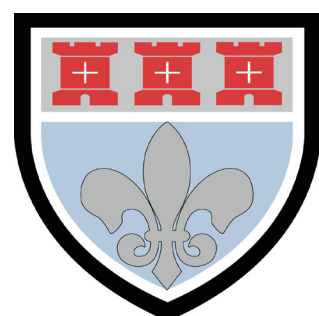


St Mary's Newsletter Autumn Term 2021-22



Footballer Selected for England

Year 10 footballer, Niamh Boothroyd, has demonstrated an outstanding attitude and great effort this year playing not only for the school team but also for the Newcastle City, County and Sunderland Ladies Under-15s teams. This has been noticed by England's team scouts who invited Niamh to attend three trials for the national squad. Niamh's hard work and determination paid off and she has been selected to play for her country at schoolgirl level. This is a fantastic and well-deserved achievement. The whole school is proud of Niamh and wishes her all the best with the England team.

Mr Thompson

NIAMH BOOTHROYD



COUNTY: NORTHUMBERLAND

TEAM: ENGLAND UNDER 15'S SCHOOLGIRLS



Mock Trial Competition

Last year, a team of Year 9 students had an incredibly valuable experience competing in the Young Citizens' Magistrates Mock Trial Competition at Newcastle Crown Court. This event was so rewarding that the school has not only entered another group of Year 9s into this year's contest but has also assembled a Year 12 team to compete in the Bar Mock Trial Competition. Both teams are being supported by Mr Anderson, Miss Hornsby and Miss Spina and they are currently preparing for the defence and prosecution in fictional court cases.



In the new year, the two teams will present their cases in a courtroom against students from other local schools. Every student has an individual role in court – for example, that of barrister, magistrate or usher – and each team's score will be determined by professional lawyers according to how well the students followed the rules of a real trial. The competition helps young people to understand how the law touches every aspect of their lives and gives them a great insight into how the legal justice system works.

Miss Hornsby



Mandarin Chinese Class

Since October, a group of Year 12 and 13 students have been learning Mandarin Chinese with a teacher from Newcastle University. This class is run in partnership with the university's Confucius Institute. Students have been working with their tutor, Sheng, to develop an awareness and understanding of Chinese culture and grammar, the correct pronunciation of the tones in the language, and the writing of Chinese characters in both standard and calligraphic form.

The students have shown great enthusiasm and dedication, attending voluntarily on a Friday after school, and Sheng has been very impressed with their work. They will now work towards the HSK 1 assessment, which is a recognised qualification in Mandarin Chinese.

Ms Mullan

Duke of Edinburgh Practice Expedition

In September, twenty-six Year 13 students working towards their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards finally completed their practice expedition after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. The students were really eager and excited to start the trip with smiles all round despite an early morning start and heavy rucksacks.

On their first day, the rain-soaked students applied their new map reading skills to orienteer across the Bardon Mill countryside. They then all helped each other in putting up their tents once they had reached Winshields campsite. After cooking their first hot meal on a portable stove, the group enjoyed some well-deserved rest.

The next couple of days brought more bad weather, but the students worked extremely well in their walking groups to keep up morale and to learn the skills that will be necessary for the final qualifying expedition later in the academic year. Even with their legs sore from all the hiking, and their shoulders aching from carrying backpacks, the students still reflected positively on their first ever expedition.

There is no doubt that the Year 13s will have another successful qualifying expedition, which will hopefully bring them better weather. We look forward to seeing them finally holding their Gold Duke of Edinburgh certificates and badges after two years of commitment and hard work before they leave St Mary's.

Mrs Francis



St Mary's Christmas Cookery

Students from Years 7, 8 and 9 have lately been practising their culinary skills to create a selection of tasty Christmas treats. They have been preparing and cooking festive-inspired biscuits and cupcakes using recipes that can be repeated at home to make edible gifts.

In the new year, the students will prepare and cook a selection of dishes from around the world with a strong focus on seasonality and nutrition.

Mrs McDonald



Drama and Dance Clubs

It has been great to see the return of the drama and dance clubs in school. Students in Years 12 and 13 are doing a fantastic job running both clubs and the younger students benefit greatly from their leadership and experience.

