Archdiocese of Birmingham
ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
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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'

20th November 2026

Dear parents and carers,

We have had a wonderful week in school. It was a joy to see the children on Monday in their own clothes and there was a real 'buzz' around school - I am very grateful for your generous contributions for the PTA/Parish Christmas Fair. I am very much looking forward to seeing everyone at the Fair tomorrow and I am sure it will raise much needed funds for our PTA and the Parish.

On Wednesday, children and staff wore red to stand in solidarity with Christians who are persecuted for their faith. The children's understanding about this issue and their empathy was incredible - even our youngest children expressed their desire to help and seek unity. The children were also able to link Red Wednesday with the UN Rights of the Child (UNCRC) truly demonstrating our Silver Award status.

Children took part in a live Picture News assembly on allergy awareness on Thursday. This is part of our whole school strategy on allergy safety ('Benedict's Law'). Whilst the children learnt about the seriousness of allergies, they also learnt about the importance of ensuring that everyone is included safely when they have an allergy. We now have a copy of the book featured in the assembly so that children can re-visit and enjoy the story again.

The week concluded with the Year 5 assembly on Christ the King. I was deeply impressed by how well the children spoke, sang and signed with meaning conveying a true sense of maturity. Their assembly linked to all their learning, including their Terrific Text "Journey to Jo'berg". I was thrilled to see William accompanying Mr Warhurst on the guitar for 'Lean on Me' - I very much hope that he can play in other performances in the future.

As we move closer to Advent and what promises to be another busy and exciting period in school (and, no doubt, at home too), I invite you to pause and reflect on all that our children have achieved so far this year. There is much to celebrate, and there is still much to look forward to in the weeks ahead. As always, I am grateful for your continued support and partnership as we work together to help every child thrive, grow and strive for excellence worthy of their God-given gifts.

Wishing you all a peaceful and safe weekend,

Mrs Yorke,
Headteacher

We pray for those who have died in November



Catholic Life

Matthew 25:14

"The Kingdom of Heaven will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property."

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

- **Know** that He loves us and blesses each of us with unique gifts
- **Make** the most of what God gives us
- **Use** our gifts and talents to serve Him and others



Masses



Year 6 Mass - 18.11.26
St. Rose of Lima

Year 6 celebrated 6R's feast day to St. Rose of Lima. The Mass was a lovely celebration of St Rose and we reflected on the humility of St Rose and how she served Jesus through her acts of service for others.





Next week's Mass: - **Year 2 Mass - Christ the King**

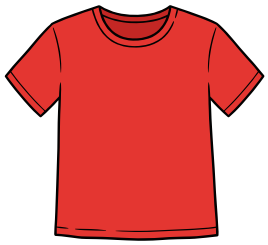
Our next Mass in Church will be on **Wednesday 25th November 2026**, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 2 and Year 1 will attend Mass.
All parents are welcome.





Year 5 Assembly- 20.11.26
Christ the King

Year 5 delivered a fantastic assembly on Christ the King on Friday - they spoke clearly and sang beautifully with meaning. Their reflection on the humility and humbleness of Christ was both powerful and thought-provoking.



#REDWEDNESDAY®

HELP PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS



Children and staff wore an item of red on Wednesday to raise awareness of Christian persecution worldwide.
The colour red is worn because red is the colour of martyrdom.
#RedWednesday is an annual day to remember that faith matters.















"We see you,
we want to help you,
we are your friends!"
Reception

Our Charity Advent Appeals

Father Hudson's Caritas
Collaborative Inclusive Compassionate

This Advent, the Archdiocese will once again unite as a family of schools in our collaborative social action mission to support Father Hudson's Caritas. St Mary's were fortunate to welcome Adele from FHC who came to speak to the children on Thursday about the Reverse Advent Calendar.





This year, every school has been invited to collect non-perishable food items, including **dried foods (such as pasta and rice), sauces, tinned foods, biscuits, crisps and any suitable Christmas food items.**
The donated food will be used to create hampers for distribution across FHC projects before Christmas.

Collective social action makes a real difference to so many people. This is a wonderful opportunity for us once again to work as part of our diocesan family, demonstrating the impact of our collective hunger for justice.

We will be collecting donations in school from **Monday 23rd November.**



Thank you for your support.





