Archdiocese of Birmingham
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN
Telephone: 0121 464 2141
Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk
www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk
Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.

St. Mary's mission: To love God above all things by: learning together, loving ourselves, loving each other, loving all people, loving life itself and constantly striving for excellence worthy of our God-given gifts.

October is dedicated to the Holy Rosary.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'Family and Community'
Our virtues for this half term are: - Compassionate and Loving



Dear parents and carers

16th October 2026

Today we have celebrated the Feast day of St. Teresa of Avila

Today, the children from St. Teresa of Avila house gathered to celebrate their Saint's feast day. The retreat was led by the House Captains and the children reflected upon the life of St Teresa and how Christ has no body on earth but ours. The children were prayerful and calm during the Retreat, and each child took away a small cross to continue their reflection and prayers. We ask St. Teresa of Avila to intercede for us - St Teresa, pray for us.

Parent Consultation Evenings

Thank you to all families who attended our parent consultation evenings. It was a pleasure to share your child's progress and celebrate their achievements. We're also grateful for the thoughtful feedback many of you provided through our parent questionnaire and parent/carers can read a summary of the feedback in this newsletter. I'll also be sharing key themes and next steps in future newsletters.

Harvest and Reception Welcome Mass

Thank you to everyone who has already contributed to our Harvest collection. Your generosity is truly appreciated. After our Harvest Mass on Wednesday, the collection will be sent to support those in need in our community. We're still aiming for 420 items, which is just one per child. So if you're able to help, please send in your donation on Monday or Tuesday. Every item makes a difference!

Flu vaccination

The Flu vaccination was due to take place on Thursday next week. However, you will have received an email from us today as we have been informed there is a shortage of the vaccination in the UK. It is unlikely that flu vaccinations will take place next week and we will keep you informed as to when this is being rescheduled

Parking pledge

This week, the children have taken home a QR code for parents/carers to access the school's Parking Pledge. This is a very important initiative being led by the School Council and the children are asking for **every parent/carer to sign the Pledge and commit to safer parking**. Sadly, I have received further complaints this week from concerned parents and residents of Vivian Road about the unsafe/inconsiderate parking around the school site. I am also growing increasingly concerned about the reports of abusive and aggressive behaviour if illegal/inconsiderate parking or stopping is challenged - if any such incidents are witnessed by school staff or if school staff are subject to behaviour of this nature, the perpetrators will be reported to the Police. I am confident that this behaviour stems only from a very small minority of the school community and I am very grateful to our families who park considerately or use alternative forms of transport to get to school.

Break up for half-term

Children break up for half-term on Friday 23rd October at the usual time. We have had a very busy and productive half-term and the children will be ready for the rest when it comes. In the meanwhile, I hope you have a lovely weekend and I look forward to seeing the children again on Monday.

Mrs Yorke, ***Headteacher***



Catholic Life



This week's Gospel and Prayer

Matthew 22:2-3

"The Kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited..."

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message, God wants us to:

- Say 'Yes!' to His invitation
- Be with Him for eternity
- Follow Jesus through their words and actions







Masses



Year 1 Mass: St. Luke

Year 1 led a wonderful mass on Wednesday dedicated to 1L's Class Saint - St. Luke







Next week's Mass: - **Reception Welcome Mass**



Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 21ST October 2026**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Reception children will be officially welcomed in to St. Mary's family at our Mass, where their Year 6 buddies will attend too. All parents/carers are welcome to attend.



CATHOLIC LIFE



IT'S BIBLICAL

The Rosary contemplates the great mysteries of the Christian Faith; each mystery has its source in the Holy Scriptures.

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the
Holy Spirit.
Amen





IT HELPS US BE HOLIER

This prayer has been a great help to many in their path to holiness when prayed with devotion.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death
Amen





IT WEAKENS THE DEVIL

The Rosary has the effect of weakening the action of the devil in the world and in our lives.

Our Father, who art in Heaven,
hallowed be Thy name;
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done;
on Earth as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
Amen



THE VIRGIN HAS ASKED US TO

In several Marian apparitions (as Fatima), our Mother has asked us to pray the Rosary for the world's salvation.

Glory Be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen



CATHOLIC LIFE

CHILD-LED PRAYER ACROSS THE SCHOOL

YEAR 2





YEAR 3



YEAR 5





ST. TERESA OF AVILA HOUSE RETREAT

Our wonderful house captains – William and Theo – led St. Teresa of Avila house in a special retreat today, as a celebration of her feast day.



CATHOLIC LIFE

A message from Fr. Hilary

Dear parents,
We took the leap, and we made it back safely!