The clubs' members are currently preparing a Christmas showcase to be performed during the final week of term. Dance club students also recently enjoyed a workshop that was led by Italia Conti Associates and which covered contemporary, jazz and musical theatre styles.

In addition to the clubs within school, students have this term enjoyed going to the Theatre Royal to see *Blood Brothers* and to Northern Stage for a production of Jim Cartwright's *Road*. More exciting theatre trips are planned for next year.

Miss Stearman



The Sound of Music

The Drama and Music Departments' rooms are alive with the sound of students rehearsing *The Sound of Music* ahead of the performances that will take place in February. The whole school musical is always an exciting time of year in school as was seen by the huge number of students who auditioned for parts. Rehearsals are going very well and everyone who is involved in the production is excited to perform in front of an audience.

Miss Stearman



Equality Group

In October, a group of Year 12 students set up an Equality Group. This is open to every student in school and gives them the opportunity to learn about LGBTQ+ history and culture, and to discuss current issues. The group meets every Monday at lunchtime and has already been hugely successful with over forty students attending each week.

In a recent session, students learnt about the artist Keith Haring. One Year 12 student drew on a recent visit to an exhibition of Haring's work at Tate Liverpool to discuss the themes – which include the hardships of the LGBTQ+ community – in his art. This was a very informative session with students learning about Haring and discussing the impact of his work.

After discovering Haring, the students took part in an art session to create work that was inspired by the talk. The work that was produced was brilliant and addressed a range of issues such as equality, love, respect and diversity. It was great to see many students not only taking inspiration from a world-famous artist, but adding their own interpretation and creative touch.

The members of the Equality Group are already planning more sessions on a wide number of topics for next term.

Miss Lamb



Aspire to Oxbridge and Medicine Groups

The Aspire to Oxbridge Group was launched this term for those Year 12 students who are considering applying to Oxford or Cambridge. We have had a fantastic attendance with the group attracting over thirty students, which demonstrates their high aspirations. The group has discussed extensively what its members are currently reading and some have delivered related short presentations. These have shown the wide variety of interests that the students have (interests that have included such areas as mathematical theory and political discourse) whilst allowing them to answer challenging questions from the audience.

The Aspire to Medicine Group is for anyone who is interested in applying for Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Science. During its meetings, the group has discussed the application process for these courses and other relevant issues and debates. A recent session involved a discussion of patient autonomy with the focus on a case study of a patient who had refused treatment. The students used the four pillars of medical ethics – autonomy, justice, beneficence and non-maleficence – and the General Medical Council's guidelines to discuss the responsibilities of a doctor and any ethical implications in this scenario. In the new year, the students look forward to visits to the school from doctors and medical students.

Miss Lamb



Science Reading and STEM Clubs

Many students are shocked by the complexity of reading materials – journals and textbooks – when they move on to higher education. The Science Department wanted to help Year 12 and 13 students to prepare for this transition, whilst inspiring and encouraging them to apply what they have learnt in lessons to the most current science, by establishing a Science Reading Club. This has allowed the students to research and discuss a range of issues, among them the latest gene technology techniques and the development of the COVID-19 vaccine, at a very advanced level.

For students in Years 7 and 8, the school's STEM Club offers the chance to explore different areas of science. It also allows them to conduct lots of exciting experiments and investigations involving such things as circuits, flame tests and whoosh bottles. The club's members have consistently shown huge enthusiasm, and Mr Elliott and his sixth-form assistants have been very impressed by their practical skills.

Miss Pearson

Table Tennis Teams

The weekly attendance at Table Tennis Club has been consistently good this term with students from all year groups taking part. More recently, there was an opportunity for four boys from Years 7 and 8 to compete in a tournament at the Tyneside Badminton Centre. Shay O’Gara and Edward Stamp of Year 7 and Jonathan Hair and Harry Maynard of Year 8 were selected from a big group of talented students. They played exceptionally well and even had the opportunity to umpire some of the other games.

Four Year 10 students are due to compete, again at the Tyneside Badminton Centre, in an Under-16 competition in December. The chosen players are Brian Granada Hincapie, Josh Kunjumon, Rayan Naderi and Ibu Oluwole-Oni. Good luck to them.