Faith without action isn't really faith at all

Toy Appeal

Christmas 2026

Please give NEW toys (unwrapped) for our local children in Birmingham for all age groups ranging from 1-15 years.

We will be collecting donations in school from

Monday 23rd November

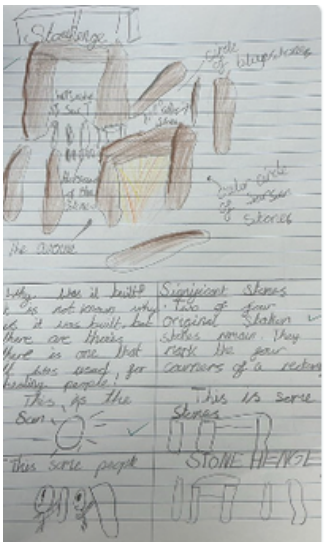
ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

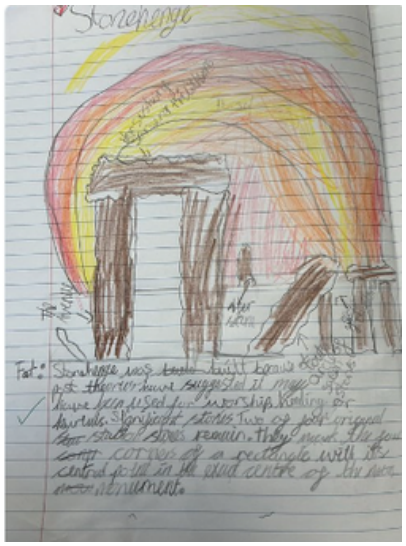
Birmingham Irish Association



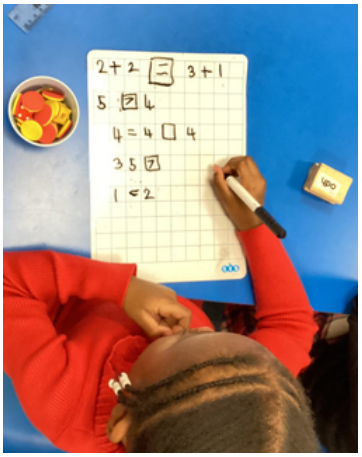
CURRICULUM

Year 3 have been thinking like **HISTORIANS** this week! They created some posters focusing on the significance of Stonehenge

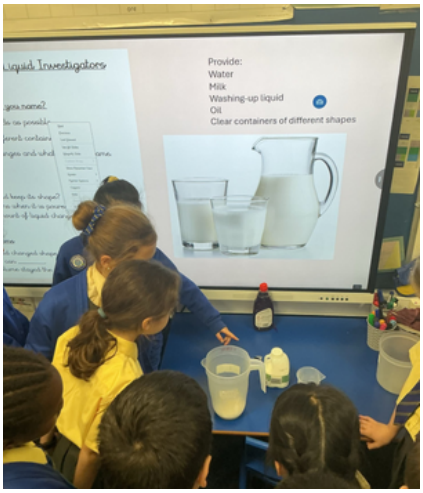








Year 1 were **MATHEMATICIANS** this week demonstrating their understanding of greater than, less than and equal to a number



Year 4 were **SCIENTISTS** this week and investigated different states of matter

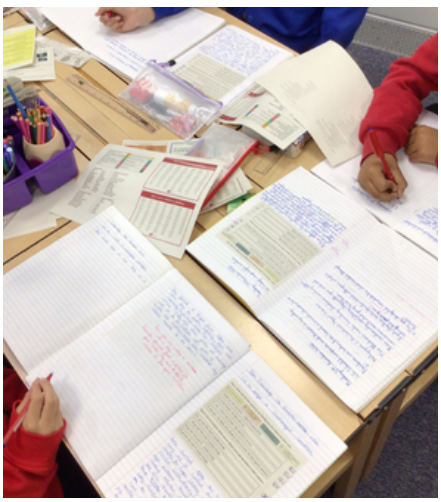


love LEARNING

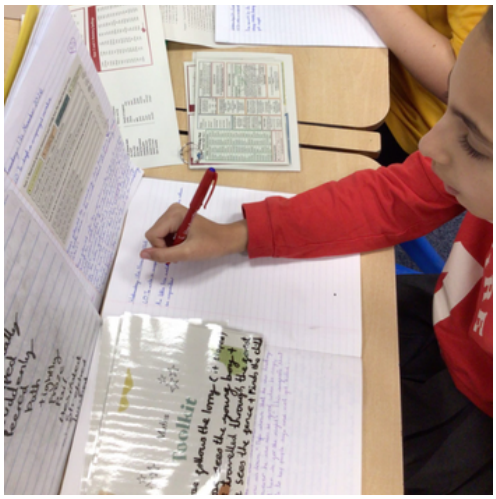


Year 5 were **GEOGRAPHERS** this week and used atlases to locate countries in North and South America