Fr Anil and I completed the Zip World Challenge in North Wales. We certainly faced our fears, and felt the rush of adrenaline, but it was exciting and moments we will treasure for a long time. Throughout it all, we carried with us your love, support and encouragement.

A big thank you to everyone who has donated, prayed for us, encouraged us and shared our appeal. Your generosity and support have been truly heartwarming.



We are very glad we took on the challenge, but our mission to renew the Parish Centre continues. If you have not yet donated, there is still time to support us. Please also consider sharing our fundraising appeal with your family and friends.

With heartfelt gratitude and prayers,

Fr Hilary OSA & Fr Anil OSA

We have raised £4,507.61 - Bravo !!!

Parents' Evenings

Thank you to all our parents/carers who attended the Parents' Evenings this week. We hope you are pleased with the discussions you had with your child/children's teacher.
We are delighted with the feedback that we received and are pleased to share a sumamry with you here.

98% agree or strongly agree that their child is happy at St. Mary's

99% agree or strongly agree that their child feels safe at school

93% agree or strongly agree that the school has a strong culture of safeguarding

99% agree or strongly agree that they can report concerns

96% agree or strongly agree that the school promotes inclusion

Where there is SEND - **100% agree or strongly agree** that the school gives them the support to succeed

94% agree or strongly agree that the school makes sure that children are well behaved

94% agree or strongly agree that the school promotes good attendance

91% agree or strongly agree that their child/ren learn well

84% agree or strongly agree that we communicate progress and next steps

92% agree or strongly agree that their child can take part in clubs

97% agree or strongly agree that the school supports spiritual and wider developments

92% agree or strongly agree that when school makes decisions it has the child's best interests at heart

99% would recommend this school to another parent

We are so grateful for your support and thank you for your honest feedback. We note your views around communicating progress and next steps (and other areas) and this is something that we will address.

Thank You

Families and Communities:

Black History Month Learning

Reception created portraits and learnt all about Benjamin Zephaniah.



Year 2 enjoyed making a collage of Gold Medallist, Denise Lewis!





Our children created posters based on their black history learning.





Curriculum learning across the school

Year 1 worked together to innovate a narrative in English





Year 3 focused on developing fluency, prosidy and confidence in reading this week

Year 6 created a double page spread on how science and faith work together







Year 2 enjoyed a Now Press Play experience based on living things and habitats



Year 5 worked on their art pieces inspired by Keith Haring

October - Pray the Rosary

As we journey into the month of October, we will be praying the rosary in school. This is a good time to pray and meditate on our Lord's life, faithfully witnessed by Our Blessed Mother. The rosary is the recitation of five decades consisting of the Our Father, 10 Hail Marys and the 'Glory Be'.





Black History Month

In October, we learn about black role models and inspiring people. We celebrate all races and cultures and the children will have the opportunity to celebrate their own families, cultures, traditions and backgrounds - please send in anything your children could show and talk about to support our learning.

Harvest Festival Collection

Needed by Wednesday 21st October for our Harvest Festival Mass

Please can any further donations for our Harvest Collection be brought in to school before Wednesday 21st October. These products will be blessed at our Reception Welcome Mass before being sent out to support families in our local area.



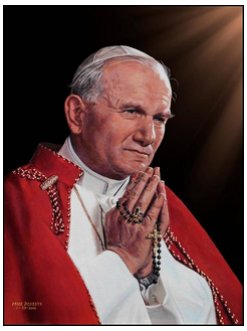
Feminine Hygiene Products

Socks and other Foot-care Items

Person Hygiene Items such as:
Shower gel, soap, deodorant, combs, hairbrushes, baby wipes,
hand cream, chap sticks, tooth brushes, tooth paste

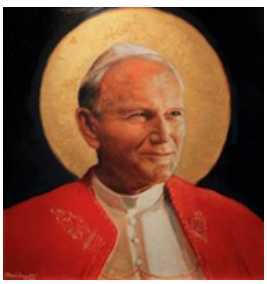
New and unopened long life items such as:
Granola bars/snack bars, easy open cans (with pull tabs),
bottles of water, ready to eat meals, biscuits, crackers

Good quality used clothing such as:
Gloves, scarves, blankets, hats, sleeping bags, warm clothing (jumpers, trousers, vests, coats etc)

