



School Newsletter

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

20.09.24

Dear parents/ carers,

Smartphone free childhood

Smartphone Free Childhood say ...

'Parents have been put in an impossible position. **Either** we give our children access to an adult product that opens the door to harmful content, addictive algorithms and the anxiety machine that is social media **or** we risk alienating them from their peers at a crucial stage of their development. It's a lose-lose; for parents, children and society. And we're on a mission to fix it.'

Can you help?

We have been contacted by a number of parents and will arrange to meet shortly. If you would like to help please contact me at smartphonefree@chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk

If we can achieve a consensus, among parents in different year groups, not to give children smartphones, that would reduce the pester power and the guilt parents feel about having to get them for their children. In this way, we could collectively delay the time children receive smartphones to a point when they are intellectually and emotionally ready. I would be interested to hear your views.

Mental Health & Wellbeing Support Team – Compass Bloom

This year, St Mary's school has been offered a commissioned mental health & wellbeing support package from Compass Bloom. See attached poster to explain a little bit more. I will share more as it gets started.

EYFS Breakfast Stay & Play - Wednesday 18th September

Thank you to our EYFS staff and to all the parents and carers who came along to enjoy the Stay and Play session this week. I think our nursery and reception children relished the chance to show their parents and carers where they go to work.

Sacramental Class Meeting – Cheese and Wine evening 6pm Tuesday 24th September at 6pm

A reminder that there is a meeting in school for parents and carers of children receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion during the coming school year.



The meeting will take place in the school hall on Tuesday, September 24th at 6pm. At the meeting Mrs Grzeczynska, Lead Catechist and School Governor, will introduce herself and share some information regarding the Sacramental Programme (Family Catechesis) for the coming year. It will also provide an opportunity for parents and carers to ask any questions that they may have. The meeting is intended for parents only but if families are struggling for childcare, then the school will do its best to accommodate your child.

Democracy in action ... the election of members of the St Mary's Pupil Parliament

Elections will take place for members of the St Mary's Pupil Parliament next week. Children will be invited to stand for election and their classmates can cast their votes next Thursday afternoon.

Holy Cross Headteacher, Mr Lindley

This weekend, Mr Lindley, the new headteacher at Holy Cross, is speaking at 5pm Mass on Saturday and 10am Mass on Sunday at St Mary's. He is also going to visit us here at St Mary's school to speak to the Y5 and Y6 children on Wednesday, October 9th.

Harvest Mass



Fr Marsden will be saying Mass with us on **Monday 30 September at 2pm**, as we celebrate the harvest. Whilst we give thanks for the food we have, we know that there are many people in our community who will be struggling to put food on their tables at this present time. Therefore, we would like to ask our families, if they are able, for donations of food which will be taken to the Living Waters Food Bank in Chorley. I know that they would be extremely grateful for donations of tinned food e.g. hot dogs, tinned meat products, tinned vegetables - tomatoes, carrots, potatoes, peas, tins of soup and beans and tinned fruit such as peaches. The bags can be left in the school entrance out on the morning of **Monday 30th September**. Thank you.



Volunteers

We really appreciate the help we receive from parents and grandparents who come in to help with reading, supporting children's learning, clubs etc. We have had a couple of parents in recent years who started off volunteering and then have decided to pursue a career in teaching! A big thank you to all our returning volunteers this year – you make a massive difference! Thank you to all those who have offered their services this year, we will be in touch soon.

If you feel you can spare half an hour or more a week please get in touch with the school office.
Many thanks.

2024 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES – PRIMARY AND SECONDARY



St Mary's Prospective Parents Open Evening Thursday 7th November at 6pm.

There will be an open evening event on **Thursday 7th November** at 6pm for parents interested in a place for their child in our reception class for September 2024. More details will follow.

Primary School Admissions September 2025: 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 2025**. Between now and 15th January all applications are processed and all preferences are considered against the school's published admissions policy for school year 2024 – 2025
<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> ****

Year 6 Pupils moving to Year 7

Applying for a place at high school

The window to apply for a secondary school place is now open. To apply for a place in a Lancashire secondary school please check the following link:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/starting-secondary-school/>

It's 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 school. If you live in Lancashire you can include out of area preferences on your online application.

The arrangements for the transfer of pupils to secondary schools in September 2025 will, as far as possible, conform to the following timetable. The deadline for applications is **Thursday 31st October**, which is during our half term break.

Parking

By way of a reminder at the start of the school year, I would appreciate your co-operation in parking safely and considerately at drop-off and pick-up times. **Please do not park on the staff carpark, the yellow zig zag lines** outside the gates and please do not park **across resident's driveways**. Thank you.



School entrance

At the start and end of the school day there are two entrances to the school in use: Walgarth Drive and Warton Place. The Warton place entrance can also be accessed from Hornchurch Drive via the alleyway that runs parallel to the staff car park. **Please do not use the path in the staff car park entrance.** This may only be used during the school day when the other entrances are locked.

