



St Mary's Catholic College

NEWSLETTER

Work together; Succeed together

Autumn Term | 2024 stmaryswallasey.com



Open Evening

St. Mary's Catholic College warmly welcomed prospective Year 5 and 6 students and their families to its annual Open Evening, a significant event in the school's calendar. With an unwavering commitment to nurturing academic excellence and personal growth, this evening offered a unique glimpse into the exceptional educational experience that awaits students at St. Mary's.

The event opened with a warm welcome from Mr. K Maddocks, the Headteacher of St. Mary's Catholic College. His inspiring address emphasised the school's vision and ethos, perfectly encapsulated in the motto, "Work together, Succeed together." Mr. Maddocks expressed how this guiding principle underpins every aspect of life at St. Mary's, fostering a community where students, teachers, and families collaborate to achieve shared goals and create lasting success.

As attendees filled the college's welcoming spaces, the atmosphere buzzed with excitement and anticipation. Parents and students were treated to a comprehensive overview of the college's approach to education, showcasing its commitment to excellence both inside and outside the classroom. The event highlighted the breadth of opportunities available at St. Mary's, from rigorous academic programs and innovative STEM activities to creative arts, sports, and community engagement.

Families had the chance to engage directly with subject teachers and current students, who shared personal insights into the learning environment and the supportive, inclusive culture at the college. The opportunity to ask questions, explore classrooms, and witness student-led projects and presentations gave families a sense of how St. Mary's cultivates a well-rounded education working as part of HFCMAT where academic success goes hand-in-hand with personal development and gospel values.

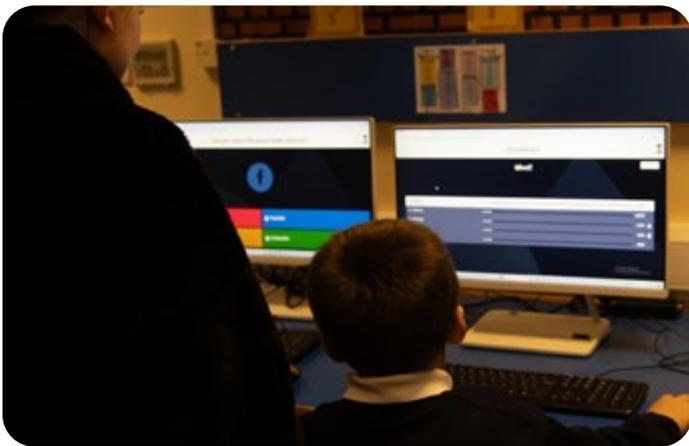
When Mr. Maddocks spoke about how collaboration truly embodies the essence of St. Mary's, ***"Our success is built upon working together—students collaborating with teachers, peers learning from each other, and families supporting the college's mission,"*** he said.

This emphasis on mutual effort and shared achievement was reflected in stories from past and present students who spoke proudly about their experiences and how they've grown emotionally and spiritually through the school's guidance and work with the local parish.

The event also featured performances by the school choir and live demonstrations across the College, allowing prospective students to imagine themselves being part of St. Mary's community. The welcoming atmosphere reinforced the belief that at St. Mary's, every student is seen and valued, and given the tools to reach their full potential.

The Open Evening served as a powerful reminder that choosing the right school is about more than just academics—it's about finding a place where children feel supported, challenged, and inspired. At St. Mary's Catholic College, students don't just learn; they thrive, building friendships, confidence, and skills that last a lifetime.

As the evening concluded, families left with a clearer understanding of what makes St. Mary's a special place. With Mr Maddocks' words echoing in their minds, they departed knowing that at ***St Mary's, their child will be known and loved in a way reflected by Jesus as the good Sheppard. (John 10: 14-15)***



C Change Conference

HFCMAT Showcases Creativity in Education



Students from St Mary's took center stage on **Wednesday, 21st September**, at the prestigious **C Change - A New Way Forward Conference** held at the Floral Pavilion. This groundbreaking event brought together educators, cultural professionals, and creative industry leaders to explore the transformative power of creativity in education and two of our Year 11 Students, Oscar and Antonia, led the way in why they feel Creativity is a vital part of education.

The conference was an opportunity to reflect on the first three years of HFCMAT's commitment to embedding creative thinking across its schools. Attendees were given a preview of the **evaluation of this work**, showcasing the tangible impact creativity has had on teaching and learning to which St Mary's has been a huge part.

"We are so proud of everything we have achieved together, This journey has been incredible, and we are excited about the next steps as we continue to innovate and inspire through creativity."

One of the highlights of the day was the performance by Oscar and Antonia who are just two of our learning Ambassadors who were specially invited to showcase their talents.

Their participation not only demonstrated the role of creativity in personal development but also highlighted its potential to unite education and the arts.

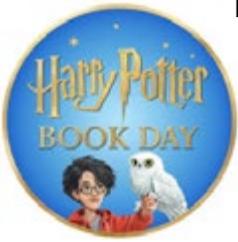
"It's such a fantastic project, and I'm delighted that our students had this opportunity to view their opinions on the importance of creativity, "It's a testament to their hard work and the Trust's belief in creativity as a cornerstone of education."

The conference reinforced HFCMAT's dedication to creativity as a **fundamental asset** in the learning experiences of its young people. By fostering innovative thinking, collaboration, and expression, the Trust aims to prepare students for the challenges of an ever-changing world.

St Mary's continues to put creativity at the heart of education and we have recently taken on new recruits in our learning ambassadors team. Watch this space next term where these new ambassadors will lead a pupil training day,

Harry Potter Day

Library celebrations



For the second year in a row, students were invited to celebrate Harry Potter Book Day in the St Mary's Library!

This year's theme was Magical Creatures, so pupils were invited to hunt for golden coins like nifflers, eat cakes covered in snakes and spiders and defeat dementors with their very own patronuses! Furthermore, we were visited by the two St Mary's bearded dragons, as well as "Mouse": a student's pet snake!

Like in 2023, every witch and wizard who attended the Potter party left with a bag full of treats, including Bertie Botts jellybeans, a chocolate frog and collectable trading card, bookmarks, and a Hogwarts house sorter.



World Mental Health Day

Supporting our young minds

#HelloYellow



Pupils exchanged one piece of uniform for something yellow in return for a donation to charity. Supported by a cake sale we raised much needed funds to support young people in the UK.

As part of our compassion core value the whole college turned yellow in October to raise awareness of Mental Health in conjunction with YoungMinds. Young Minds is the UK's leading charity fighting for a future where all young minds are supported and empowered, whatever the challenges. They are here to make sure young people get the best possible mental health support and have the resilience to overcome life's difficulties. As a College we are committed to supporting their work. All year groups have also been introduced to Inspire Opportunities and there are many wonderful projects planned to further develop our core values. We are working together to succeed together.



YOUNGMINDS
fighting for young people's mental health

Inspire Time YoungMinds Standing together. Pupils exchanged one piece of uniform for something yellow in return for a donation to charity. Supported by a cake sale we raised much needed funds to support our young people in the UK.





Department Focus: Science

Developing creativity in our schools



Year 7 students have made a fantastic start to their journey at our school, quickly settling into their new routines and classrooms. In science, they have been diving into exciting topics like ecosystems, where they are learning about the relationships between living things and their



environments, as well as solids, liquids, and gases, exploring the properties and changes of states of matter.

Key Stage 3 science lessons have been particularly engaging, with plenty of

hands-on practical work allowing students to investigate and experiment. From observing food chains in action to conducting experiments with materials and temperature, the enthusiasm and curiosity shown by our Year 7 students have been inspiring. We look forward to seeing them grow as young scientists!

Year 8 students have been diving deeper into the world of science this term, expanding their knowledge and honing their skills as budding scientists. They have been exploring biodiversity, gaining a deeper understanding



of the variety of life on Earth and the importance of conservation. In chemistry, they've been learning about fuels and energetics, discovering how reactions can take in or release energy, as well as investigating chemical reactions and how substances interact. Key Stage 3 science lessons are packed with hands-on practical work, giving students the opportunity to conduct experiments, make observations, and analyse results.

These activities not only bring science to life but also help them develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills essential for their future studies. It's been wonderful to see their enthusiasm and growing confidence in the lab!

Year 9 students have been making great strides in their science education, tackling

fascinating topics that build on their previous learning and prepare them for the challenges ahead.

This term, they have been delving into photosynthesis, understanding how plants produce their food and sustain life on Earth, as well as exploring the physics of moving by force, analysing how forces impact motion and energy. In chemistry, they have been mastering the periodic table, discovering the properties and patterns of elements. Practical work continues to play a vital role in Key Stage 3 science, with experiments designed to reinforce their understanding and ignite curiosity.

From investigating the rate of photosynthesis to measuring forces and observing chemical reactions, these activities are helping students develop their skills as confident, analytical, and inquisitive scientists ready for the next stage of their journey.



Year 10 students have made an impressive start to their GCSE science courses, embracing the challenges of studying in greater depth and building on their Key Stage 3 foundation.

This term, they have been exploring key topics such as energy in physics, where they are analysing energy transfers and efficiency; cell biology in biology, learning about the structure and function of cells and their role in living organisms; and making salts in chemistry, where they are developing practical skills through hands-on experiments.

