah	Great explanation text on why dinosaurs are extinct
	v	Holly	Giving up her seat for someone else.
Y5	s	Finley	Being noticed for being a good friend.
	v	Thomas	Always promoting peace and service.
Y6	s	Thea	For her wonderful persuasive letter to the Grinch.
	v	Lydia	For showing the value of peace whilst on our trip.

## Attendance



### Chorley, St Mary's Attendance League 2025/2026 w/e 19.12.25



CURRENT POSITION	CLASS	CURRENT %
1st	YEAR 4	97.60
2nd	YEAR 2	97.40
3rd	YEAR 1	97.32
4th	YEAR 3	97.25
5th	RECEPTION	96.85
6th	YEAR 5	95.50
7th	YEAR 6	93.47

Well done to **Y1** on their **100%** attendance this week!

#### How does our attendance compare against other schools?

Attendance measure	Percentage	Ranking ⓘ
Overall attendance	96.5%	You are ranked 103rd out of 479 schools
Overall absence	3.5%	You are ranked 103rd out of 479 schools
Authorised absence	3.0%	You are ranked 164th out of 479 schools
Unauthorised absence	0.4%	You are ranked 39th out of 479 schools
Persistently absent	7.4%	You are ranked 76th out of 479 schools
Severely absent	0.0%	You are ranked 1st out of 479 schools

The illness that we have suffered in Y6 over a few weeks ago sent us plummeting down the attendance tables. But we have managed to climb back up 20 places. I am sure we can continue climb our way back up to the top in the New Year and get back into that top 10.

#### 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>



**Reminder!**

## **Some New Year reminders**

**Earrings and Jewellery** - For safety reasons, earrings are not to be worn in school. If

### **Hair styles**

We expect pupils to have sensible hair styles. Cuts, dyed hair or styles which in the judgement of the school are extreme, are not acceptable. Please keep the school and nursery a fashion-free zone!

### **Hair tied-up to prevent head lice infection, please!**

As we all know, head lice do not fly or jump from head of hair to head of hair, they just walk! Therefore, to prevent the spread of head lice in school we ask that hair, longer than shoulder length, be tied back. Many thanks.



**Shoes** Pupils are expected to wear plain black shoes. Again, we want school to remain a fashion-free zone. Some sports companies make black trainers for children. We ask you not to use these for school. They are trainers and not shoes and of course, the children will prefer to wear them! However, once one has them, this puts pressure on the other children to ask their parents for them. Many thanks for your co-operation in this matter.



### **Labelling Uniforms**

The children really look smart in their uniforms but so that bits and pieces do not go missing, please ensure that **all items** are labelled clearly with your child's name. Thank you. If items do go missing, we will be putting the lost property box in the newly available space in the main entrance.

**Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all at St Mary's School & Nursery,**

**P Smyth 19.12.25**



## NHS Dentist for Children

We have been contacted by the NHS to publicise NHS dentistry for children. Please see attached leaflet.



Rodericks  
**Dental**  
Partners

**St Georges Dental Practice**

### Message from SVP Chorley Buddies



## SVP Chorley Buddies *We're Helping*

**01257 542 367**

Supported by  
**Chorley  
Council**

**Activity  
Classes**

**Good Food  
Clubs**

**Community  
Café**

**Craft  
Club**

**Children's  
Activities**



## SVP Chorley Buddies *We're Helping*

**01257 542 367**



St Vincent  
de Paul Society  
England and Wales  
Turning Concern into Action

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Seated Yoga Adlington Library 9:30-10:30am. FREE to all.	St Joseph's Good Food Club St Joseph's Parish Centre, Harpers Lane, Chorley 10:30-11:15am, followed by refreshments. £5 to shop and donations for refreshments.	Coppull Good Food Club St John the Divine Parish Hall, Coppull 10:30-11:15am, followed by refreshments. £5 to shop and donations for refreshments.	Buttermere Good Food Club Buttermere Community Centre, Chorley 10:30-11:15am, followed by refreshments. £5 to shop and donations for refreshments.	Clayton Brook Good Food Club Clayton Brook Village Hall, Clayton-le-Woods 10:30-11:15am. £5 to shop and refreshments available in the Café.
Knit and Natter Primrose Gardens, Chorley 10am-12pm. Donations welcome.	Seated Yoga Adlington Library 11am-12pm. FREE to all.	Gardening Club Buttermere Community Centre, Chorley 11:00am-12:00pm. FREE to all.	Seated Exercise Ravensthorpe Independent Living Accommodation, Astley Village 10:30am-11:30pm. £3 suggested donation.	Aquarobics All Seasons Leisure Centre, Chorley 3-4pm. Term time only. £5 suggested donation.
Kids Arts and Crafts Coppull Library 3:30-4:30pm. Term time only.	Chair Fit Euxton Community Centre, 11:15am-12:15pm. £3 suggested donation.	Lunch Social 2nd Wednesday of the month St Chad's Parish Centre from 12-2pm BOOKING ESSENTIAL Donations welcome.		
	Lunch Social 4th Tuesday of the month Buttermere Community Centre, Chorley from 12-2pm. BOOKING ESSENTIAL Donations welcome.	Buddies Café Buttermere Community Centre, Chorley 9am-3pm Affordable café with crafts running from 12:30-2pm Everyone welcome		
	Seated Exercise All Seasons Leisure Centre, Chorley 3-4pm. £5 suggested donation.	Chair Fit Croston Old School, Church Street, Croston 1:30-2:30pm. £3 suggested donation.		



**SCAN TO DONATE**