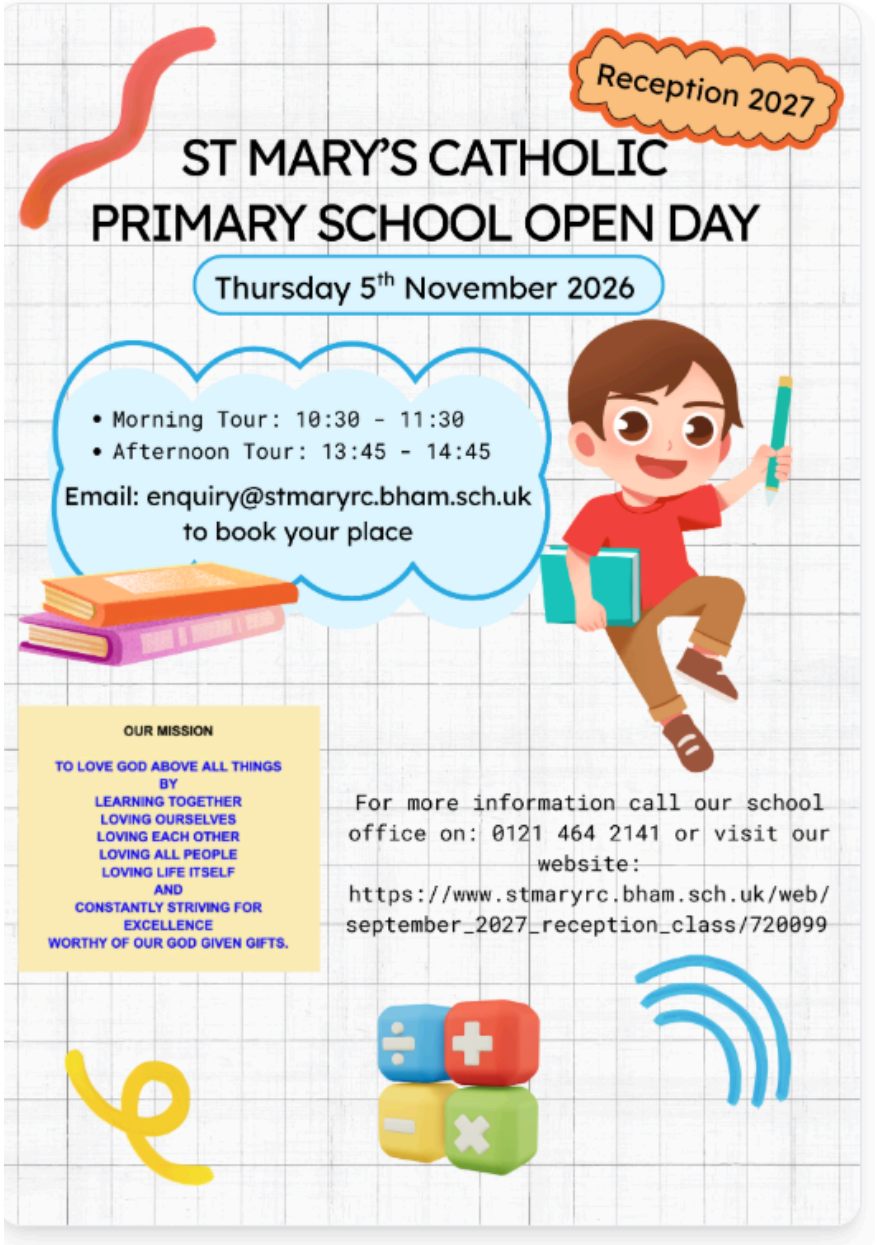


On **Thursday 22nd October**, we will be celebrating Saint John Paul II, christened Karol Józef Wojtyła, St. John Paul II was Bishop and Pope (1978–2005). He led an extraordinary and inspiring life and made many reforms.

Children who are in St. John Paul II House Group - can come in to school wearing red on this day!



Reception cohort - September 2027



Have you a child who is Reception age next year - September 2027?
We'd love to extend our welcome to you, to come and look around our fantastic school.





Contact the school office to book your place!

Request for assistance with research project

A member of staff within the Archdiocese is undertaking research as part of a PhD and is keen to hear the views and experiences of parents and carers whose children attend Catholic primary schools.

The research is a survey which should take no longer than 5 minutes.

The findings from this research will be used to help enhance and support Catholic education, so we would be very grateful for your participation. Parents and carers of all faiths, and those of no faith, are warmly encouraged to take part – your views and experiences are important.

Participation is entirely voluntary, and consent can be withdrawn at any time.

To find out more and take part, please visit:

https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/YcKE9XC8vC

Thank you for supporting this valuable research.