Year 2 explored rhyme and pictures as discerning and attentive **READERS** this week!



Year 6 were **WRITERS** this week composing suspenseful narratives based on their Terrific Text 'Rose Blanche'



Following feedback from our recent parent survey, many of you told us that you would like to know more about what your child is learning in school.

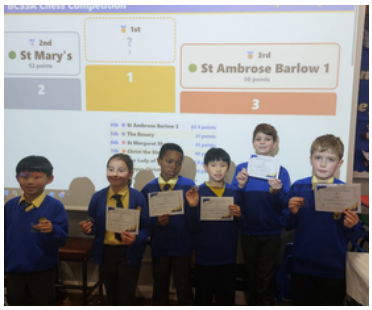
You said... more information should be provided to parents/carers about the curriculum and what their child will learn throughout the year.

We did... create and share a new "What Your Child Will Learn" document for every year group. These guides provide a clear overview of the key knowledge, skills and experiences children will develop across the curriculum during the academic year. We have also continued to signpost families to our curriculum pages on the school website, where you can find detailed subject information, progression documents and our half-termly curriculum maps.

We hope these resources help you gain a greater understanding of your child's learning journey and support learning conversations at home. Thank you for your valuable feedback and continued support.



Competition News



Congratulations to our chess team who finished 2nd place in the Birmingham Catholic Sports Association Chess Competition! A special well done to L in Year 3, who achieved 3rd place in the individual standings.



Next week - WB 23.11.26



Year 5 Harborne Library Visit - 24.11.26

Year 5 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.
5F will leave at 8:45am
5M 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 5 staff know.



Year 2 Mass - Solemnity of Christ the King 25.11.26 at 9:15am

Year 2 will be leading Mass celebrating the solemnity of Christ the King on Wednesday 25th November at 9:15am. Year 1 will be attending also. Parents and carers are warmly welcome to attend.

Coming up:



Christmas Discos

Dates for the Christmas discos are -
Monday 1st December (3:30-4:30) - KS1
Tuesday 2nd December (3:15-4:00) - Reception class
Thurday 3rd December (3:45-4:45) - KS2
Cost for disco and non-school uniform is £3.00
If you are just taking part in non-school uniform, the cost is £1.00
Please make all payments are to made on School Gateway - thank you!



Penitential Service for Years 4-6 - 7.12.26

In order to prepare our hearts and minds during the season of Advent, children in Years 4–6 will be attending Confession on Monday 1st December. This is a special opportunity for our pupils to reflect on their actions, seek forgiveness, and renew their commitment to living out the values of kindness, faith, and hope as we journey towards Christmas. .