The transition to GCSE has been smooth, with students demonstrating curiosity and determination as they tackle more complex concepts and refine their scientific skills. It's been exciting to see their enthusiasm for the subject and their commitment to achieving their best!

Year 11 students have shown great dedication and resilience as they recently completed their mock examinations, demonstrating their hard work and determination to succeed in their GCSEs.

As they continue their studies,

they are looking forward to their upcoming practical drop-down day, where they will have the chance to focus on hands-on experiments and reinforce their understanding of key scientific concepts. This term, they have



been diving into topics such as forces in physics, exploring how they shape the motion of objects; homeostasis and response in biology, examining how the body maintains balance and responds to changes; and rates of reaction in chemistry, investigating the factors that influence chemical processes.

With a strong focus on both theoretical knowledge and practical skills, Year 11 are well on their way to becoming confident and capable scientists ready to tackle their final exams.



Inspire Programme

Pupils enjoyed a wide range of Personal Development activities within our Inspire Program this term. Inspire Programme is at the heart of the school's commitment to developing confident, compassionate, and ambitious young people who are equipped to make a positive impact in their communities and the wider world.

A Term Full of Opportunities

This term has seen a wealth of activities under the Inspire Programme, designed to engage students with real-world challenges and opportunities.

"The Inspire Programme is about giving every student an equal opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge, and values they need to thrive, both now and in the future," said Mrs Keen. Whether through collective worship, creative activities, Inspire time or opportunities like first aid the Inspire Programme ensures that St. Mary's students are prepared not only to succeed academically but also to become compassionate, creative, and impactful members of society.

With a curriculum that prepares for life today and tomorrow, the Inspire Programme truly embodies St. Mary's mission to develop the whole child and inspire a lifelong commitment to learning and growth.



Healthy Lifestyles Days

Years 7&8 students get practical

Year 9 students had two impactful Healthy Lifestyle Days on Wednesday, 13th November, and Thursday, 14th November. These days were designed as part of the school's Inspire Programme, which focuses on raising awareness of critical personal safety and lifestyle issues faced by teenagers today.

The sessions addressed topics such as knife crime, exploitation, cyber safety, and peer pressure. Facilitated by Merseyside Police and the Wirral Youth Justice Service, the workshops aimed to provide students with the tools and knowledge to make informed, healthier lifestyle choices while staying safe.

"These are crucial issues for young people," said Miss A. Keen, event organizer. "The Healthy Lifestyle Days are about empowering our students to navigate these challenges confidently and make positive decisions for their future."



Adding to the program's depth, the school hosted a performance of the play "Eve's Story" on Thursday, 14th November. Developed by writer Maurice Bessman in collaboration with Liverpool Cultural Education Partnership, Merseyside Police, community workers, and young people, the play explored the harrowing reality of coercive behavior and grooming through the story of a young character, Eve.

The performance shed light on the dangers of county lines exploitation, engaging students with a powerful narrative that encouraged reflection and discussion.

"This play is an important resource for addressing sensitive but essential topics in a way that resonates with young people," explained Miss Keen.

Through initiatives like the Healthy Lifestyle Days, St. Mary's demonstrates its commitment to nurturing well-rounded, informed, and resilient young people. By tackling these issues head-on, the school continues to create a safe, supportive environment that empowers students to thrive.



Anti-Bullying Week

Be kind to others

Anti-bullying Ambassadors at St Mary's came together to promote equality, diversity, inclusion, and kindness within school. In our Anti Bullying week, the theme "Make a noise about Bullying" empowered them to do something positive to counter the harm and hurt that bullying causes.

The Anti-bullying Ambassadors are made up of 12 students from Years 9, 11, 12 and 13. Our Anti-Bullying team was launched in 2021 as part of the school's '#BEKIND!' campaign and has since continued to develop.

To mark the end of Anti Bullying week, all children were invited to wear odd socks. This was to raise awareness of bullying, to remind each other of how unique we are, and how we can all work together to try to eradicate the issue of bullying.

During our Inspire lessons that week all our children explored the issue of bullying and what we can do as a college to eradicate it and how everyone is welcome and we have no outsiders here.

As part of the focused week the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors led collective worship each day in the theatre for each year group which included Music, Dance and Drama pieces from the performing arts pupils.

Our Anti Bullying campaign does not end here. The ambassadors have been working hard to promote anti-bullying throughout the school in a range of ways including working with Tranmere Rovers Football Club. Students from all year groups are able to benefit from the activities and support services that are provided.

**In a world where you can
be anything #BeKind
#Reachout**



Year 10 First Aid

First Aid Training Empowers St Mary's Students

This term, Year 10 students participated in a hands-on first aid session led by Class Training, where they learned essential skills that could one day save lives. From CPR to responding to injuries, the session offered students a valuable introduction to basic first aid, giving them the confidence to act in emergencies.

"This training is about empowering our students," said Mrs Keen "Knowing how to provide first aid is a critical skill that can make a real difference in their lives and the lives of others."

Looking ahead, the school's Year 13 students will undergo a comprehensive first-aid training day later in the year. This advanced session will prepare them to handle emergencies in professional environments and culminate in the awarding of a First Aid in the Workplace certification.

The school recognises the importance of this training as students prepare to transition into further education or the workforce, where having first aid knowledge can be an invaluable asset.

The initiative reflects St. Mary's belief in the importance of equipping students with life skills that extend beyond the classroom. By providing first aid training to multiple-year groups, the school ensures its students are prepared to respond to real-world challenges with confidence and competence.

These are skills that last a lifetime, whether at school, home, or work, knowing how to act in an emergency can save lives—and we're proud to give our students that ability.



Attendance

December saw the launch of the 14 day Challenge. Every student that attends in December will have a "lucky dip" to win a prize such as a £10 Amazon voucher, Christmas socks or a chocolate treat! There is a prize every time!

We have also seen the return of the Attendance Advent calendar! One member of each form has received a chocolate treat, each day in December. But you have to be in it to win it!

The final day of term will see our Sports Hall transform into a Christmas Wonderland! Our students will be invited to have their photo taken with our very own sleigh and enjoy Hot Chocolate, cake, participate in festive Crafts and maybe even a little Christmas Karaoke. Watch this space!

St Mary's Catholic College

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Work together; Succeed together

Careers Provision

Engaging with industry

Careers and Enterprise Award

We were delighted to be nominated and be placed as runners-up recently, from schools across the North West, for the Educate Careers and Enterprise Award. This award recognises schools, academies and colleges that are preparing young people the best they can for their future careers. Judges looked for excellent examples of career-related learning about the range of career pathways and opportunities available to them, whilst also developing a spirit for enterprise amongst pupils or students and encouraging entrepreneurship.



Careers Provision at St Mary's Catholic College

We understand that high-quality careers education and advice are crucial in preparing our students for life beyond their statutory education. Our goal is to equip students with a clear and accurate understanding of the 'world of work' and the various pathways available, enabling them to choose the most engaging and rewarding options. By developing their education and skills, we provide the tools for creating successful futures and maximising their life opportunities.

Our strategy is built around the Gatsby Benchmarks, Careers Development Institute (CDI) framework and our Catholic ethos and culture of inclusivity.

We have two clear objectives based on the central theme that 'The whole child matters':

- Prepare our students to 'THRIVE' in an ever-changing world and flourish in the future.
- Improve the social mobility of all students, especially those who lack social capital.

To achieve these objectives, we have made Careers a key priority in our college development plan, collaborating with stakeholders such as governors, local businesses, parents, staff, and pupils, and setting out our minimum expected standards for our careers program.

Collaborative Partnerships and Industry Engagement:

We have established strong partnerships with local and national businesses and higher education institutions. These collaborations create bespoke work experience opportunities, giving students practical insights into their chosen fields. For example, our partnership with a leading engineering firm allows students to participate in real-world projects, enhancing their technical skills and understanding of industry standards. Additionally, collaboration with a local university offers students access to advanced facilities and mentoring programs, bridging the gap between secondary education and higher learning.



Innovative Teaching Methods and Curriculum Integration:

We have integrated careers education across all subjects, redesigning our curriculum to align with labour market needs. This includes adding media, engineering, and hospitality at KS4 and T Levels in Education in the sixth form. Innovative teaching methods, such as project-based learning, enable students to tackle real-world challenges. For instance, Year 10 students collaborated with a local tech startup to develop marketing strategies for a new app.



Enterprise Projects and Entrepreneurship:

To foster a spirit of enterprise, we encourage students to participate in entrepreneurship programs and competitions. Our annual entrepreneurs competition is a highlight, where students develop business ideas, create prototypes, and pitch their concepts to a panel of judges comprising successful business leaders and alumni. Students benefit from a comprehensive selection of clubs, residential trips, experience days, and one-to-one careers guidance. Students experience multiple encounters with employees, employers, guest speakers, and further and higher education

establishments,

as well as work experience and mock interview days. We host apprenticeship assemblies and careers fairs and participate in the 'National Careers Challenge', 'National Apprenticeship Week', and 'National Careers Week'. In 2023, our Year 8 team won the NCC national finals in Birmingham, and we are attending the finals again in 2024.