Mr Thompson



Under-18s Boys Basketball

Well done to the Under-18 basketball squad that represented St Mary’s at Jesmond Park Academy in the first league fixtures of the season. The boys unfortunately lost both games against St Cuthbert’s and the host school, but they showed great courage and perseverance in the face of strong opposition. Their effort and resilience will stand them in good stead in future matches.

Mr Bone

Geography Field Trip

In November, Year 12 geographers enjoyed – despite the freezing conditions – a walk through Heaton, High Heaton and Ouseburn. This allowed the students to conduct a range of investigations to help them prepare for assessments on historical and physical geographical factors that affect people’s sense of place. In the lower Ouseburn Valley, the students were given an excellent walking tour by the Ouseburn Trust. This explored the industrial heritage of the location, its reputation as the cradle of the industrial revolution in the region, and how it has evolved into a centre of culture.

Mr Gamesby



Geography Film Club

This has been a very exciting start to the year for the Geography Department as five Year 12 students, Eleanor, Eve, Filipa, Laura and Kimberly, have set up the Geography Film Club. They have shown a good selection of documentaries and films to encourage students across the school to take an interest in important issues such as ocean exploitation and the diminishing cryosphere. The club has been so popular that it has had to find a bigger room for the screenings. Our Year 12s’ enthusiasm for promoting Geography has certainly paid off.

Miss Henzell



Music Department News

This academic year has seen the long-awaited return of live music to St Mary's. The students have relished being able to take practical music lessons again and some wonderful and imaginative work has been created this term.

At the end of September, the extra-curricular programme restarted with over 130 students and staff joining one or more of the school's ensembles. It really was wonderful to see the return of so many older students alongside a huge number of new younger musicians.

The quality of music-making has been extremely impressive, especially after such a long break. Rehearsals for the school's Remembrance services started in October. They included the chamber choir performing 'A Flower Remembered' by John Rutter, which was composed in memory of the victims of the earthquake and tsunami that hit Northeast Japan in March 2011. A Year 11 student, Sam Foster, also gave an assured and moving rendition of 'The Last Post' which signalled a return to school gatherings and the performing of live music at St Mary's for the first time in twenty months.

All the ensembles are currently working hard for the Christmas concerts. The chamber orchestra is preparing several pieces, including 'Fairytale of New York' and 'The First Nowell', while the choir's repertoire includes 'Let It Snow', 'God Bless Us Everyone', 'Jingle Bell Rock' and 'Feliz Navidad'. The school orchestra will perform 'The Christmas Song' and 'Somewhere in My Memory'. A few students, including violinists Patrick Caragay (Year 11) and Lucas Colley (Year 13) and Year 8 vocalist Henry Wilkinson, will deliver solo versions of such pieces as 'Meditation' from Jules Massenet's *Thäïs*, 'In the Bleak Midwinter' and 'Walking in the Air'.

Many thanks to all the students and members of staff who have been involved in a joyful term of music-making.

Mr Richardson



Year 7 Netball Club

We have had fantastic attendance at the Year 7 Netball Club this term and new players are encouraged to join. The girls practise their positions, ball skills and tactics every Wednesday evening. Two Year 7 teams have entered the Newcastle City School League and have already secured a win. More matches have been organised for the new year and the girls are already preparing for another tournament.

Mrs Cormack

Year 9 Netball Team

The Year 9 team has made a brilliant start to this season, developing a fantastic understanding of tactics and strategy in order to outwit opponents. Players in both the 'A' and 'B' teams have attended the weekly practice sessions and have been committed to developing their fitness and teamwork skills. Whether they have won or lost, all the players have shown both dignity and a willingness to improve individually and as a group. Well done, girls.

Miss Gleadow

Year 8 Netball Team

A big well done goes out to the Year 8 netball team for competing in the Tyne and Wear County Schools Netball Tournament in November. The girls played to a very high standard against other local schools and finished impressively in third place. They are now looking forward to playing more competitive matches in the new year.

The girls practise netball after school every Wednesday and new players are welcome to attend.

Mrs Cormack



Year 10 Netball Team

The Year 10 team has made an outstanding start to this season, achieving wins against Newcastle High School for Girls and Sacred Heart. The team has worked well under the captaincy of Charlotte Hobbs and has produced some excellent tactical performances. The girls have been very impressive when they have been losing and have reacted positively to turn the situation around. Well done, girls.

