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.

November is dedicated to the Holy Souls.

Our theme for the Autumn term is: 'Families and Communities'
Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Faith-filled and Hopeful'

13th November 2026

Dear parents and carers,

Remembrance
November is a special time of remembrance, when we reflect on the importance of remembering those who have died and praying for peace in our world. This week, the children have taken part in a whole-school Remembrance Service, observed a two-minute silence, celebrated a Remembrance Mass and led prayer services in their classes. Through their learning across the curriculum, children have also explored the sacrifices made by others. Whether wearing poppies, writing poetry, offering prayers or sharing moments of quiet reflection, our pupils have shown great reverence, maturity and respect as they honoured those who gave their lives for our freedom.

Good Shepherd Retreat
On Tuesday, we were delighted to welcome Dan and Emily from the One Life Retreat Team to lead a special retreat centred on the theme of Jesus the Good Shepherd. Children explored what it means to follow Jesus' example of love. It was a joyful and faith-filled day that encouraged all of us to reflect on how we can be good shepherds to one another in our daily lives.

Non-Uniform Day for the Parish Christmas Fair
Our PTA are supporting the Parish Christmas Fair, which takes place on Saturday 22nd November, and are asking for donations to help make the event a success. Children may wear non-school uniform on Monday 15th November and are asked to bring the requested item for the fair. Full details of what each year group should bring can be found in the Dates and Information section of this newsletter. Thank you, as always, for your support and generosity.

Red Wednesday
On Wednesday 18th November, we will mark Red Wednesday, a day when Christians around the world stand in solidarity with those who face persecution because of their faith. Children are invited to wear an item of red clothing alongside their school uniform as a symbol of support and prayer for those who suffer for their beliefs. We will spend time reflecting on the freedoms we enjoy and remembering those who are unable to worship freely.

Dates for Your Diary
Please note that I have added several new dates to the calendar and that some Mass dates have changed. I encourage all families to check the Dates section of this newsletter carefully to ensure you have the most up-to-date information for the weeks ahead.

Wishing you all a peaceful weekend as we continue this season of remembrance and reflection together.

Mrs Yorke,
Headteacher



We pray for those who have died in November

Catholic Life

Remembrance and Holy Souls

We will remember them...





They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning,
We will remember them.

During our whole-class gathering and 2-minute silence, we reflected on: -

- why it is important to remember;
- why those who protect us are special;
- that we must never lose hope;
- we should pray for peace in our world.





Remembrance Poetry

Every year group focussed on a well-known remembrance poem and composed their own versions, taking the opportunity to perform their work to another class.

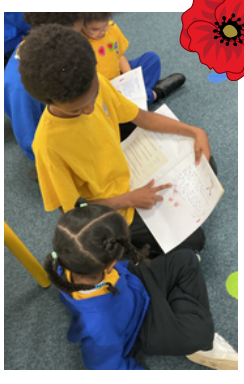












Have you seen my boy Jack?

Have you seen my boy Jack?
The smile he had is what I lack
unending days with no news
memories prick me with the blues

I feel weak,
My eyes are blured,
He can't be dead,
I can't say the word,
As I wait for him to come again,
my stomach lurches with unending pain,

I weep and mourn,
and stop to call,
have you seen my boy Jack,

He was brave,
the country he could save,
Although the sky is painted red,
I want him to know how much I cared

I love my boy Jack



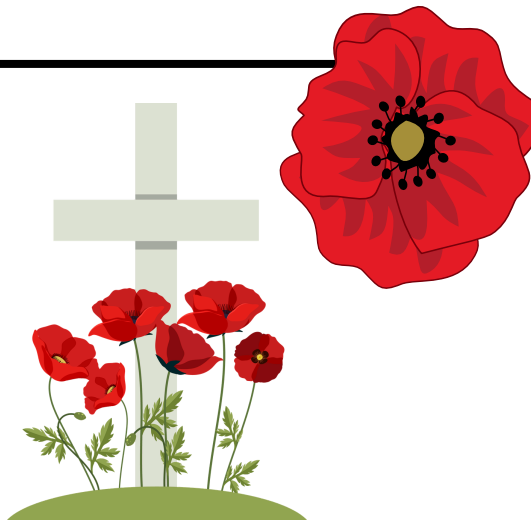


Masses



Year 4 Mass – 11.11.26
Remembrance

Year 4 led a beautiful Mass on Wednesday in remembrance of those who have lost their lives in conflict.



Next week's Mass: – **Year 6 Mass – St Rose of Lima**



Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 18th November 2026**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 6 will be leading a special Mass dedicated to 6R's class Saint – St. Rose of Lima. Year 5 will also be in attendance. All parents are very welcome to attend.