Career Fairs and Industry Talks:

Our annual career fair attracts a wide range of employers, universities, and apprenticeship providers, offering students firsthand insights into various career options. This event is complemented by industry talks featuring guest speakers from diverse sectors, providing valuable insights into different professions, career trajectories, and required skills. We are a founding partner in the Wirral Pledge, a collection of organisations putting employers at the heart of informing and inspiring young people in Wallasey and North Wirral.



Tailored Support and Guidance:

Recognising that each student's career journey is unique, we have a particular focus on transition stages, providing experiences that align with student needs. In Year 9, we collaborate with Nestle and the Wild-Hearts group to deliver seminars linking curriculum choices to future careers. Each pupil has a St Mary's Careers Passport to log their career work. Special sessions assist with university applications, CV writing, and interview preparation, ensuring students are well-prepared for their next steps.



Impact and Outcomes:

The impact of our Careers and Enterprise program is evident in our students' achievements and NEET rate. Over the past three years, more students have secured places in universities and competitive apprenticeship programs.

Alumni frequently return to share their success stories, serving as role models and mentors. Employer feedback consistently highlights the high level of preparedness and professionalism demonstrated by our students during work placements.

We won the national prize from 'Amazing Apprenticeships' for the most creative use of resources. This year, we have been selected by Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge, funded by the DfE, to become their 'development school' for the Liverpool City Region, involving a pilot scheme to provide additional support based on 'employability skills'.



Careers Fair

Engaging with industry

St. Mary's Catholic College recently hosted its much-anticipated Annual Careers Fair in the sports hall, offering students an invaluable opportunity to explore a range of future pathways. The event brought together a diverse group of exhibitors, including local and national employers, the armed forces, further education and training providers, and a variety of universities.

Representatives from prestigious institutions such as Cambridge University and the University of Sheffield made the journey to join the event, alongside numerous other organisations. Their presence provided students with the chance to ask questions and gain insights into higher education options, career opportunities, and vocational pathways. Students from all year groups attended the Careers Fair, with Year 11 students showing particular enthusiasm. Fresh from the Sixth Form Open Evening, they were eager to explore their options and engage with the exhibitors. The university representatives were particularly impressed by the level of interaction and curiosity shown by the students, with both Cambridge University and the University of Sheffield noting how engaged and thoughtful the students were.

The Careers Fair is part of the college's ongoing commitment to broadening students' horizons and providing them with the tools to make informed decisions about their futures. These events play a vital role in helping students understand the wide variety of opportunities available to them as they consider their next steps.

The college looks forward to continuing to provide these enriching experiences, ensuring that students are well-prepared to take on the challenges of the future.



Inspire Opportunities

This half term has been a vibrant one for students, as the extracurricular program has taken center stage, offering a wide array of activities to engage every interest. From creative arts to sports and community action, there's been something for everyone to enjoy.

Students with a flair for performance have been shining in the performing Arts showcasing their creativity. Meanwhile, film enthusiasts have come together in the Film Club, exploring cinematic masterpieces and even trying their hand at filmmaking.

For sports lovers, the school grounds have been buzzing with energy. Whether it's the fast-paced action of teamwork on the football field or other sporting events, students have had ample opportunity to stay active and develop their skills.

The spirit of service has also been alive and well through the Faith in Action initiative. This program has encouraged students to make a difference in their communities, fostering compassion and leadership skills.

And that's not all! With an even wider selection of clubs and activities available, students have had the chance to discover new passions, build friendships, and grow in confidence outside the classroom.

As we look back on this action-packed half term, it's clear that these activities have not only enriched student life but have also strengthened the sense of community within the school. Here's to more exciting opportunities in the next term!

<https://stmaryswallasey.com/extra-curricular-timetables/>



Music Department

Live and Loud

On Tuesday 5th November, the first Tuesday Night Live concert took place in Birkenhead.

The event marked a number of firsts: it was the first time one of the popular Friday Night Live concert took place on a Tuesday. Tuesday Night Live also took a bow in its new home of Future Yard in Birkenhead.

As usual, young artists from St Mary's and SJP took to the stage to entertain the sell-out audience, with pupils playing a range of styles expertly.

Regular performers including Vena Cava, Avenue and Fuzion, who headlined their second event, wowed the crowd, as they usually do. Soloists John Moor and Olivia Quayle performed two of the more chilled items on the set, ably showcasing the talent that exists across all years at St Mary's.



Boys Dance Returns

Back with a Bang

Dance is back and bigger than ever at St. Mary's as the school proudly relaunches its Boys Dance Program. Under the leadership of the immensely talented Teo our Head student, the program is set to redefine expectations, offering boys the opportunity to explore ballet, modern, and jazz dance techniques in an inclusive and inspiring environment led by Teo himself.

Teo, an accomplished dancer and mentor, has taken the reins of the program, bringing his expertise and passion to every session. His commitment to nurturing talent and building confidence has already made an impact on the boys who have joined.

"Teo is an excellent mentor," said Mrs. Sabri. "He inspires the boys with his skill and enthusiasm, and this program is an amazing opportunity for them to grow as dancers and individuals."

The program aims to break down stereotypes and show that dance is for everyone, providing boys with a creative outlet while developing their strength, flexibility, and artistry. Teo's teaching blends the discipline of ballet, the fluidity of modern dance, and the dynamic energy of jazz, offering a well-rounded foundation for budding dancers.

"It's so exciting to see the boys embrace this opportunity," Mrs. Sabri added. "They're learning not just dance techniques but also teamwork, discipline, and self-expression."

For the participants, Boys Dance is more than just a class—it's a chance to build camaraderie, gain new skills, and explore the transformative power of movement.

"This is a space where we can push ourselves, learn from each other, and show what boys can achieve in dance," said one of the boys in the program.

With Teo at the helm and the full support of the school's dance department, Boys Dance is poised to become a highlight of St. Mary's performing arts offerings. As the program grows, the boys will have opportunities to showcase their talents at school events and beyond, proving that dance is as empowering as it is inspiring.



Spreading Christmas Cheer

Year 10 Health and Social Care Students Bring Joy

Our Year 10 Health and Social Care students have been focusing this term on the elderly life stage and the needs people have during this period of their life. As part of their work they decided to write some Christmas cards and drop them off at local nursing homes, bringing some Christmas cheers to some of our neighbours.



St Mary's Dance Department Launches Aim Higher Dance Company

The Dance Department at St. Mary's is stepping into the spotlight with an exciting new initiative: the creation of its very own Aim Higher Dance Company. Under the expert guidance of Miss O'Connor Sage, the company will bring together the school's most talented dancers to represent St. Mary's at a variety of high-profile events throughout the year.

Auditions for the company took place in October, with students from across the school showcasing their skills and passion for dance. The energy and enthusiasm were palpable as hopefuls vied for a coveted spot in the company, which promises to be a cornerstone of the school's performing arts program.

Miss O'Connor Sage, who will lead the company, expressed her excitement about the initiative. "This is an incredible opportunity for our dancers to push their boundaries, gain performance experience, and represent St. Mary's at a professional level," she said.

The Aim Higher Dance Company is already preparing for an ambitious schedule. Upcoming performances include appearances at Leap Festival, a renowned celebration of dance, and a special showcase at The Floral Pavilion. These events, along with others in the pipeline, will give the dancers a platform to shine and bring pride to their school.

"This company is all about celebrating the exceptional talent we have at St. Mary's," Miss O'Connor added. "Our students are ready to show the world what they can do."

The launch of this Dance Company underscores St. Mary's commitment to excellence in the arts, providing students with platforms to excel and inspiring others to reach for their full potential. Congratulations to all who auditioned and to those who will be part of this remarkable journey!

Raise your voices

From First Notes to a Show-Stopping Finale

The music department hosted an ambitious and heartwarming choir event that brought Year 7 students together for a day of music and creativity. From the first warm-up in the morning to a live-streamed grand finale in the evening, the day was a resounding success.

The challenge was to recruit and train a choir from scratch, guiding students—many with little to no prior singing experience—through learning and performing a song. By the end of the day, the young singers showcased their hard work in a stunning performance broadcast live on YouTube. "This was an incredible experience for everyone involved," said Mr Hughes, the organiser of the event. "Our Year 7 students amazed us with their enthusiasm and teamwork. They really rose to the occasion."

Throughout the day, students participated in vocal workshops, rehearsals, and team-building exercises in the school's theatre. The young singers practiced everything from basic vocal techniques to mastering harmonies and stage presence. The highlight of the event was undoubtedly the live-streamed performance, where the newly formed choir delivered an inspiring rendition of Karl Jenkins' Adiemus. Family, friends, and the wider community tuned in to watch the students

perform, applauding their dedication and talent. The event wasn't just about the final performance; it also aimed to ignite a passion for music among the students. "*We hope this experience inspires them to explore music further, whether that's joining the school choir or simply discovering the joy of singing,*" said Mr Faithfu'l, our Head of Music. Feedback from both students and parents has been overwhelmingly positive. Many parents expressed pride and delight at seeing their children perform on a public platform.

Congratulations to all the Year 7 students and staff who made this event such a memorable day. It was a shining example of what can be achieved when passion and teamwork come together!