Karate Club at St. Mary's





Strings Club

October half-term

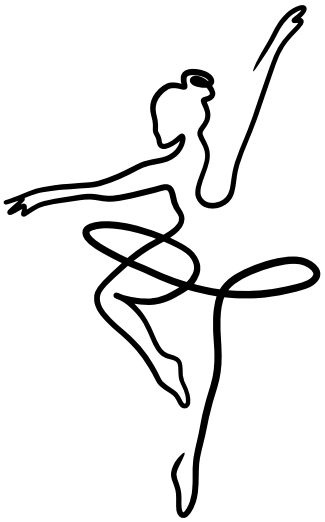
The Strings Club will be bringing their award-winning Holiday Camps to St Mary's this October half term, during the week beginning 26th October. Their fun-filled, screen-free days combine music with creativity, wellbeing and lots of opportunities to make new friends. Children can enjoy guitar, violin or ukulele sessions, alongside art, drama and creative workshops, energetic games and outdoor activities.

Children attending for more than one day can also benefit from free instrument hire, so no previous musical experience or instrument is needed.

Even better, St Mary's families receive 10% off The Strings Club Holiday Camps all year round. Simply use the code **STMPRI26** when booking.



Elmhurst Ballet School Open Day 2026





Whole School Open Day
Thursday 5th November

Curious about life at Elmhurst? Come and see it for yourself.

Our **Whole School Open Day** is your chance to step inside a world-leading vocational dance school and experience a day in the life of our students. Guided by the young dancers who know Elmhurst best, you'll explore our studios and facilities, see our Artistic and Academic classes in action, and meet the people shaping the future of dance training.

Timetable

Session 1- 10:30am - 12:10pm

10:30am - Registration and refreshments

10:50am - Presentation in our Theatre

11:10am - Student lead tour of the school

12:10pm - End of session

Session 2- 11:10am - 12:50pm

11:15am - Registration and refreshments

11:35am - Presentation in our theatre

11:55am - Student lead tour of the school

12:55pm - End of session







To book a place, please visit: https://www.trybooking.com/uk/event/120757

A Letter to Parents/Carers from West Midlands Police

Dear parents and carers,

This is a message from West Midlands Police about Halloween and Bonfire Night.

We want everyone to have an enjoyable Halloween and Bonfire Night this October half term. This letter is to provide you with useful advice to keep you, your child, and your community safe.

On the run up to half term, your child might get a visit from one of our local officers visiting their school to deliver important messages about how to stay safe around fireworks and keep themselves safe in the darker nights.

To help start that conversation with your child about personal safety, stranger danger, and antisocial behaviour School Officer PC Smith has created a short video for you to watch with your child. Watch here: https://youtu.be/hylRME6G9hU

Trick-or-treating safety tips:

- Accompany young children while trick-or-treating and talk to your child about staying with their friends. Tell them never to enter a property they do not know.
- Plan a safe route in familiar neighbourhoods, use pelican and zebra crossings, and stick to well-lit streets.
- Add reflective tape to costumes and carry flashlights or glow sticks.
- Make sure phones are charged, have location apps turned on, and keep it out of sight when they are not using it.
- Keep a light on in your home to help welcome your children home and prevent burglars.
- We ask that children do not visit homes that display a 'no trick-or-treating' sign as this time of year can be unsettling for many.

It is always best to check any sweets, gifts, or toys children have been given while trick-or-treating.

Fireworks and Bonfire Safety Tips:

- Attend a public firework display rather than handling fireworks at home. Never allow children to handle fireworks or sparklers without supervision.
- Talk to your children about the danger of pointing fireworks at people or buildings. Police can prosecute for dangerous use of fireworks.
- Wear high-vis jackets, glow sticks, or give a torch to your children.
- Before visiting a bonfire or firework display talk to your child about a safe meeting place or a time to regroup after the event.
- Never create a bonfire, or start a fire, in a public space, against a building, or next to vehicles. Call the fire service on 999 if you see any fires in public spaces or in public bins.

Always ask: What are your child's plans? How are they going to enjoy fireworks and bonfire night safely?

Throughout half term, local officers will be patrolling your town centres, visiting community hubs and policing large events. Stop by and say 'hello' if you see us out and about.

In an emergency, you can report misuse of fireworks or dangerous behaviour to us on 999. To report non-life-threatening incidents or antisocial behaviour please contact us online by searching 'WMP report' or calling us on 101.

You can report 100% anonymously to Crimestoppers by calling 0800 555 111.