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



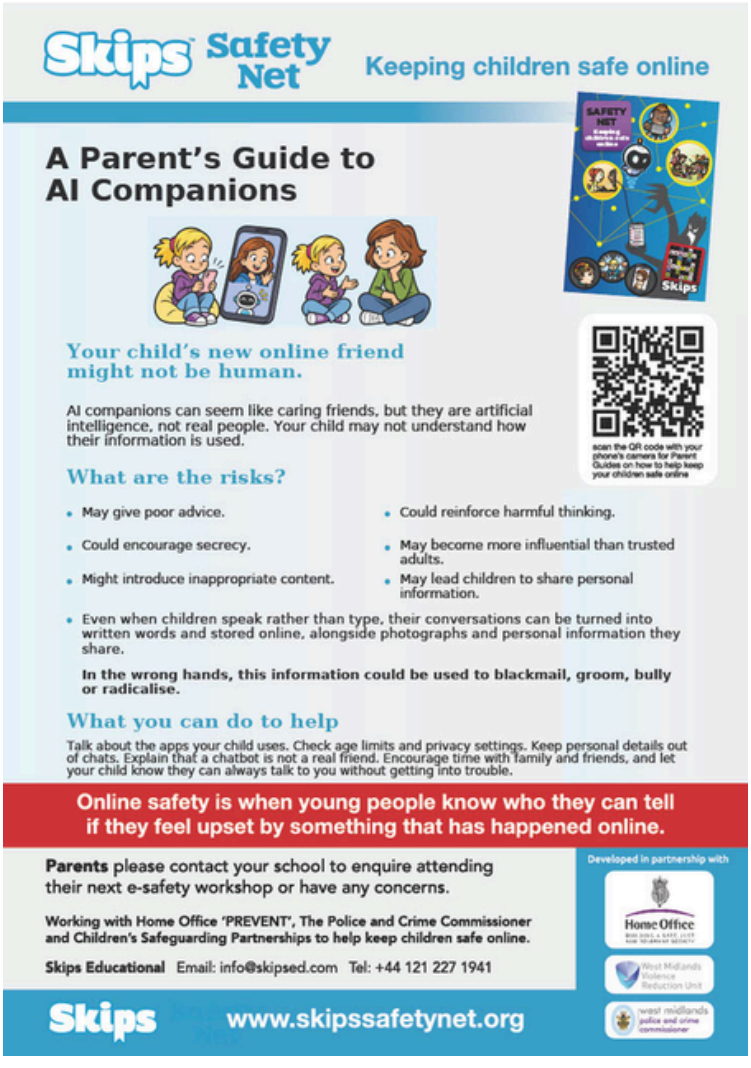
Shania Birchenall
SENDCo

SAFEGUARDING- ONLINE SAFETY

As new technologies become part of children's everyday lives, it is important that we help them use them safely.

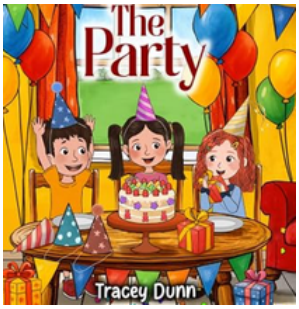
Please take a moment to read this helpful guide about AI companions and chatbots, and talk to your child about staying safe online, protecting personal information, and speaking to a trusted adult if they ever feel worried or uncomfortable.

stay safe Online



ALLERGY AWARENESS

Children took part in a live Picture News assembly this week featuring Tracey Dunn, from AllergyWise. The children learnt what an allergy is, why some people need to take extra care and what they can do to help everyone feel safe and included. The session featured an age-appropriate story called 'The Party' in which twins, Victoria and Albert, ensure that their friend with a serious allergy to milk is kept safe, made to feel welcome and included in the fun.









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 -

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	97	90	90	94	97	97	96	95	94	92	99	91	93	91
Lates	1	2	5	0	2	4	3	3	7	5	2	0	0	3
Whole School Attendance so far this year						96.9%		School Target					97%	

Well done 5M: - Our attendance champions!

Dates for this Half Term

Autumn theme -	Families and Communities
Autumn 2 Virtues	Faith-filled and Hopeful
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
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
7th December 2026 - 1:30pm	Guitar and piano Concert for parents after school
8th December 2026 - 3:45pm	Years 4, 5 and 6 Penitential Service in Church
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	Ayanna A	For working really hard on her phonics and reading!
Year RT	Charlie	For putting so much effort into all of his learning, all of the time!
Year IF	Boyang	For working well in maths this week.
Year IL	Odran	For working really hard in all of his learning!
Year 2E	Jude	Creating a fantastic non-chronological report about the United Kingdom.
Year 2G	Jax	For fantastic maths work. Well done !
Year 3L	Nathan N	For amazing writing this week. Well done Nathan. Keep it up!
Year 3T	Asher	Amazing work in RE this week!
Year 4J	Massimo	For his enthusiasm and engagement in every lesson-well done!
Year 4M	Reena	For being a good role model in every way in the classroom and around the school
Year 5F	Anya	For being an academic and behaviour role model for her peers.
Year 5M	Melissa	For her increased confidence to contribute to class discussions! Well done!
Year 6O	Alarna	For trying her best and working hard across all subjects! Well done!
Year 6R	Peonya	For Working really hard in maths!