Whole School Retreat – 10th November 2026

We were thrilled to welcome Dan and Emily from OneLife Music back to St Mary's on Tuesday for the The Good Shepherd whole school retreat.



Children and staff took part in a fantastic day of singing, signing, prayer and reflective activities celebrating Jesus The Good Shepherd. The day culminated in a wonderful sharing session of work created by the children on each element of Psalm 23. The children loved the day as you will read!

"I learned that Jesus always leads us back and carries us in the hardest times."
W (Y5)

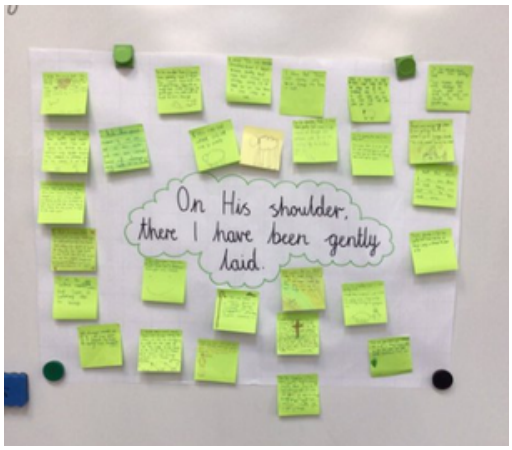
"The retreat was really nice. I loved the singing. I learned that Jesus never leaves us."
D (Y3)

"The retreat was fantastic! I learned that when we go our own way, Jesus comes to find us and brings us back to the good."
Y (Y6)

Whole School Retreat – 10th November 2026









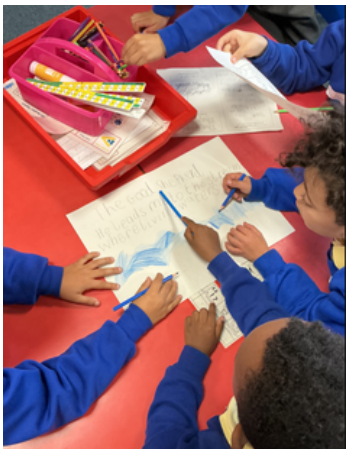












Monday 16th November - Non School Uniform Day

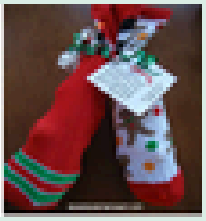
On Monday 16th November, St Mary's School and PTA are asking for donations for the Christmas Fayre.
The children can come to school wearing non-uniform and bring in the following items...

Reception



Chocolate for the tombola (please no nuts).

Years 1, 2, 3





Christmas Stockings - filled with sweets / little treats. Take a new pair of socks, roll one sock up and put into the other, fill the sock with treats, sweets, hair accessories etc...
Secure with an elastic, tie or ribbon (please no nuts).

Years 4, 5, 6



A bottled drink - alcoholic or non-alcoholic for the Tombola (Unopened and in date please).

Finally, if you are doing a clear out before Christmas and have any pre-loved items that you would like to donate, they would be greatly received (toys, books, gift sets, jewellery, crockery etc) You can deliver any of your donations into school or the Priory between 8-4 Mon-Fri over the next 2 weeks.



Year 5 Harborne Library Visit - 17.11.26

Year 3 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.
3L will leave at 8:45am
3T will leave at 10:15am
If you are a parent who would like to attend and support walking to and from the library, please let the Year 3 staff know.



Wednesday 18th November 2026

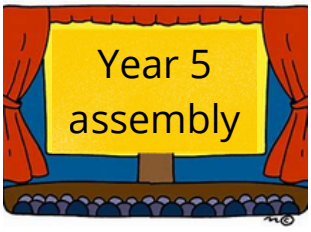
Red Wednesday - wear red to stand up for solidarity

Children are invited to wear an item of red on Red Wednesday as a symbol of solidarity with those around the world who suffer persecution for their faith. This powerful gesture reminds us of the importance of religious freedom, compassion, and standing up for justice. Through prayer, reflection, and discussion, we will help our pupils understand why it's important to speak out for those who cannot.



Year 5 Assembly - 20th November 2026

We are looking forward to welcoming parents of all Year 5 children into school next Friday 20th November, for their year group assembly based on Christ the King.



St Mary's Church / PTA

Christmas Fair

Parish Centre, Vivian Road, Harborne

Saturday 21 November

12.00–3.00pm

With Live Carol Singers

- Santa's Grotto
- Bottle Tombola
- Chocolate Tombola
- Christmas Stockings
- Mulled Wine & Minced Pies
- Festive Sandwiches & Drinks
- Stalls, including:



FREE ENTRY

(£4 for Santa's Grotto)



School Choir performance

Friday 4th December
7pm-9pm
Parish Centre

Carols by Candlelight



Tickets on sale at Shocal 0412

Family ticket £15
Adult ticket £6

This is an **Operation Encompass School**

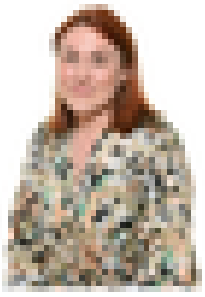
KEEPING SAFE

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.