Connections 2025

A Journey of Discovery and Friendship

St Mary's Youth Theatre (SMYT) are currently in rehearsals for their production of "Saba's Swim" by Danusia Samal as part of the National Theatre's Connections Festival 2025.

The cast consisting of KS4 and KS5 students have been working really hard and giving up their lunchtimes and afterschool to bring this brand new piece of theatre together ready for their home performance in February. This will then be followed by them taking it to the Lyceum Theatre in Crewe in April to perform alongside Helsby High School as part of the festival.

The home performance will take place on Monday 10th February as part of the Performing Arts Department's Showcase week which will celebrate the work being created across the department from our young people.

The cast can't wait to let you into Saba's story of finding your voice and fighting the system.

Seven months ago, Saba walked out of her GCSE mocks and didn't come back. Her friends don't understand why. Now, on prom night, Saba has finally made contact, challenging her friends to track her down via a series of cryptic clues. But when the friends are finally reunited, Saba is different. The way she sees the world has changed. And what she's asking of her friends... is it more than they can give?



Year 7 Masks

A Journey of Creativity and Collaboration

This term, Year 7 students embarked on an exciting exploration of Greek theatre, where they not only learned about the fascinating history of ancient performances but also brought the art form to life through their own creative collaborations. The unit was a blend of history, drama, and artistry, as students dived into the world of masks, storytelling, and performance.

The masks became a canvas for personal expression and a powerful tool for character development. One of the most rewarding aspects of this project was the emphasis on collaboration. Students worked together in small groups. The process fostered teamwork, as students had to communicate and support one another in bringing their collective vision to the stage.

While learning the history and significance of Greek theatre was enlightening, the real enjoyment came from the hands-on experience. The exploration of ancient theatre was not just about historical knowledge but about tapping into the timeless joy of performance and storytelling.

As the term draws to a close, Year 7 students leave the project with a deeper understanding of the cultural and artistic legacy of Greek theatre, as well as a sense of accomplishment in their own creative abilities. It has been a term full of laughter, learning, and the shared thrill of theatrical performance.

We can't wait to see what other creative projects lie ahead in drama next term.



Extra Curricular

Clubs and Interventions

Lunchtime Sessions 1-1.35pm

Monday

Art Club | Choir | Dodgeball | Futsal | Table Tennis | Basketball | Recharge | Dance Club | Games Club | Scrabble Club | Boys Club | Bake Club

Tuesday

Art Club | Ukelele Orchestra | Knitting Club | Basketball | Futsal | Table Tennis | Dodgeball | Year 7 Dance Club | Games Club | Recharge | Holy Mass

Wednesday

Art Club | Choir | Table Tennis | Dodgeball | Basketball | Futsal | Homework support | Horrible Histories club | Recharge | Boys' Dance Club | Board Games club | Poetry Club | Games Club

Thursday

Art Club | Connections | Dodgeball | Table Tennis | Futsal | Basketball | Anti-Bullying Ambassador club | Contemp. Theatre | Recharge | Games Club | Boys' Dance Club | SVP Group | Fantasy Premier League

Friday

Art Club | Drama Club | Dodgeball | Futsal | Table Tennis | Basketball | Dance Club | Recharge | Games Club | French Speaking Club | Spanish Club | Pilgrimage Club/SVP Group

After School Sessions 3-4pm

Monday

Art Club | Book Club | Netball | Boys' Football | Taylor Swift Club | Study Support Club | Girls' Code Club | St Mary's Dance Co. | Games Club | Year 11 Interventions - Child Development, DT, French, Health & Social Care, Hospitality, Maths, Psychology

Tuesday

Girls' Football | Boys' Rugby | Dungeons & Dragons Club

Wednesday

Art Club | Japanese Club | Cross Country | Scholar Programme LAMDA - Acting | FI in Schools | Football Fixtures | Board Games Club | Year 11 Interventions - Child Development, Computer Science, DT, Drama, English, Health & Social Care, Science

Thursday

Futsal | Harry Potter Book Club | Study Support Club | National Theatre -Connections | Year 11 Interventions - Child Development, Geography, History, RE, Computer Science, Health & Social Care, Music

Friday

Study Support Club

Year 11 Interventions - Computer Science, Health & Social Care, Hospitality, Science

More information including room numbers and year groups can be found on our website [here](#)

Musical Theatre

A Celebration of Talent and Teamwork

The Year 13 students at St. Mary delivered a show-stopping performance of their abridged version of Matilda for their Musical Theatre exam. The exam performance, which featured their very own unforgettable "Miss Trunchbull," was not only part of their musical theatre exam but also a celebration of creativity, mentorship, and hard work.

What made this performance even more special was the involvement of Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 students, who worked tirelessly under the guidance of their Year 13 mentors. The older students played a dual role, both performing and nurturing the next generation of performers. Together, the year groups created a performance that brought the magic and mischief of Matilda to life.

"Our Year 13 students have been incredible mentors," said Mrs Keen. "They've worked so hard to direct and perform this production while also guiding our younger pupils who have been instrumental in bringing this piece together." The collaboration between the year groups was evident on stage. This teamwork underscored the theme of the show itself: the power of community and determination.

The performance was the culmination of weeks of preparation, during which the Year 13 students explored the history of musical theatre, honed their directing skills, and brought their vision to life. The result was a vibrant and heartwarming rendition of Matilda.

"It's been such a rewarding experience," said one Year 13 student. "Not only did we learn so much about musical theatre, but we also got to share that knowledge with Year 7 and watch them grow. This project highlights the strength of St. Mary's performing arts and the College's commitment to fostering collaboration and leadership among students. Congratulations to all involved and well done especially to our Year 13.



Exciting Changes in the PE Department

New Leadership, Fresh Faces, and New Opportunities for Students

This term we have had a number of huge changes within the PE department with Mr Murray becoming Head of PE. We have also welcomed new members of staff to the department with Mr Everall and Ms Schuman-Edwards joining the term.

This has allowed the department to grow and offer a number of outstanding opportunities to the students of St Mary's. Examples of this can be seen through the Year 7&8 Boys Football Teams. Mr Everall has worked extremely hard to get both year groups friendlies and get into the next round of the cups. The Year 7s already this term have managed to beat Deyes High on penalties and set up a potential exciting fixture against Cardinal Heenan of Liverpool!

Mr Murray has also worked really hard offering our KS4&5 students the opportunity to look into careers after their St Mary's Journey. These have included an educational visit to Edge Hill University as a Sports Taster day along with 6th form open evening where students were given support on their journey for further education and a career in sport.

The PE department has also reviewed their Academic Review strategies this term to ensure that all students make their best possible progress. This has been achieved through designing engaging approaches to assess students' knowledge and understanding which can be seen in the Boxercise and Gymnastics Bronze Award below!



Cross Country

Building Strength, Spirit, and Community

Cross-Country has run onto the Extra-Curricular timetable for the first time this Advent Term. It has enabled pupils and staff to mix, socialise and see what they are capable of when they put their minds to it. Every Wednesday after school, you are invited to run various challenges including the hills at Harrison Park, Pyramid sessions at the Dips and the bleep challenge. Pupils have strived to be the best version of themselves, endeavouring to beat their own previous achievements. Pupils from Year 7 up to 11 have represented themselves with purpose and consistency. A special kudos to the four boys who came on an unbelievably wet Saturday morning for the Birkenhead Parkrun, 5k. They made themselves and the school proud. We encourage you...Grab your trainers, come on down and see what we are about!



Art Department News

Creativity Shines Across All Year Groups

Our pupils have been embracing the values of Respect, Courage, Determination, Pride, and Compassion throughout their artistic journeys this term. These core values have been central to the exciting and inspiring art projects across all year groups, where students have pushed their creativity, developed their skills, and shown a deep commitment to their learning.

Year 7: Exploring Mixed Media with Helen Wells

Year 7 pupils have been exploring the world of mixed media, drawing inspiration from the intricate, nature-inspired patterns of contemporary artist Helen Wells. Through experimentation with watercolours, fine liners, and collage techniques, they've been creating their own vibrant designs. This project has encouraged students to approach their work with determination and creativity, while also fostering a sense of respect for the different materials and techniques they're learning to master. The compassion shown by students in helping each other and sharing ideas has been a key part of their success.



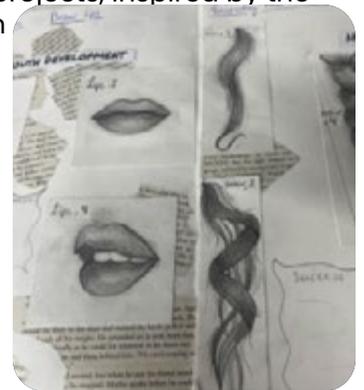
Year 8: Personal Portraits and Self-Expression

In Year 8, pupils are focusing on self-discovery and realism in portraiture. Building on the skills developed in Year 7, they are refining their observational drawing techniques while exploring how to express their individuality through their artwork. Working from photographs of themselves, students are learning to capture the unique details of their features and convey their personalities with pride. Their work demonstrates growing confidence, compassion for one another's creative journeys, and an increasing understanding of the formal elements of art.