Miss Gleadow



Word Gets Around About Scrabble Club

This term has seen the introduction of an English Department Scrabble Club, which gives students the opportunity to relax with friends in a welcoming environment while consolidating their spelling and vocabulary. The club has been an enormous success, with students from Years 7 to 13 regularly attending on a Wednesday lunchtime. Alongside Scrabble, students have also played Bananagrams, a faster, board-free twist on the traditional word game. Special thanks go to three Year 12 students, Will Metcalf, Jacob Nelson and Eleanor Quinn, for helping to organise games, draft in extra seating and adjudicate on contentious spellings.

Miss Scott



Colouring/Crafts Club

This year, the Colouring/Crafts Club has given students a quiet place in the Chapel to create some artwork and hone their individual skills. Some members simply want a calm space at lunchtime in which to gather their thoughts and prepare for the rest of the day while listening to some background music. Regardless of how they spend their time, all the students are encouraged to relax and to enjoy the moment.

Mrs Ifeajuna



Debate Club

The Debate Club meets every Thursday lunchtime to give students in Years 7 to 9 the opportunity to form and deliver effective, evidence-based arguments. A number of important social, political, economic and historical issues have already been discussed including the question of lowering the voting age to sixteen and animal rights.

It has been lovely to see the students so engaged in the debates and their level of preparation, together with the respect that they show one another, has been inspiring. They have been a pleasure to watch. It has also been wonderful to see some students from Years 10 and 12 involved in helping to run the club.

Miss Durham and Miss Germany



Horrible History Club

This year, the History Department has started a new and exciting extra-curricular activity for Year 9 students. Every Friday lunchtime, the group meets to allow each member the chance to work on a 1,500-word independent research project on a topic of their choice. This amazing opportunity for students to study an area of special interest has led to the study of the history of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, the social impact of the Second World War and the history of Stonewall. It has been inspiring to see the levels of dedication shown by the students and the department cannot wait to see their completed work.

Alongside this initiative, History Club is running again this year but with a new twist. Every Monday lunchtime, the group watches and discusses a different episode of *Horrible Histories* and, because the episodes cover a vast time range, the club caters for a wide range of historical interests. Everyone learns something new each week while having fun.

Miss Germany

Girls Selected for City Football Team

Well done to those students who were successful in their trials for the city's football team. The girls already represent St Mary's and now have the chance to play competitively alongside other talented students from different local schools. We clearly have a set of talented young individuals who will do very well and the PE Department wishes them the very best.

Mr Thompson



Sportshall Athletics Competition

As part of the Newcastle School Games, boys and girls in Year 7 and 8 competed in a Sportshall Athletics Competition in December. This consisted of track events, including sprints and relays, along with field events such as the shot putt, speed bounce, triple jump, long jump and vertical jump. All the students performed to an outstanding level and showed an amazing level of sportsmanship.

Well done to everyone who was involved.

Mrs Cormack



Just.Is Investigates COP26

It has been wonderful to welcome new members to Just.Is from across the whole school this term. The group looked at what happened at the COP26 meeting in Glasgow when world leaders discussed how to tackle climate change. It also made a video and other resources on the impact of climate change for use by other students. In November, some of the members joined a live link up as part of the World Youth Fun Day in November to learn about the fantastic work that is taking place in the church. Currently, the Just.Is students are planning a big conference for our feeder primary schools in March.

Mrs Shields



Reading Club

This term has seen the launch of a new Reading Club at St Mary's. We have a thriving culture of reading across the school and thought that it was about time that students had the opportunity to meet informally to get stuck into all things literary.

The Reading Club is open to everyone from all year groups and currently has student helpers from Years 8, 10 and 11 and Sixth Form. At the first meeting, the students discussed what they wanted from the meetings and selected texts to read. The excellent recommendations and keen focus on diversity, representation and the environment showed what a conscientious and passionate group of young people we have in school.

The group decided that they first wanted to explore *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, a modern classic written by Douglas Adams in 1979. This very funny and slightly wacky novel takes the students into the world of the main character, Arthur Dent, having to deal with some people trying to bulldoze his house.

Every Friday lunchtime, the students gather in G10 to eat their food, read a new chapter, and discuss their reactions, thoughts and opinions on the characters and plot. They become especially enthusiastic when they are asked about how they might write the story differently. The warm, supportive and lively discussions that take place can take unexpected turns and always lead to laughter.

