



Headteacher Message

Dear Parents/ Carers

Thank you for your fantastic support for the school, as shown in your responses to the Catholic School's inspection, the school had on the 5th and 6th of November. We can't wait to share the outcome and report of the inspection with you as soon as we can. We are always delighted to see you at the Achievement Assemblies and Celebrations of the word, which you are always welcome to attend on Mondays and Thursdays.

The children look so smart in their winter uniforms- thank you for ensuring the children are wearing their uniform with pride, since the half term holidays. The Academy continues to support the school in improving the building and exteriors. Over the half term holiday, the junior playground was resurfaced and PE doors installed in the hall.

In this month of November, there are several events that the school is celebrating or has celebrated. The school was invited by a staff member from De Lisle to take a wreath up, with their pupils and the pupils at Sacred Heart to the Loughborough Remembrance Service on the 9th of November. Thank you to parents who joined us for our Remembrance Celebration of the Word on the 11th of November at 11a.m. We will continue to read out in our prayer times, names sent in for our friends and families.

The school focused on Anti-bullying week from the 10th to the 14th of November, looking at our power for good and encouraging children to talk to a trusted adult in school and speak out about bullying. We will be updating our anti-bullying policy and will gain parent and pupils views to do this. Next week is the Staff training day on Friday the 21st November, where staff will gather with other staff from the Academy schools to train on different areas of the curriculum and on SEND. Please do join us for the FOSM meeting on Wednesday the 19th of November after school to plan the next events- we are always thankful for parent volunteers at the events. The Fosm also bought £100 of books for pupils from the book fayre from fundraising- thank you.

Miss Jordan

Contact Info

Address: Hastings Street, Loughborough, LE11 5AX Phone: 01509 212 621
Email: office@stmarys-rc.leics.sch.uk Website: www.stmarys-rc.leics.sch.uk



Dates for your diary



11th Nov: Book Fayre arrives and is in school for a week in the front reception and corridor.

·21st Nov: CMAT inset day (staff training day) : pupils not in school

·24th Nov: seasonal flu vaccination day

·2nd Dec: 10.15a.m: Pantomime at Loughborough Town Hall- walking from school at 9.30a.m

3rd December: Phonics workshop and early reading- please sign up at the school office.

·4th Dec: Christmas Fayre and Grotto

·5th Dec: Menphys Carol concert at De Montfort Hall

·8th Dec: 9.15 mass in church

9th Dec: EYFS Nativity: 1.30p.m: performance for parents

11th Dec: Christmas jumper day/ meal day. 4/5/6 Advent confessions

2.15p.m: Rock steady concert

16th Dec: 1.30p.m Carol service KS2 in church

17th Dec: KS1 nativity 2.00: performance

19th Dec: children come to school in party clothes.

22nd December to the 2nd of January 26- Christmas holidays

5th January 2026: School begins for the Lent/ Spring Term

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Meet Our Staff

Mrs Clarke-Deputy Headteacher



Having now been here for half a term, I jumped at the chance to write a little about myself in this newsletter. My name is Mrs Clarke and I joined St Mary's at the beginning of this academic year as the Year 3 teacher (for 3 days a week) and Deputy Head. I share the year 3 class with Miss Myatt, who teaches on the Thursday and Friday in Year 3.

I came from Loughborough Amherst School, where I was the Head of Prep and, before that, was at Sacred Heart for many years. I'm delighted to be part of this community and have thoroughly enjoyed my time here so far.

Over the past term, I've had the pleasure of meeting many of the children across the school. It's been lovely to see so many smiling faces and to get a real sense of the enthusiasm and kindness that make this such a special place to learn and work. I know that some of you have seen me too leading Achievement Assembly on a Friday morning or out on the playground.

Due to my teaching commitment of 3 days, I'm not quite as visible around the school as the previous Deputy Head may have been. However, I am very much involved in the life of the school and am always keen to build connections with families, staff, and, of course, the children. Please do come and say hello if you see me on the playground or at an event—I'm always happy to stop for a chat! I hope to become a very familiar face very soon.

I'm really looking forward to continuing to get to know more of you as the year progresses and to playing my part in helping all the children grow with Jesus to be the best they can be.

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Homework

Homework and Times Tables Rock stars (TTRS)

The school will be sending out a survey to parents to gain views on different areas, but particularly on home work, as we would like to update the school's homework policy taking your views into account.

Homework is defined as tasks given to pupils by their teachers to be completed outside of usual lessons at home. For the previous homework policy the school referred to EEF research and to parental views. EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) research stated that homework in Secondary school had a greater impact on learning than Primary schools and that homework on reading, mathematics and using digital technology had the greatest impact. Research also showed that the quality of the task was more important than the quantity of the tasks. EEF research also highlighted that homework linked to classroom work enabled better progress and that it is important for schools to consider how home learning can be supported particularly for those pupils who do not have a quiet space to learn or digital technology. St Mary's school also took into account that the school population is very diverse and English is not always the first language spoken at home, therefore it could be difficult for parents to support pupils. The Friday homework club at lunchtime was set up to support pupils, with the information about school context as a basis.

