



20th December 2024

Chorley St Mary's News

Season's greetings!



It's Christmas!

Wishing you all a happy and peaceful Christmas



School Newsletter

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

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is the last newsletter of 2024. We have come to the end of the long, busy autumn 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 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 6th January 2025.**

0900 Mass at St Mary's Church to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany - Monday 6th January 2025.

Please remember that for the juniors Years 3 – 6 , we are going to St Mary's Church on our first day back to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. Please could you drop the children off from 0845 at Church. They will walk back to school after Mass, which will finish just after 9.40am. If any parents or carers are available at 9.40 am to accompany us on our walk back from Church, we would be extremely grateful. If you are able to help, please let your child's class teacher know.

KS2 Nativity Performance Monday 16th December at St Mary's Church

On Monday evening, the children from Years 3 to 6 told the Nativity story in their Christmas production in Church, *The Bells Ring Out*. It was a beautiful performance with a narration and a selection new 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 **£880 in total** and this has already been banked. **£80** has been used to fund the licences and costumes.



We will pass on cheques of: **£285.00 to Derian House, £285.00 to St Catherine's Hospice, £285 to Meningitis Now, £200.00** will go towards the heating at St Mary's Church and the remaining £48 pays for the licence fees for EYFS production (due it being filmed and sold) . Thank you very much for your wonderful generosity.

Christmas Dinner

Thank you to Mrs McKeown, Mrs MaCaulay, Mrs Waddington and Mrs Benedito for preparing our wonderful Christmas dinners this week. The children (and staff!) enjoyed their tasty Christmas feast very much!

Christmas Mass times at St Mary's RC Church, Chorley

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES at St Mary's Church, Chorley from parish newsletter

CHRISTMAS EVE (24th)

16.00 Carols.

16.30 Mass

After the Christmas Eve Mass, everyone is invited to the parish centre for some free hot food.

CHRISTMAS DAY MASS: 09.30

CONFESSIONS: Saturdays 16.15 – 16.45

Advent Service of Reconciliation

at St Gregory's, Sunday 15th at 15.00



Theatre trips

YN, YR, Y1 and Y2 EYFS and KS1 visit to the Lowry – *The Stick Man* – Monday 16th December

The nursery and infant classes enjoyed a wonderful visit to the Lowry in Manchester on Monday morning to watch a live performance of *The Stick Man*, based on the children's book by Julia Donaldson and Alex Sheffler.

Thanks to all the staff and volunteers who took them along. And, a special thanks to one of our parents, Mr Eames, who helped facilitate the visit. They had a fantastic time.

Christmas Parties

The children across school enjoyed their Christmas parties, yesterday. Thank you to the PTFA for funding selection boxes 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 to the junior classes, he did leave each class a gift! He worked very hard yesterday morning, visiting all the infant classes and he spoke with the children and he gave them a present each. Thank you Father Christmas – what a great job you did!

Primary School Admissions September 2025 Deadline – WEDNESDAY 15th JANUARY 2025

Please see Mrs Wilson's letter below regarding admissions to school for September 2025. Occasionally, I have to go to appeals meetings for pupils not admitted to school due to missed deadlines or non-completion of supplementary information forms (SIFs). If you are unsure about any part of the process please contact the school office – or if you are aware of anyone who is seeking a place at St Mary's next September and may not see this note, please make them aware of it. Thank you.

Dear Parents & Carers,

*A reminder that if you have a child that is due to start school in September 2025, that the closing date for applications is **Wednesday 15th January 2025**. Please be aware that if you are applying to our school (or any other faith school) that a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) **must be completed** for each school and the evidence provided where necessary.*

Should you have any questions or require any further help or information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Mrs Wilson, School Business Manager

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 2025 – 2026
<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> ****

Holy Cross Production of *We Will Rock You*

Please see ticketing details in poster at the end of the newsletter.

CSSP Christmas Holiday Club

Please see details in posters at the end of the newsletter.

CSSP Competition Winner!

You may remember in last week's newsletter the CSSP were running a Christmas competition: "*Team Blues 12 Moves*" where children were asked to learn a Christmas dance that they had filmed and to send in video entries of them recreating it to be in with a chance of winning a large goody bag.

Well Violet in Y4 took up the challenge and won the fully loaded goody bag! She received her prize in assembly today. Congratulations Violet and thank you CSSP. She was very pleased.



UK Parliament Teacher Ambassador (Gold)

Congratulations to Mr Cahalin and the St Mary's Pupil Parliament. For all their work on developing our parliament, Mr Cahalin has been awarded the prestigious UK Parliament Teacher Ambassador Gold Award. Well done – a fantastic achievement.

First Holy Communion Badge Competition

The First Holy Communion Badge Competition is back for its second year! Children preparing to make their First Holy Communion next spring are invited to design a badge to commemorate the special day.

The badge will be round and roughly the size of a £2 coin, and participants can only use up to 5 colours, including black and white. To get the template and enter the competition, use the form and template attached to this email and email your entry to badges@rcaol.org.uk
All entries need to be in by 27 January.

Vacancy - Breakfast Club assistant

Are there any parents, carers interested in working for an hour, 0745 – 0845, each day in the Breakfast Club? If you are interested or you know of anybody else who is, please contact Mrs Wilson at the school office. office@chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk or 01257 262811.

Tax-free childcare

One of our governors shared some information with me last year 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>

Parent Pay Balances

Mrs Wilson and Mrs Hargreaves have asked me to remind you to check balances on Parent Pay and settle any outstanding amounts. Thank you.



Changes to contact details

If there are any changes to contact numbers over the break e.g. from new mobile phones, please let the office know in January.

We will keep the prize collection open until Friday, 12th January at which point we will roll them over to the summer fair.

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>

Health and Safety Reminder – sickness and/ or diarrhoea

This is the time of year when there are more bugs and germs around than usual. If your child does become ill with **sickness or diarrhoea**, the guidance for schools from Public Health England gives a minimum recommended absence from school of **48 hours**. This is to limit the spread of the bug around school. Thank you.
new.





Chorley, St Mary's Attendance League

2024/2025 w/e 20.12.2024



CURRENT POSITION	CLASS	CURRENT %
1 st	YEAR 6	98.42
2 nd	YEAR 3	97.46
3 rd	YEAR 5	97.35
4 th	YEAR 4	97.31
5 th	YEAR 1	97.29
6 th	YEAR 2	97.08
7 th	RECEPTION	96.81

Congratulations to Y5 on their **100%** attendance

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.

PTFA future dates

PTFA Meeting - Tuesday 4th February - time to be confirmed

PTFA Meeting - Tuesday 29th April - time to be confirmed

Ladies Party Night - Friday 27th June - St Mary's Parish Centre



Some New Year reminders

Earrings and Jewellery - For safety reasons, earrings are not to be worn in school. If parents wish their children to have their ears pierced then please have them done at the beginning of the six-week break to allow ears to heal. The only form of jewellery children are permitted to wear is watches.

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 20.12.24



For your diary!

*Christmas Eve mass
will be at 16.30 with
carols starting at 16.00.*

*After Mass, everyone is
invited to the parish
centre for a free hot
meal.*

*School will re-open
after the Christmas
break on Monday 6th
January 2025.*



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chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk | off ce@chorleystmarys.lancs.sch.uk