If you are interested in joining the Reading Club, please speak to Miss Gray or just turn up at the next meeting. Copies of all the chosen texts are provided by the school.

Miss Gray

Under-12s Girls Football

We have had fantastic levels of attendance at the Year 7 football training sessions this term. The girls have consistently shown an outstanding effort and attitude and it has been a pleasure to lead the sessions.

The team recently competed in the Newcastle City five-a-side tournament, playing against three other teams and drawing every match. This meant that the girls missed out on a place in the semi-finals by only one point. Nevertheless, they showed great teamwork and communication skills.

More recently, the team played its first set of seven-a-side fixtures at Benfield in very cold conditions. Although they lost to a strong Studio West team, the girls did very well overall on the night to beat the Royal Grammar School 1–0 and to draw 2–2 with Benfield. They can certainly be very proud of how they represented the school.

Mr Thompson



Under-14s Girls Football

We have had excellent levels of attendance at the Under-14s football training sessions this term and the team has got off to an excellent start to the season. It currently sits second in the league with three wins and a draw out of the five matches that have been played. The girls have demonstrated fantastic teamwork and have played outstandingly well in all their games. They can be very proud of how they have represented the school with the promise of continuing their success in the new year.

Mr Thompson



Under-16s Girls Football

We have had consistently excellent levels of attendance at football training sessions this term. The girls have not only worked hard but have been great role models for the younger students.

The Under-16s are competing in the National School Foundation Association League against teams from Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland. They are currently in third place after winning three matches, drawing another and losing only one. The teamwork that they have displayed has been outstanding and the girls can be very proud of how well they are representing St Mary's.

Mr Thompson



Design and Technology Projects

Since March 2020, our Key Stage 3 students have missed out on opportunities to develop their practical skills in design and technology. However, a club has been established this year to rectify the situation. A group of Year 13s currently run the school's Textiles Club to help Year 8 and 9 students to develop machine skills and a range of techniques. Their first project has been to develop unique designs for tote bags.

Elsewhere in the department, students are currently developing their ideas for Christmas tree decorations. This project will involve using CAD/CAM and a laser cutter. The final products will be sold in school and ideas of projects for next term are already being suggested.

Mrs Douglas



Origami Club

In Origami Club this term, students from Years 7 and 8 have folded paper to make pinwheels, hopping frogs, butterflies and gift boxes. At Christmas, after having practised the art in school, they will be able to fold napkins into Christmas trees for festive dining table settings.

Mrs Crosbie

Art News

Everyone is thrilled to be back in the art rooms and the department has welcomed students from different year groups to the school's art clubs. Supported by Miss Eakin, and with the help of Year 12 student Lucy Elder-Smith, Year 7s and 8s have created some terrific animal paintings while the Year 9 artists have been showing off their wild imaginations with quirky illustrations using pencils and paint. Both groups are now busy creating some very emotive exhibits for the Holocaust Memorial Evening in January.

Mrs Tait

Puzzle Club

In Puzzle Club this term, students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have tackled a range of investigations, logic puzzles and games. Sudoku in particular has proven itself very popular. A couple of brainteasers are featured below. If you enjoyed solving them or would like to know the answers, please join us at lunchtime on Monday in Week A.

Using any letter only once, what are the largest and smallest numbers that you can write down in words? For example, 'eighty' but not 'ninety' because 'n' is used twice.

A man is caught on the King's property. He is brought before the King to be punished. The King says, "You must give me a statement. If it is true, you will be killed by lions. If it is false, you will be killed by the trampling of wild buffalo." In the end, however, the King has to let the man go. What was the man's statement?

Miss Marshall

British Open Judo Championships

Congratulations to Luke Nevins of Year 9 who recently attended the British Judo Council's Open National Championships. Luke travelled to Kettering to compete at the Arena Sports venue in the 46–50 kilogram category for fighters aged 13–15. He performed brilliantly against students from all over the UK and deservedly won a gold medal.