Year 9: Celestial Art and Louisa Boyd's Inspiration

Year 9 students have been reaching for the stars with their mixed-media projects, inspired by the celestial themes of Helen Wells and the dynamic, layered works of Louisa Boyd. With a focus on constellations and cosmic wonders, pupils are creating intricate 3D mixed-media pieces. This project has encouraged students to think creatively, experiment with different materials, and approach their work with courage as they push the boundaries of their artistic abilities. Compassion has been evident in the way students offer



support and constructive feedback to each other throughout their creative process. Next term, Year 9 students will have the exciting opportunity to enter the external Dot Art competition, showcasing their creativity and talent. Each school can submit up to 30 pieces of student artwork, which will be

displayed on the Dot Art website in March. A panel of respected art professionals will shortlist the top three artworks from each school, considering



technical skill, confident use of materials, and imaginative approaches. Public voting will follow, and the artwork with the most votes will win a place in the exhibition. The winning Year 9 student will have the opportunity to join the dot-art Artist Membership scheme for 12 months, displaying alongside professional artists.

Year 10: Exploring Layers with Françoise Nielly and Florian Nicolle

Year 10 students have been investigating the elements of art through the theme of "Layers." They have been exploring both traditional and modern methods of art to deepen their understanding of texture, form, and depth. The bold, expressive work of Françoise Nielly, known for her vibrant and layered portraiture, and the dynamic, layered works of Florian Nicolle, celebrated for his modern, digital mixed-media art, have been key inspirations for their projects. Pupils have worked



with fruit as a subject, using photographs and editing skills to develop their drawings. They've then used a range of materials, both traditional and contemporary, to build up layers in their artwork, creating dynamic compositions that reflect a sophisticated understanding of the elements of art.

Year 11, 12, and 13: Coursework and Mock Exams

Year 11, 12, and 13 students have been continuing their coursework, refining their projects, and developing their individual artistic voices. Year 11 and 13 have wrapped up the term with their mock exams, which provided them with the opportunity to demonstrate their skills under exam conditions. The focus was on building confidence, honing time-management skills, and showcasing the techniques and ideas they have been working on throughout the term. Year 11 students have also been experimenting with clay and mixed media as part of their mock exam process, exploring three-dimensional art-making in addition to their



traditional techniques. Year 12 pupils have also been making great progress on their coursework, preparing for the challenges ahead.



English Department Theatre Trip

An Inspector Calls at the Liverpool Empire

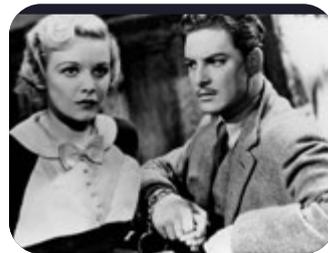
110 students and staff thoroughly enjoyed an excellent performance of *An Inspector Calls* by JB Priestley at the Liverpool Empire. The 1945 play was a hit with the Y10 and 11s who chatted enthusiastically on the buses home about the different ways the actors had brought characters to life and the symbolism of the collapsing set. The crowd reaction to Inspector Goole's zinger 'I don't play golf.' even made the local news! All staff commented on how great it was to see so many students engaging with literary theatre. We're sure that they will call on what they learned by watching the play when it comes to their Literature GCSEs.



Classic film club

Exploring Cinematic Classics Together

A small dedicated group of Year 10 pupils have been meeting every Friday, after the last lesson, to watch classic films together. They meet in the College hall and this term have studied some class films: Hitchcock's *Thirty Nine Steps*, *La La Land* and *Casablanca* before moving on to *On the Waterfront*. The experience of watching these classic movies on the big screen and exploring and discussing the cinematography in each film has kept them busy and engaged. Plans for the future include hosting a film festival for their peers.



A Special Visit from Spartacus

Bringing Comfort and Smiles with Our Friendly Therapy Dog

We had a heartwarming visit from Spartacus, the therapy dog, in December. Spartacus is a highly trained and certified therapy dog who brings comfort and joy to many. Based in Alder Hey, Arrow Park, and various nursing homes around the Wirral, Spartacus has a unique ability to brighten the day of everyone he meets.

During his visit, Spartacus greeted staff and residents alike with his friendly demeanor and wagging tail. He has a calming presence, which makes him especially

effective in reducing stress and lifting spirits. Whether it's a gentle nuzzle or simply sitting by someone's side, Spartacus knows just how to bring a sense of peace and happiness to those who need it most.

Therapy dogs like Spartacus play an invaluable role in emotional well-being, offering companionship and comfort to people of all ages. Their visits can have a profound impact, fostering positive interactions and creating unforgettable moments of joy.



Mathematics Matters

Inspiring Confidence and Curiosity

This term, Mrs Parry, Miss Daniels and Miss Waring have visited all year groups in their assemblies to talk about a topic that touches every student's life: the importance of mathematics. We explored why maths is so important for us, tackled the challenge of maths anxiety, and encouraged every student to see themselves as successful learners of maths.

A key part of the assemblies was addressing maths anxiety, a common struggle for many. We reassured students that feeling unsure or frustrated is part of the learning process. Practical tips like taking deep breaths, asking questions, and practicing regularly were shared to help them build confidence and resilience.

Most importantly, students were reminded that the best learners in maths aren't those who get it right immediately, but those who show determination through embracing challenges, staying curious, and keep trying. Every mistake is a step toward understanding, and every effort counts.

Through these assemblies, we aimed to inspire a positive mindset toward maths, empowering students to believe in their ability to succeed. Together, we're building a school community that sees maths not as a hurdle, but as an exciting journey of discovery and growth.

Year 11 Leading the Way

Revision Success!

Year 11 students have been setting a fantastic example with their dedication to using the Year 11 Study Zone! This space, designed to help them prepare for their mock exams, has been buzzing with focus and productivity. Whether it's tackling tricky topics, reviewing key concepts, or working collaboratively, Year 11 have made it clear they are serious about their success. Well done to everyone who has been putting in the effort—you're inspiring the rest of the school!

But the work doesn't stop here! The Year 11 Study Zone will continue to be open, so let's keep that momentum going. It's the perfect place to stay on top of revision and prepare for the next steps in your academic journey.

Additionally, don't miss out on the all the Intervention sessions held throughout the week. These are a fantastic opportunity to refine your skills and build confidence in maths, particularly now that your mocks are behind you. Whether you want to solidify your strengths or improve in areas you found challenging, these sessions are here to support you.

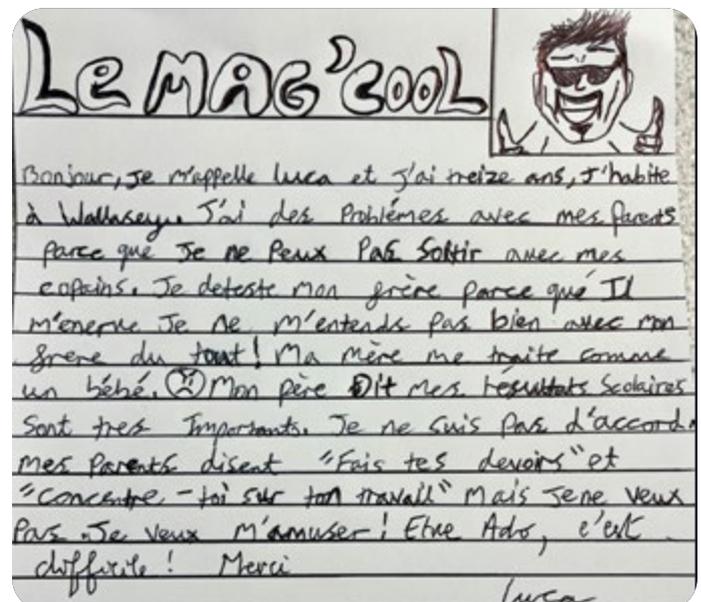
Let's make the most of these resources, Year 11—you're doing an amazing job, and the hard work will pay off! Keep striving for excellence!

French

Celebrating Achievements

This term, in Modern Foreign Languages, year 9 pupils have been focusing on EXTENDED WRITING and wrote extremely encouraging articles on 'the life of teenagers nowadays'. Here is a great example from Luca! Roll on GCSE French next year! A very satisfying first term.

Congratulations to all our year 11s as well for their second mocks and for their fantastic attendance after school on Mondays period 6, your efforts will be rewarded!



Chaplaincy

Exciting Experiences, Life Skills, and Future Preparation

The Chaplaincy Team has been very busy this term, welcoming our new Academy Chaplain Mr Broekman who has become a valuable member of our community helping with weekly mass and the SVP group, He has also run a popular scholars Greek language group and a classic film group.

CAFOD Family Fast Day was one of our first ports of call this year and was a hit with students and staff who replaced their usual meal all week with a cup of soup, a piece of dry bread and a digestive biscuit. This allowed all to experience the feeling of poverty felt in the world. The SVP ran the soup kitchen so successfully Thursdays are going to be CAFOD Thursday where a small donation to CAFOD for a soup experience.