Parentkind

Parentkind – the charity that supports school PTAs - have teamed up with Asda, who is making millions of pounds available to donate to primary schools across the UK through their 'Cashpot for Schools' initiative – all you have to do is, opt in through the Asda Rewards app, choose our primary school and shop and scan in store or shop online at Asda.com, between 2nd September and 30th November 2024.

Asda will donate 0.5% of the value of your shop to our Primary school. Also, every time somebody opts in, Asda will give an additional £1 to the school Cashpot. Plus, it doesn't stop there – Asda are also giving £50 to every school to get them started.

The supermarket has joined forces with Joe Wicks to support the initiative – look out for the TV advert, radio ads and social media coverage. Asda does the rest, all money raised will be donated to schools to spend on the things they need the most.

Message from Linda Walmsley, Lay Chaplain at Holy Cross

*For the first Youth Mass of the academic year, we're working with the Live Simply Group at St Gregory's to host a **Creation Mass**, on Sunday 6 October at 6:30pm. We're hoping to involve as many young people and families as possible and to help with that.*

Many thanks. Linda, Linda Walmsley Lay Chaplain



As always, if there is anyone in our school who you think might like to be involved - readers, greeters, musicians, offertory we can put them in touch with Linda. Please contact the school office.

INVITATION St Joseph's Guide Unit sent the following invitation:

Girl Guide Open Evening

16th Chorley St. Josephs Girl Guides invite you to take part in an Open Evening. We currently have spaces available for girls aged 9.5 to 14 years of age.

Girl Guiding offers fun, challenging and educational opportunities. Using weekly meetings and larger event's to support learning and empowering girls to be brave, confident and try new things in a safe environment.

We extend a warm welcome to you to come and join us at the Open Evening to see what we do and ask questions. This will take place at St. Joseph's Primary School Hall on Tuesday 24th September 2024 from 7.30pm to 8.15pm. Please come along and get to know us and our girls.

If you are interested in attending please contact Zoe Hall Unit Leader on 07927277905. We look forward to seeing you

High School Open Evenings

Holy Cross Catholic High School

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND OUR

Open Evening

at Holy Cross Catholic High School

Thursday 10 October 2024

Join us between 4.30pm - 7pm

Holy Cross
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

www.holycross.lancs.sch.uk

"AN OUTSTANDING CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL"
ARCHDIOCESEAN REPORT

St Michael's CE High School


St Michael's CE High School are holding an open morning on Thursday 10th October 9:30am-12 noon. This is open to all prospective families and there is no requirement to book.

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 20.9.24



Class	Name	Star of the Week for ...
YN	Hallie	Always being kind and including her friends
YR	Lily	For fantastic answers and discussing our story
Y1	Ella	For her excellent attitude to all of her new learning.
Y2	Cleo	for her wonderful enthusiasm
Y3	Madison	For trying hard to answer lots of questions in class.
Y4	Finley N	For getting 25 out of 25 on his times tables test.
Y5	Lydia	For her excellent effort and answers during our mathematics linked to place value.
Y6	Faith	Her letter in a bottle from a character lost in the jungle

ATTENDANCE NEWS

Message from the school office

When leaving messages on the absence line to report your child absent for the day, please could we kindly remind parents to confirm the details of illness so that we can record this on school registers. It is important to know the reason so that we can identify any potential illnesses which could spread through classes, eg vomiting/diarrhoea or coughs/cold. Please could we also remind that you should telephone every day of absence.

Our school website contains lots of information for new and existing parents alike. For any frequently asked questions, we have a dedicated page in the Parent section <https://st-mary-s-catholic.schudio.com/parents/faqs>

This also links to our online contact page if you have a query not answered on the website. If you use the online contact page, your query will be directed to the correct person and dealt with quickly.



Chorley, St Mary's Attendance League

2024/2025 20.09.24



CURRENT POSITION	CLASS	CURRENT %
1st	YEAR 3	100.00
2nd	YEAR 1	99.74
3rd	RECEPTION	98.69
4th	YEAR 6	98.44
5th	YEAR 2	98.21
6th	YEAR 4	97.31
7th	YEAR 5	95.79

Three classes had **100%** attendance this week – well done! Congratulations to Reception, Y1 and, Y3. Special congratulations must go to Y3 again because they have had 100% since the first day of term. Can they keep up this record-breaking streak into a fourth week?

An update on Penalty Charge Notices issued for unauthorised absence

These changes came into effect on 19 August 2024.

- Penalty notices issued for offences that take place after 19 August 2024 will be charged at a new rate of £160 per parent per child. This can be paid at £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Any second penalty notice issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period will be issued at the rate of £160 to be paid within 28 days with no option for a discounted rate.
- The threshold at which a penalty notice **must** be considered is set at 10 sessions (equivalent to 5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10-school week period. This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.
- A maximum of 2 penalty notices may be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling 3-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another course of action will need to be considered (such as prosecution or one of the other attendance legal interventions).
- Only penalty notices issued for absences taking place after 19 August 2024 will count towards the above thresholds.

Best wishes,

Patrick Smyth
Headteacher
20.09.24