Three key areas are focused on for Homework: Reading, Spelling and learning times tables. Without these key skills children cannot engage with the rest of the curriculum. The reading, spelling and times tables are age appropriate, with further revision given to children as they attend Year five and Six. In EYFS and Year One, pupils read their books three times before it is sent home to read with parents and from Year Two, books sent home are carefully levelled at the pupil's ability. It is important that all pupils, including up to Year 6 read aloud to a parent. A child may be fluent, but may have very little understanding of what they are reading and that discussion with a parent at home is important, using a dictionary or technology to find meaning- use of AI would be useful. All pupils should read to their parents at least x2 a week.

TTRS- Times Tables Rock stars are introduced from Year Two. This is a technology based game, which children can gain points on, whilst improving their speed of recall. The school would encourage pupils to go on times tables rock stars at least twice a week for 5-10 minutes. However some children may prefer to use it daily, as little and often is effective for knowledge to transfer into long term memory. Pupils should work on the times tables relevant to their year group: Year Two- x2, x5, x10, Year Three x2, x3, x4, x5, x6 and Year Four, Five and Six all the times tables, including the division facts. In Year 4 pupils take a times table test set by the Government, to assess their knowledge. There is leeway in the home work for the pupils to just complete the minimum amount set or maximum and this is always celebrated in the Achievement Assembly.

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Advent 2 Curriculum at St Mary's Road Safety Week and Travel Programme

Advent 2 Curriculum

This term, there are a range of subjects being taught in each of the classrooms in the afternoon, linked to a central theme.

EYFS: Space: planets and the sun

Y1: Fire Fire- History, Science and Design and Technology- based around the Great Fire of London

Y2: Fighting Fit: Science, History and Art linked to what humans need to survive and grow.

Y3: Rock and Roll: Science, History and art based on rocks and fossils.

Y4: The great Plague: history, Science and Art focus (this will link back to the Y2 History learning)

Y5: A kingdom united: Science, History and Geography focusing on UK cities, Counties and Anglo Saxon settlement.

Y6: Super Sleuths: Science and History Focus- looking at classification.

The curriculum is designed to build on each year group and is taught through a blocked curriculum, where children have science lessons in the afternoon, and then after two weeks move onto the History lessons for example, rather than having every subject every week. Our monitoring has shown that all children, particularly children with SEND needs can recall their learning better this way. We also bring in seasonal learning into the subject learning- such as Autumn, Remembrance and black History month.

St Mary's Travel and Road Safety Programme

St Mary's has been chosen to participate in an Active travel programme, from the County this Academic Year. We will be working on a programme of events to encourage children to walk, or ride to school, to reduce traffic congestion around school and to make it safer at drop off and end of day times. This will involve a park and stride scheme and scooter lessons for a year group. Further information will be sent out about the range of events we will participate in.

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Collective Worship/ RE

Collective Worship/ Prayers

The school provides a rich and varied diet of collective worship and prayer. Pupils have the opportunity to pray three times a day: Start of day prayer, Lunchtime prayers and the end of day prayer. The school also has a school prayer, and each class has a saint's prayer devised by the Chaplaincy Team. Pupils learn a range of prayers, appropriate to their age group and the prayer progression can be viewed on the Catholic life pages of the school's website.

There is an act of collective worship each day. On Monday's a group of pupils who have volunteered plan and lead the whole school celebration of the word to the whole school, based around a theme linked to the weekend's Gospel. Tuesday is a day for class collective worship led by a group of children, or the children have Christian meditation or Lectio Divina- which is a quiet focus on a bible reading, Wednesdays are whole school Hymn Practises, Thursdays are whole school collective worship led by a class and Fridays are Achievement Assemblies, which always start with an act of collective worship. Families are very welcome to join us for any of our collective worship. This year, each class will also have a class mass with Fr David. This half term, it is Year 5's on the 25th of November at 9.15a.m- which year 5 parents are invited to. This will be in their classroom.

Religious Education at St Mary's

This Academic Year, the school has implemented a new RE Syllabus from the 'to know you more clearly' Diocesan programme of study. In previous year's we used the resource 'Come and See'. The new RE Syllabus is a lot more varied and in depth. Pupils and staff have reported that they are enjoying this more. Over the next few terms, we will invite you to see the RE lessons. This term the unit is called Prophecy and Promise, with an Advent and Christmas focus from the bible. The new RE syllabus also has a greater focus on learning a wider variety of religions. Please see the website for more details.