Mr Maughan



Newcastle City Boys Football

Four students – Ewan Aditjandra of Year 8, Noel Marcos-Monteiro and Alan Achuo of Year 9, and Stephen Husband of Year 10 – have been selected to represent Newcastle City Boys this year. The boys have all shown an unwavering commitment to football at St Mary's and have been integral to the success of their respective teams. It was a pleasure for the PE Department to nominate all four for selection and they thoroughly deserve the achievement of being chosen to play for the city.

Mr Maughan



Year 7 Boys Football

The Year 7 boys football team played Benfield School in their opening league fixture. An enthralling match ended with Benfield winning 6–5 with a late goal. Despite the result, all the members of the St Mary's squad played incredibly well and there was a great spirit of togetherness on display. The boys were excellent ambassadors for the school.

Mr Bone



Year 8 Boys Football

In their first year as a squad, the Year 8 footballers got the season off to a perfect start with a 2–1 win against Jesmond Park Academy and a 2–0 victory over Walker Riverside Academy. The boys then followed these results by beating Gosforth Junior Academy 4–0. Every member of the squad has been superb, but a special mention needs to be made of Scott Thompson for the very important goals that he has scored.

Mr Bone

Year 10 Boys Football

The Year 10 team has made an excellent start to the season with a very new squad. It has been extremely difficult to select a team from the large numbers of students – many of them new faces – who have attended the weekly training sessions. So far, the boys have played one game away to Jesmond Park Academy. St Mary's went 1–0 down in the first half but equalised with a sublime free kick from captain Stephen Husband. At half-time, the score was 1–1 and, despite St Mary's taking the lead late into the game, Jesmond managed to grab a last-minute equaliser. In the end, 2–2 was a fair result that reflected the quality of both teams.

Mr Maughan

Year 9 Boys Football

The Year 9 footballers have competed in the Newcastle Schools Central Venue League. They have played four fixtures so far at Jesmond Park Academy and Gosforth Academy. The team produced an outstanding performance in their first game against a very strong Benfield side. A fantastic game that swung from side to side ended with St Mary's winning 3–2 with a goal in the dying minutes. The goals were scored by Noel Marcos Monteiro, Josh Siba and Miraldo Lopez Coreia.

With little rest before their second game, the boys struggled against Jesmond Park Academy. Although they created lots of good chances, the players could not find their finishing touch in the last third of the pitch. Unfortunately, they conceded a goal against the run of play and, spurred on by this, the opposition deservedly won 3–1. The consolation goal was scored by Miraldo Lopez Coreia who only joined the team this year.

The second round of fixtures was played at the end of November. Jack Davison and Jacob Houghton were fantastic as full-backs in a makeshift defence, and Corben Dodds and Adam Harrison – making their debuts – were also excellent. The boys played some great football against the Royal Grammar School and were unlucky not to come away with a win. They instead played out a scoreless draw. Unfortunately, St Mary's lost 4–0 to Gosforth Academy in the next game, a result that can be attributed to some key players being out through injury and a very strong opposition that deserved the victory.

Mr Maughan



St Mary's Running Club

This year, Miss Curran and Miss Gardiner have put aside their love of languages for an hour a week after school to share instead their love of running. It has been wonderful to see so many students from across the year groups and with different experiences of the activity taking part in the Thursday afternoon Running Club sessions.

The club organises a range of activities and its members can practise sprinting or have a go at middle and long distance running. All the sessions are varied and are designed to encourage everyone to work together. They also give Miss Curran and Miss Gardiner the chance to see students in a completely different context outside the classroom.

The students have impressed the organisers with their general positive attitude and determination to complete each session no matter how bad the weather might be. Some young runners have also chosen to move things a step further by taking part in inter-school competitions over the next few weeks.

Any students who are interested in joining the Running Club will receive a warm welcome. Just come along to the PE changing rooms after school on any Thursday and join in.

Miss Curran and Miss Gardiner



Languages Club

This term has seen the return of Languages Club, which is run every Wednesday lunchtime by the MFL Department. It gives students the chance to explore a variety of languages, cultures and religious festivals from around the world.

The club has been very well attended and the students have been extremely enthusiastic every week. They have spent this term looking at international celebrations or events and enjoying related craft activities. A favourite week was when the students learnt some Hungarian and continued the tradition of making little people out of conkers.

Everyone in the club is looking forward to doing more exciting activities next term.

Mrs Gardiner and Miss Curran