It was a delight to be once again celebrating our feast day with a whole school mass, with our chaplaincy group reading and mass being celebrated with Father Mike who led our prayers on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Throughout the term, mass has been held in our chapel with our local priests celebrating it for us. Including a fabulous memorial ceremony on Remembrance Day with students wearing their uniforms from the various services they represent, college was filled with an abundance of different uniforms, a very moving day.

The 4th Wallasey Churches Together Nativity was a huge event welcoming lots of local children from our community, the choir sang carols and the Chaplaincy group read the nativity story as the churches together acted out the special nativity story, refreshments were served and the Youth SVP sold their baubles and gifts they had been creating this term.

During Advent the Chaplaincy team challenged all forms to raise money for CARITAS and Planning for tomorrow, (Their website is <https://www.p4tglobal.org/>) a charity providing education to refugees in Uganda. For 3 weeks college has been buzzing with students holding stalls full of candy canes, raffles, guessing the sweets and of course a multitude of very talented bakers for cake sale.

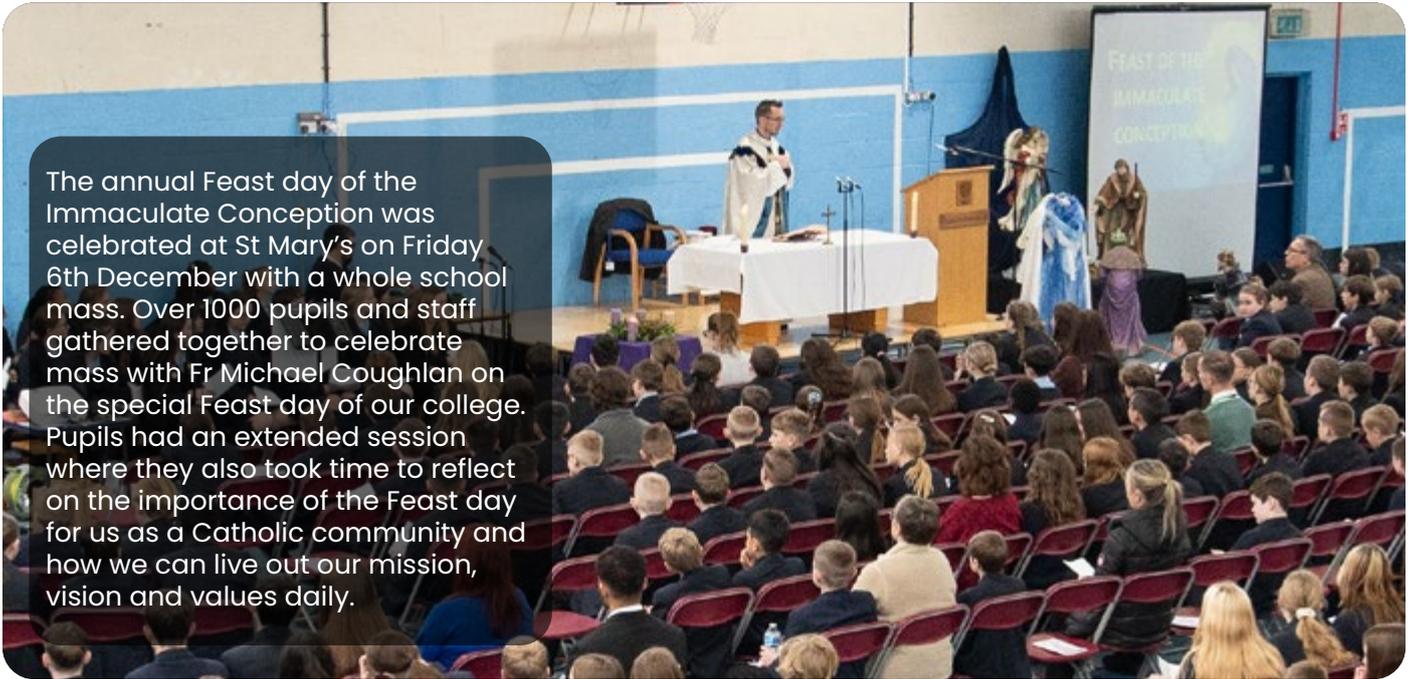
The youth SVP have taken over an area of the canteen and created a wellbeing hub where they meet daily and undertake activities they plan, they also look after the food hub making food parcels for those in need, ongoing thanks goes to NEO our local hub which provides help for those who need it.



Chaplaincy

Feast Day Mass

The annual Feast day of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated at St Mary's on Friday 6th December with a whole school mass. Over 1000 pupils and staff gathered together to celebrate mass with Fr Michael Coughlan on the special Feast day of our college. Pupils had an extended session where they also took time to reflect on the importance of the Feast day for us as a Catholic community and how we can live out our mission, vision and values daily.



St Mary's Students Shine

Festive Christmas Celebrations

Performing Arts Students from St. Mary's College spread festive cheer this December, taking part in two memorable events that celebrated the joy and spirit of Christmas.

Wallasey Churches Together Nativity Service

On Thursday, 12th December, St. Mary's was honored to host the Wallasey Churches Together Nativity Service on the college grounds. From 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm, pupils performed outdoors, reenacting the Nativity story with heartwarming enthusiasm.

Despite the chilly weather, students brought the story of Christmas to life, captivating the audience with their performances. Families, staff, and members of the local community gathered to enjoy the free event, creating a magical evening of togetherness and faith.

"Our pupils did an incredible job, and it was wonderful to see so many people join us," "The outdoor setting added something truly special to this cherished tradition."



HFCMAT Carol Service at Liverpool Cathedral

The festivities continued on Monday, 16th December, when St. Mary's choir joined schools across the Holy Family Catholic Multi-Academy Trust for a stunning Carol Service at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral.

The evening event brought together students from across the Trust to celebrate Christmas through music, with the grand backdrop of the cathedral adding to the occasion's majesty.

"Our students gained so much from this experience," said Mr Faithfull "Performing in such a historic and beautiful venue alongside other schools was an unforgettable opportunity."

Parents and families who attended were full of praise for the evening's performances. The event served as a testament to the hard work and talent of all involved, as well as the strong sense of community within the Trust.



A Festive Season to Remember

These two events exemplified the joy, faith, and talent of the St. Mary's community. From the warmth of the Nativity on college grounds to the grandeur of the Cathedral carol service, the students made this Christmas season truly unforgettable.



"We are so proud of our pupils for their dedication and enthusiasm," said Head of Performing Arts. Ally Keen "They represented St. Mary's beautifully and brought so much joy to everyone who attended." As the holidays approach, these festive moments will undoubtedly remain cherished memories for all who participated and attended. Well done to all involved for making the season brighter!



Year 7 Welcome Mass

Collective worship



We welcomed our new students with their first ever mass as a year group. They shared prayers, reflections and sang together. The mass became a poignant moment, where strangers became friends, forging bonds that would extend beyond the walls of the church and into the heart of their shared education at St Mary's.

Christmas Dinner

Festive Feast at St Mary's

It was Christmas dinner with all the trimmings at St Mary's today, where 100's of dinners were served, alongside crackers and party hats! Many thanks to our canteen staff for all their hard work getting the dinners ready!



Remembrance Day

Lest we Forget

On Monday 11th November the school stopped and observed a 2 minute silence to remember all those who have died or been affected by war. Our 6th form students and student council along with several pupils in a service uniform gathered in our theatre for prayer and reflection. The whole school stopped in a 2 minute remembrance whilst the last post was played throughout the college.



Aid to the church

Standing in Solidarity

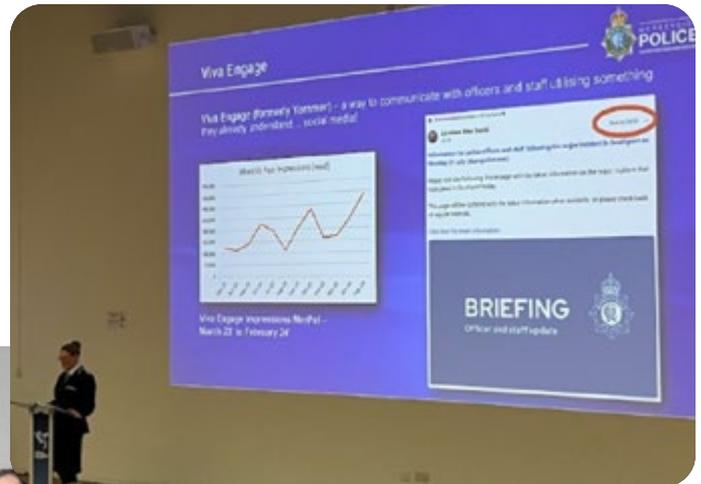
This term we supported @acn_uk and #RedWednesday, which highlights the plight of persecuted Christians across the world. Students took part in the ACN UK live stream event, to learn and pray.



Merseyside Police Autumn Lecture 2024

An Inspector Calls at the Liverpool Empire

Overview : Students visited Liverpool John Moores University to attend The Chief Constable of Merseyside Police Autumn Lecture 2024. They had the chance to meet the constable and hear how Merseyside Police are tackling the spread of misinformation, and build relationships with the community, through social media. Two of the students are applying for the undergraduate Police apprenticeship, and will be able to use this opportunity in their applications and interviews.