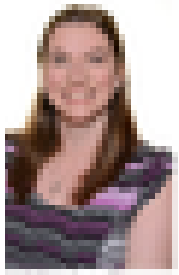
Pastoral Team

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



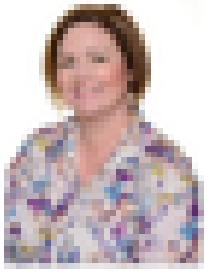
Louise Yorke
Headteacher



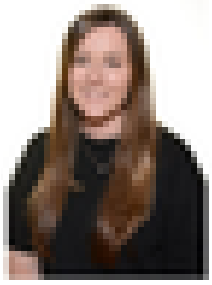
Jade Preedy
AHT



Rachel Jones
Senior Teacher



Sharon Tame
School Counsellor



Rachel Richards
EYFS Lead



Shania Birchenall
SENDCo

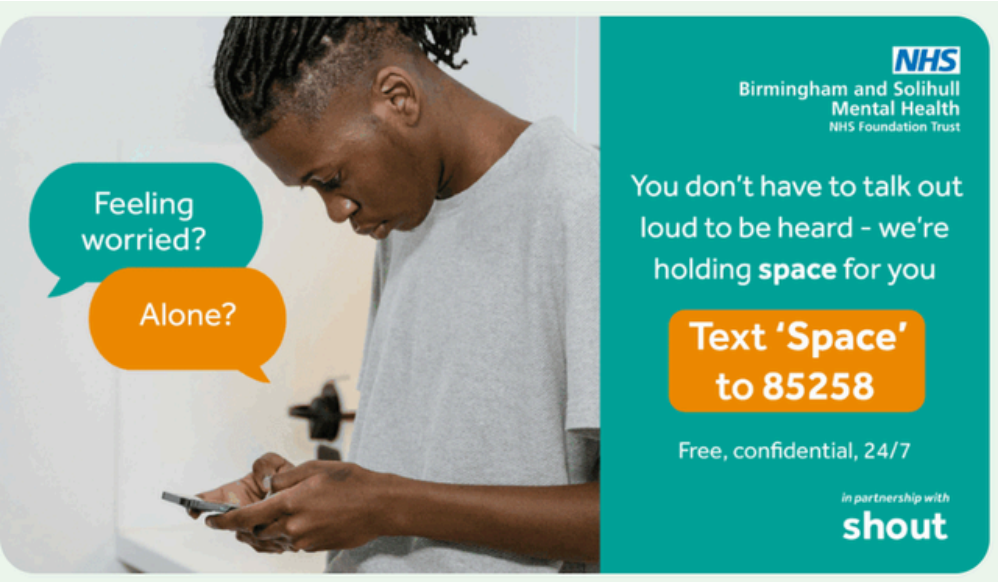
SAFEGUARDING

Bullying in school is a serious issue that can have a lasting effect on children's emotional well-being, academic performance, and social development. St Mary's are legally required to have an anti-bullying policy (this is contained within our Behaviour and Relationship Policy and can be found on our website), but effective prevention goes beyond policy—it involves fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment where all children feel valued. By promoting positive behaviour, teaching empathy, and encouraging open communication, we play a vital role in preventing bullying and supporting children in developing healthy relationships.

How can I help my child if I think they're being bullied?

- Open up a conversation. ...
- Listen to their experience. ...
- Give them time before talking if they need it. ...
- Check in with them. ...
- Keep a log of the bullying. ...
- Help them build up their self-esteem. ...
- Encourage them to spend time with peers who treat them well.

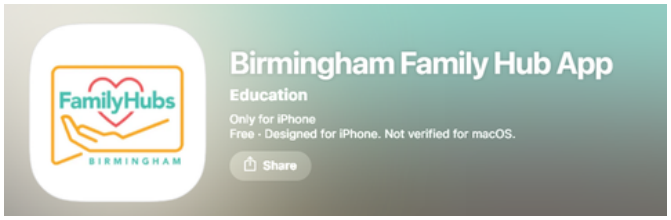
Speak to a DSL



Students, staff, and families across Birmingham and Solihull can access free, confidential mental health support 24/7 by texting 'Space' to 85258.

Provided by Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust and Shout, the service offers in-the-moment support to anyone dealing with anxiety, low mood or just in need of a confidential chat with a trained professional.

It's discreet, easy to use and perfect for anyone who finds talking difficult – currently around one in every four texts comes from a young person ages 13-17. You can find out more here.



