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*We are committed to working closely with our Family of Primary Schools. Every year we admit students from nine feeder primary schools, however, our intake comes from students from a wide range of schools across Newcastle. This year, we are expecting students from forty-two different primary schools.*

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*We work closely with Year 6 teachers in order to understand the Key Stage 2 curriculum and the pastoral experiences of the students. It is crucial that we understand the local contextual factors for our students and how varied it is across the Newcastle region and how we can best build on the knowledge and skills that our students need in order to ensure a smooth transition between the two Key Stages.*

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*Since 2017 we have increased our entry to the EBacc subjects for all students from 46% to 81% (on average across the last three years (2018 – 2021). This is significantly higher than the Local Authority Average and the average for England which were both approximately 40%.*

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*Senior and Middle leaders worked together to redesign every subject to ensure that the curriculum is well-planned and aspirational and built on the prior knowledge of our students from the feeder primary schools as well as developing skills incrementally over time. We ensured that all students, including disadvantaged and those with SEND, were given the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed at each stage of the curriculum, including the knowledge needed to prepare them for their future lives.*

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*Evidence of the impact of the progress that St Mary's continues to make to sustain high performance can be seen in our outcomes for students. Our average Progress 8 score over the last five years (since 2017) is over 0.5, meaning that on average, every student leaves St Mary's with at least half a grade more in every subject than similar students do nationally. Disadvantaged students also continue to outperform this group nationally with our Progress 8 score for this group higher than the national average.*

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*Since 2016/17 when our persistent absenteeism was above the national average (St Mary's 14.7% versus National 13.5%) we have focussed on reducing this and in 17/18 and 18/19 we were consistently below the national average (17/18 11.5% versus 13.9% and in 18/19 13.2% versus 13.7%). This pattern was repeated for overall absence with our % in 16/17 exceeding the national % followed by 17/18 and 18/19 being below the national average. Clearly, the pandemic has caused significant disruption to attendance rates, however, our commitment to continuing this drive to improve attendance remains a key aspect of our work.*

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*Our Pastoral Programme attempts to create an awareness in students of the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations by looking at the social, economic and political dimensions of life. We also explore themes which celebrate and acknowledge the rich cultural diversity we have in our world, country and school. Religious Education at St Mary's also affords students a deep understanding of their own faith as well as awareness of the faith and traditions of other religious communities as a basis for understanding and respecting them. As a result, our students are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.*

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*At St Mary's, we recognise the value of having a broad and diverse wider curriculum. Fully aware of the enormous benefits to holistic development of extracurricular participation, we want all our students to take full advantage of the fantastic opportunities on offer here at the school.*

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*Embracing Remote Learning has been an inevitable consequence of the pandemic. At St Mary's we have worked tirelessly over the last two years to improve our offer in this aspect and you can read more about our development over time by clicking [here](#). Using Teams has ensured that we have been able to continue to deliver the full curriculum to students throughout the last two years.*

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*At St Mary's we believe that every student should be respected for their personal worth and dignity and be supported and cared for appropriately. Each student will be encouraged to develop a caring attitude towards those around them and to respect and tolerate people of every background, race, religion and culture.*

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*If you visit St Mary's you will see a collective commitment to ensuring a positive, welcoming climate as all leaders, Middle and Senior, are a clear and visible presence around the school. We believe that St Mary's is a safe, caring environment with a family atmosphere and we are committed to the welfare of every individual, student or staff member.*

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*At St Mary's we routinely evaluate the strengths of the school and as such, we believe that we coordinate an excellent professional development programme for staff. In recent years, our work in professional development has extended via both Teaching Schools and the Trust.*

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*A continuing focus for the Teaching & Learning team has been to develop the use of educational theory and as such we have now established a 'spinoff' Teaching & Learning Book Group. This year, we have focussed on 'Teach like No-One is Watching' by Mark Enser.*

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*Our Governors see no limit to the further success of St Mary's and they robustly challenge us to continue the school's improvement journey. They rightly believe that the school can continuously develop, and their expectations continue to rise.*

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*We are blessed at St Mary's to have an outstanding body of teaching and support staff. Teachers are nearly all subject specialists and are able to use their expert subject knowledge to inspire and motivate students.*

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*We believe that St Mary's staff feel valued and listened to, and staff retention is high.*