T Level Update

Using Mathematical Concepts in an Early Years Setting

The Year 13 students completed a lesson planning activity for reception age children using mathematical concepts to support learning in an Early Years Setting. All of the students came up with creative ideas to support students' knowledge and understanding of different mathematical concepts.

Leah Shallcross used a Number train to explore Number with the children - children had to match the correct number of people to each carriage. Callum Oates explored Shape and created magnifiers to find the same shape in the classroom

Emily Higgins created an activity on Counting and Number Recognition using paper plates. Children had to count the number of dots and match it up with the correct number plate to make the plates whole again.

All students were imaginative and created tasks that were interactive and engaging to support children's learning.



A Thriving Term at The Arc

Exciting Experiences, Life Skills, and Future Preparation

This term St. Mary's autism base, the Arc has expanded and we are excited that the provision now has students from year 7-year 11. The Arc have had some fantastic experiences so far this term including; Nanny Sharon's Alpaca farm, Chester Zoo, the cinema, going shopping in the village, going to Tam O'Shanter's farm.

At KS4 the Arc students study Level 2 Animal care. As a part of this course they have to learn how to care for small animals and how to handle them. Visiting the Alpaca farm and Tam O'Shanter farm gives the students the opportunity to see how the animals are cared for in the farms, how they are fed and handled by the staff there. As you can see from the photographs the Arc students all had a turn of holding the small animals too! This will form part of the overall assessment for their Level 2 qualification.

Preparation for adulthood is an integral part of being a KS4 student in the Arc. The KS4 students attended a morning at the Floral Pavilion Prep for Adulthood event in October. This event brought all agencies together for young people aged 16 and over such as health, social care, universities and colleges, support networks for young people - it was a really impressive event that allowed the KS4 students to gain a valuable insight into what was out there in the community once they leave St. Mary's We also managed to sneak in a chippy lunch on the way home!

As part of the Life Skills course in the Arc the students also go to the park together to promote healthy lifestyles and social skills. Activities such as Manhunt, kite flying and using the park equipment is all part of the fun. The students also use the shops in the village where we practise the skills of planning, budgeting and communication skills with the staff in the local shops. This is an essential skill for life and the students have made lots of great purchases this term already.

Social skills is an essential part of the curriculum in the Arc and the students play games and practice these skills. It is also essential to have social skills training out in the wider community and we love to go out as a group to visit museums, the zoo, the cinema and lot of other places around Liverpool and the Wirral. This week we have been to the zoo, the cinema and the park - we enjoy these opportunities and the students are a credit to the school and the Arc when we are out and about.

Therapy Dog - we were delighted to welcome Spartacus the therapy dog into St.Mary's college last week to visit a young person in our Y7 community. Spartacus was dressed to the nines with bells and tinsel - he was a real hit with all of the young people who came to visit him and his owner. Spartacus is one of a large number of therapy dogs from the charity Bark and Read - this charity provides therapy dogs into specialist schools, hospitals and clinics across Liverpool and the Wirral. We are delighted that St. Mary's has been accepted to have a therapy dog in the new year, this will be from the Bark and Read scheme and will support young people with SEND in the school. We are very excited about this new prospect.



The Journey of St Mary's Diversity Group

Empowering Voices

The Diversity group was formed in January 2022 in partnership with the University of Liverpool. The group was formed in response to pupil voice highlighted barriers that exist for pupils from minority groups. The group are passionate young people who are keen to create change in their school and wider community. Their focus is on learning, equal voices and the celebration of diversity. The group is composed of 14 pupils from various backgrounds, from years 7 to 13.

Impact

The group have worked with staff from St Mary's and the University of Liverpool to provide a voice for pupils who have previously felt they were not represented well enough in the school. The young people have created a support network for other pupils in the school and are determined to make this support sustainable for future pupils, leaving a legacy behind once they move on to further education.

Progress

Over the two years the group has met regularly with Mr. George, Lydia Pari Redican and Natalie Majekodunmi (University of Liverpool). The project ran weekly by BAME staff, undergraduates and community leaders on how to build an anti-racist school community.



In the sessions the students focused on their own school and discussed what it does to make them feel happy and welcome, what they believe the school needs to improve on and share their vision of how they would like to see the school community evolve to ensure pupils of colour have a voice and welcome space. The students were committed to creating positive change so the project sought to give the students the tools to create campaigns in their school and the platform to build their sense of identity and give students throughout the school opportunities to experience cultures other than their own.

Since 2022, the pupils have visited the University of Liverpool, took part in a black history Liverpool walking tour, visited London, and both Leeds and York Universities.



When at the universities, the students have taken part in activities to help them understand the power and influence of their voice and how it can create change. The Universities have worked with the students to help them understand what the process of change looks like and how to create campaigns that can help achieve their goals. This was done through working closely with key staff at the Universities and black and minority access teams. For example, the students met with the team behind the University's Race Equality Charter. The team delivered a workshop to explain the process of policy to the students and how to create policy that has a lasting and meaningful impact on an organisation like the University and how they can replicate that at their school.



As part of Black History Month, the students were invited by the Centre for Study of International Slavery to take a walking tour, led by local historian Robin Plant, to better understand Liverpool's complex history with the trans-atlantic slave trade and how it still impacts on the city today. But to also celebrate Black History, the students have also visited the Black Cultural Archives (BCA) in Windrush Square, Brixton, London. In an additional trip to London, the students were invited to attend

the Garrick Theatre to watch 'For black boys who have considered suicide when the hue gets too heavy' which explored black mental health and the damning statistics around minority groups.



All of this has been possible through successful financial bids made to 'Shaping Futures', to allow all trips to be completely free for students, aligning with one of the groups aims to widen participation for all.

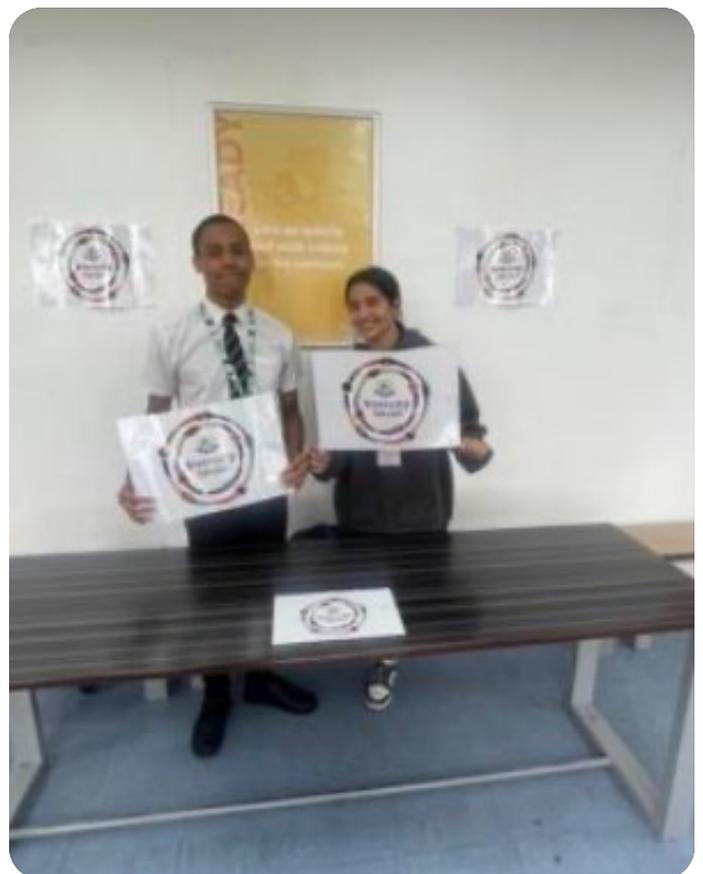


Next Steps

In the future, the group aims to work with the leaders of the school to have their voice heard in matters such as school policy, curriculum and ensure they have a represented voice in school meetings and decisions. In 2024/25 the group also will begin work on a bespoke educational program which will aim eradicate racial incidents as a form of restorative practice to minimise the likelihood of the abuse reoccurring.

Being part of a multi-academy trust (MAT). A key aim for the next academic year is to network with the multiple primary schools and high schools across the MAT and have the group replicated across all the schools. It is hoped that these actions see the diversity group become an integral part of the school community and a recognised safe space for pupils to approach and discuss issues – no matter the age group or school the

pupils attend. This work has already begun with students working alongside 'Loudspeaker' who provided a workshop for each year group during 'student inset day'. This worked on making race conversations comfortable amongst pupils, which will continue next year with staff professional development sessions tailored in response to teacher feedback on the barriers to responding to racial incidents.



Highlights from Sixth Form

Inspiring Leadership and Future Opportunities

Our Junior Leadership Team have been busy this term planning and leading their projects across the college supported by the Sixth Form Pastoral Team and in particular Mrs Keating. Here is an update on a few of the projects currently underway.

Head Students: Teo Bathily and Jasmine Thomas



We are honoured to serve as the Head Students at St Mary's Catholic College, considering it a privilege to lead by example and support the various year groups within our school community. Our first term in this role has been both rewarding and fulfilling. We have had the opportunity to speak at whole-school events, collaborate with the SVP group, and provide valuable student feedback to the Senior Leadership Team.