Thank you,

West Midlands Police

This is an **Operation Encompass School**

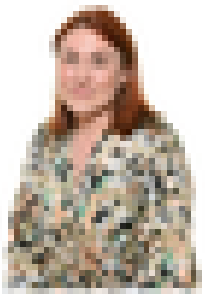
KEEPING SAFE

We are an operation encompass school. Therefore school is working alongside the police to ensure support for any child who has been involved in or witness to domestic abuse. Please find more information about this on our website or contact the school office.

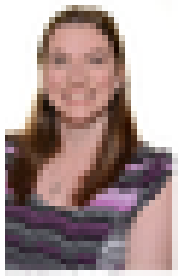
Pastoral Team

If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team

If you have a concern that a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm, or you receive a disclosure (intentionally or unintentionally) you must contact one of the following staff members as quickly as possible:



Laura Noone
Lead DSL
DHT



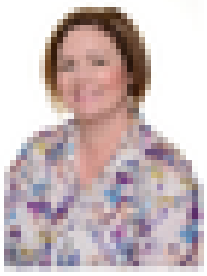
Louise Yorke
Headteacher



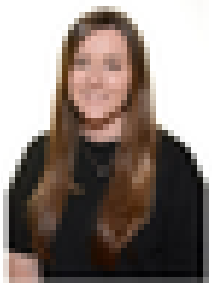
Jade Preedy
AHT



Rachel Jones
Senior Teacher



Sharon Tame
School Counsellor



Rachel Richards
EYFS Lead



Shania Birchenall
SENDCo

Do not book holidays during term time

This is a reminder that holidays during term time are unauthorised. If you intend to take your child out of school during term time, we ask that you complete a holiday request form at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date where possible. Parents may be fined by the Local Authority for taking unauthorised leave of absence. Children need to be in school every day so please ensure holidays are only booked during school holiday time.

Good attendance, continues to be a school and government priority. Good attendance is 96% and above

Remember below 95% is a concern and below 90% is classed as persistent absence. If you have any problems with regards to getting your child to school or you are struggling to improve your child's attendance, please speak to Mrs. Yorke or a member of the SLT team. We will announce the attendance for the previous week in this section of the newsletter each week.

Attendance and Punctuality: -

Our attendance for last week was -

Week 12/10/26-16/10/26

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	99	95	96	100	99	97	98	98	99	98	97	98	98	98
Lates	5	1	4	1	1	1	5	6	2	1	1	1	2	0
Whole School Attendance so far this year						97.9%		School Target					97%	

Well done 1F: - Our attendance champions!

Dates for this half term

Autumn theme -

Autumn I Virtues

21st October 2026 - 9:15am

22nd October 2026 - am

22nd October 2026 - all day

23rd October 2026 -normal time

Families and Communities

Compassionate and Loving

Reception Welcome Mass (with Year 6 buddies) - Parents welcome

Flu vaccinations in school

*Children in **St. John Paull II House** - **wear red** non-school uniform*

Children finish today for October half-term (normal finish time)

Term Dates for this year

Autumn Term	Wednesday 2nd September - Friday 23rd October
	Half-term
	Monday 2nd November - Friday 18th December
Spring Term	Monday 4th January - Thursday 11th February
	Half-term
	Monday 22nd February - Thursday 25th March
Summer Term	Monday 12th April - Friday 28th May
	Half-term
	Monday 7th June - Tuesday 20th July

School Closed:

- Monday 3rd May 2027 - May Bank Holiday

INSET DAYS

- Tuesday 1st September 2026
- Friday 2nd October 2026
- Friday 12th February 2027
- Monday 28th June 2027
- Wednesday 21st July 2027

1 more INSET day to be confirmed

Star of the week

Congratulations to the following children who have shone in school over the last week:

Year RB	Faya	For working really hard and taking her time in handwriting!
Year RT	Lucas	For creating a fantastic piece of artwork of Benjamin Zephaniah!
Year IF	Rose	For reading so beautifully in Mass this week. Well done!
Year IL	Emilia	For trying her very best in her learning!
Year 2E	Kendrick	For trying his very best in phonics and reading.
Year 2G	Zikora	Working hard in English on her adjectives!
Year 3L	Emily	For super writing! Well done Emily.
Year 3T	Daisy	For consistently demonstrating a positive attitude to learning and being an excellent role model for others.
Year 4J	Ethan.M	For his lovely contributions to class discussion-well done!
Year 4M	Josie	For being a kind and helpful learning partner
Year 5F	Aila	For great work in RHE this half term.
Year 5M	Anji	For always trying her best in every lesson. Well done!
Year 6O	Danny	For his fantastic attitude to learning and trying his best.
Year 6R	Alicia	For always taking so much pride and care in her work across all subjects!