The Birmingham Family Hub App supports parents from birth right the way through to Year 13.

Parents will receive timely and evidence-based information direct to their phones to support child health, development, education and wellbeing. They can also use the app in over 100 different languages.

The app has been curated by Birmingham child health and development teams with local information and in partnership with national expert organisations.

Attendance

Week 09/11/26-13/11/26

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	98	94	97	99	96	98	98	97	99	95	99	96	94	99
Lates	0	4	6	0	3	0	2	2	8	6	1	1	0	0
Whole School Attendance so far this year						96.9%		School Target					97%	

Well done 1F, 4J, 5M and 6O: - Our attendance champions!

Dates for this Half Term

Autumn theme -	Families and Communities
Autumn 2 Virtues	Faith-filled and Hopeful
16th November 2026 - am	Non-uniform day and collection of bottles for Parish/PTA Christmas Fair
17th November 2026 - am	Year 3 library visit - 3L (8:45) and 3T (10:15)
18th November 2026 - all day	Red Wednesday - wear an item of red clothing in solidarity of persecuted Christians
18th November 2026 - 9:15am	Year 6 Mass in Church (Y5 attending) - Parents/Carers welcome
20th November 2026 - 9:15am	Year 5 Assembly for parents
21st November 2026 - Midday	**Parish / PTA Christmas Fair**
WB 23rd November 2026	**Food and toiletries donations for Fr Hudsons / toys donations for Brum Irish**
24th November 2026 - am	Year 5 library visit - 5F (8:45) and 5M (10:15)
25th November 2026 - 9:15am	Year 2 Mass in Church (Y1 attending) - Parents/Carers welcome
WB 30th November 2026	Advent Week 1 - Hope
30th November 2026 - 1:30pm	Years 4, 5 and 6 Penitential Service in Church
1st December 2026 - am	Year 4 library visit - 4M (8:45) and 4J (10:15)
1st December 2026 - 3:30pm	KS1 Christmas Disco
2nd December 2026 - 9:15am	Year 3 Mass (Year 4 to attend) - parents welcome
2nd December 2026 - 3:15pm	Reception Christmas Disco
2nd December 2026 - 7pm	PTA Wreath Making Workshop
3rd December 2026 - 3:30pm	KS2 Christmas Disco
4th December 2026 - 7pm	Carols by Candlight in Parish Centre
WB 7th December 2026	Advent Week 2 - Faith
8th December 2026 - 3:45pm	Guitar and piano Concert for parents after school
9th December 2026 - 9:30am	Whole School Mass (Feast of the Immaculate Conception) - Parents/Carers welcome
9th December 2026 - 1:30pm	Year 5 ukulele concert in Hall - Year 5 Parents/Carers welcome
9th December 2026 - 3:45pm	Violin and piano Concert for parents after school
10th December 2026 - all day	Christmas jumper day and Christmas dinner for children
10th December 2026 - 9:30am	**Reception Nativity in Church for Parents/Carers**
11th December 2026 - 9am	Year 3 Prayer Service in Hall - Parents/Carers welcome
WB 14th December 2026	Advent Week 3 - Joy
15th December 2026 - 2:15pm	**Year 1 and Year 2 Nativity in Church for Parents/Carers**
16th December 2026 - 9:30am	Whole School Advent Mass - Parents/Carers welcome
16th December 2026 - 2:15pm	**Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas Assembly in Hall for Parents/Carers**
17th December 2026 - 2pm	**Year 5 and Year 6 Carol Service in Church for Parents/Carers**
18th December 2026	**Last day of term - early finish as follows:** • **1:40pm - Reception** • **1:45pm - Siblings** • **1:50pm - Key Stage 1** • **2pm - Key Stage 2**

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	Diola	For trying her best in maths and taking her time to count carefully!
Year RT	Maria	For listening carefully and speaking so confidently during the One Life retreat
Year 1F	Khadija	For always trying her best in every lesson.
Year 1L	Leanna	For always trying her best in every lesson and being a wonderful role model!
Year 2E	Andreass	For trying really hard with your maths and spellings. Well Done Andreass!
Year 2G	Micaiah	Working really hard on his letter formations. Well done!
Year 3L	Alex	For super maths this week. Well done, Alex!
Year 3T	Anna	For working so hard on her presentation in her books this week. Well done!
Year 4J	Chloe	For great collaboration with others during our retreat day!
Year 4M	Anicet	For trying very hard with his handwriting and presentation in his books
Year 5F	Janssen	For exemplary work and behaviour in the Autumn term! Well done!
Year 5M	Elim	For always striving for excellence. Well done!
Year 6O	Reese	For aways trying her best in everything she does!
Year 6R	Issak	For showing great enthusiasm in Geography