Fundraising:

Erika Mooney
Jasmine Thomas
Brooke Smith

This term, we organised our first fundraising event by hosting a Halloween Movie Night for Year 7 students. The evening was a great success, raising an impressive £180. Guided by the Gospel values of compassion, generosity, and service to others, we are committed to using these funds to support those in

need and make a positive impact on our community. Looking ahead, we are already planning our next event after Christmas and aim to involve other year groups in order to maximise our fundraising efforts. Our experience on the Junior Leadership Team has been incredibly rewarding, allowing us to build confidence and develop valuable organisational skills.

Sport:

Ted Gutteridge
Harry Twiddle

Our first project this term is to introduce a level of Premier League professionalism to the yard! After Christmas, we plan to implement a refereeing rota for Year 8 football games that take place at lunchtime. In addition, we are exploring other sporting activities that we can supervise to provide students with the opportunity to engage in sport and develop important skills such as teamwork, leadership, and healthy lifestyles.

Student Voice:

Justin Feeley
Ebony Randels

We are responsible for representing the student voice and ensuring that students are aware of how they can share their opinions and make their voices heard within the school community. Recently, we had the opportunity to meet with the Headteacher to update him on the activities and initiatives of the Junior Leadership Team. All students have completed a whole-school feedback questionnaire, which we will review in the new year. Based on the feedback, we will develop actions to enhance the school environment and ensure it remains the best possible learning space for all students.

Catholic Life:

Ashley Shaw

This term, I focused on ensuring that our school environment reflects our Catholic faith. I conducted an audit of each classroom to confirm the presence of a reflective prayer space and a crucifix, serving as constant reminders of the love of Christ that guides our school community. Looking ahead to next term, I am eager to involve as many students as possible in our school's prayer life, fostering a deeper connection to our faith and spiritual growth.

Diversity:

Sammy Miah

Our primary focus this term has been to engage deeply with the Inspire resources taught across the college. We have collaborated closely with Miss Keen to explore important resources, including Black History Month and the TenTen programme on Human Trafficking, ensuring that these topics are effectively integrated into our learning environment. Look out for updates on more projects in the next newsletter!



In the first half term of Sixth Form we plan a trip for new year 12 students to spend time with year 13 and come together as a community. Students are given an opportunity to shape the enrichment activities they want and this year on a dry autumnal day in October our students opted to visit Alton Towers for scarefest.

Our year 12 level 3 students visited Liverpool Hope University December.



Last week our year 12 level 3 students visited Liverpool Hope University for the first of our University visits this academic year. They received a warm welcome and were able to participate in campus tour and workshops on managing finances, choosing your course and study skills.

Inspire speakers ex students Belinda Bailham and Grace Mallion

Our ex students Belinda Bailham and Grace Mallion who left in 2022 visited students to talk about their journeys through sixth form to their current career posts. Belinda is serving in the Royal Navy and has already visited many countries in her time and Grace, having studied the BTEC diploma in Health and Social Care, is working as an associate nurse. It was an absolute pleasure to welcome them back in to college and students really enjoyed their presentations.

Year 13 Personal Statement Workshops

At the start of November Y13 students had one to one personal statement support by Catherine Shlitio



from Liverpool John Moores University Outreach team. She was extremely impressed with our students and they really benefited from the sessions.

University and Apprenticeship Fair at Anfield Stadium

In October some of our Year 12 and Year 13 students travelled from SMCC by train to attend the 'University and Apprenticeship Fair' being held at Anfield stadium. They were afforded time to speak to a wide range of universities based across the country and beyond, including Glasgow, Swansea and Belfast. In addition, companies such as Astra Zeneca, Weightmans, BAE Systems, Unilever and many more were in attendance to discuss future apprenticeship opportunities. This fully funded experience is part of our commitment to provide our students with the labour market information (LMI) that will enable them to make informed decisions about their best future pathways.



Key College Dates

Upcoming dates to remember

Tuesday 14th January 2025

Parental coffee event 5 - 9-10.30 am

Wednesday 15th January 2025

Online Parents' Information Evening 2: Online Safety and Anti-Bullying

Thursday 23rd January 2025

Parental Coffee event 4 9-10.30

Friday 24th January 2025

Yr7,8,9 Reports send to parents

Thursday 30th January 2025

Yr9 Parent evening

Friday 7th February 2025

Yr10 Reports sent to parents

Tuesday 11th - 13 February 2025

Performing Arts Festival

Friday 14th February 2025

Last Day of Half Term 3

Monday 24th February 2025

All Students return

Thursday 27th February 2025

Yr10 Parent evening

Wednesday 5th March 2025

Year 12 Enterprise Day

New Y7 Parent Zoom

Thursday 6th March 2025

World Book Day

Year 9 Options Evening

Wednesday 12th March 2025

Online Parents' Information Evening 3: Careers

Friday 14th March 2025

Parental coffee event 5 - 9-10.30am

Friday 28th March 2025

Year 7 residential to Savio house

Thursday 3rd April 2025

Yr11,12,13 Reports sent to parents

Friday 4th April 2025

Last Day of Half Term 4

Hot Chocolate Friday

Pupils recognised for achievement

Year 7

Aaliyah, Alfie Brookes, Amari Ledsome, Ameera Byrne, Archie Lavery Nelson, Archie Parker, Archie Jones, Elliot, Ellis Kirkham, Farrah Miri-Lavasani, Hannah Minott, Isaac Palmer Hale, Issac Palmer-Hale, Jack, Jack Gordon, Jake Quayle, James Lowe, Jalayla, John Moor, Joseph Ross, Jones, Liyana Gunawardana, Mason Murphy, Mason Sato-Shaw, Max Leventhal, Michelle Burkett, Osaru Murphy, Phoebe Sandalls, Rayen Hornby, Reece McNamara, Ria Morgan, Scotty Worrall, Shayla Atherton, Sophie Sandalls, Ted Curran, Vinya Adama, Violet Dodd, Alya Banks.

Year 8

Amelia Rice Johnson, Ava Hardman, Brooke Beattie, Michael Brough, Ethan Cummings, Eleano Faithfull, Ethan Keir, Mollie Lawler, Daniel Kendall, Faith Heskin, Hugo Smith, Rainbow-Murphy Logan, Riley Davies, Tyler Massey, Aaliyah Richards, Alex Burton, Amelia Clarke Jones, Bobby Moore, Helin Yalcin, Maya Deleves, Oliver Cardus, Orla Keane, Poppy Wade, Taylor Massey, Tilly Swift.

Year 9

Amelia Carter, Ava McGregor, Ayden Ashworth, Elena Davies, Emily Durose, Freya Davies, Isabella Wallace, Joe Feely, Keira Hunstone, Kuldeep Singh, Lewis Rogers, Lola Cloy, Megan Lowe, Noah Pritchard, Sian Parkinson, Thamu Ncube, Toby Pickup, Avinay Leslie, Ben Anderson, Elena Reynolds, Ethan Verrill, Finlay O'Connor, Georgia Thomas, Jacob McLaughlin, Luca Powell, Maciey-May Moore McCullagh, Max Feeney, Samuel Walker, Tia Allen, Wilfred Adedugba.

Year 10

Alfie Nicholls, Callum Southern, Ciaran Davis, Dannica Bingham, Dillon Little, Eibhlin Coughlan, Faith Smith, Hannah Porritt, Jack Keeshan, Jamie Taylor, Joseph Howard, Joshua David Smith, Lottie Byrne, Mia Farah, Sam Morris, Antonia Smith, Caiden Jones, Cameron Feely, Chloe Flemming, Connor Bawden, Daisy Tharratt, Ethan Forrester Phillips, Euphemia Douglas, Frankie Pickthall, Kayleigh Davies, Olivia Higgins, Ruby Ward.

Year 11

Aidan Walton, Alfie Maguire, Ashton Dacosta, Connor Seward, Ellarna Werbisky, Hope Corkish, Kady Jensen, Katie Keogh, Laughlin Lowe, Maddie Fessey, Magdalena Cleary, Michael Armour, Nobubele Dube, Phoebe Davies, Aleisha Rimmer, Antonia Holt, Chris Kavanagh, Eve Barr, Hope Downward, Isabella Scriven, Jack Dillon, Jamie Pearson, Jayden Lee Pickles, Lacey Moore, Louis Voas, Luke Keeley, Maisy Day Glover.

Sixth Form

Bruce Woodburne, Ethan Laurence, Gabrielle Fields, Harry Howarth, Lexi Kearney, Lily Rimmer, Maggiella Linaker, Maisie Challenger, Mia Cook, Mia Warner, Callum McGuinness, Devan Smith, Freya Sandalls Faulkner, Georgia Baker, Lily Lloyd, Reece Parker, Tayla Sanders-Horton, Daisy Wiggins, Dylan Banks, Ethan Perry, Freddie Pink, Jasmine Thomas, Leah Shallcross, Lily Gilmour, Megan Heathcote, Sammi Miah, Ted Gutteridge, Teo Bathily, Josh Geargeas, Katie Welch, Olivia Quayle, Owen Dowdall.