

St Mary's

NEWSLETTER



ISSUE 2 - OCTOBER 2024

Une Aventure en France

Earlier this term, 49 very excited Year 8 students set off at 1.00am for their long journey to France! After a very choppy crossing on the ferry, students eventually arrived at the Château de Warsy where they would be staying for 4 nights. The students were very excited to get into their pods for a French glamping experience!

Students had a fantastic time; they spent Tuesday in Paris, admiring the Sacre-Coeur, and taking in all of the beautiful sights from the boat tour. Students were very keen to shout a friendly 'Bonjour' at passers-by! Wednesday was market day in Compiègne, a lovely traditional French town where students enjoyed using some French to buy various different things - mostly food!

The big day of course was Thursday when students spent the full day in Disneyland! Staff and students alike had a wonderful day and enjoyed lots of rides. Thank you to all staff and students who took part, it was a superb trip and a very memorable experience for all and an excellent opportunity for students to hone their French language skills.

Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you had a wonderful half-term break with your families and friends.

It has been lovely to welcome back our students to school this week and we look forward to another busy half-term filled with lots of memorable events and activities, including our Advent activities and fundraising as we move towards Christmas.

At the end of this newsletter I have also included our Term and Holiday dates for 2025-2026, for your information.

These dates are also saved on the school website, along with our 2024-2025 Term and Holiday dates.

Best wishes,
Miss Patterson, Headteacher.

Art trip to Edinburgh

A group of our students recently had a fantastic trip to Edinburgh. They were completing tasks for their Bronze Arts Award. They visited the National Museum of Scotland and the National Gallery where students gathered photos and drawings to 'explore the arts as audience members'. The students represented St Mary's exceptionally well. A huge well done to all students involved.



Drama and Dance Clubs

Drama and Dance clubs have made a return this month with excellent attendance from students across all year groups. It is wonderful to see our Sixth Form students leading clubs, and displaying outstanding leadership skills. Drama club is on every Wednesday at 12.30pm in G25 for years 7-9. Dance Club is on every Thursday at 12.30pm in G31 for all year groups.

This month we also had the pleasure of auditioning and announcing the cast for our 2025 Whole School Musical- *Les Misérables*. Well done to everyone who auditioned, we have a huge cast again this year and we can't wait to see the final show in February!



Karate Champion

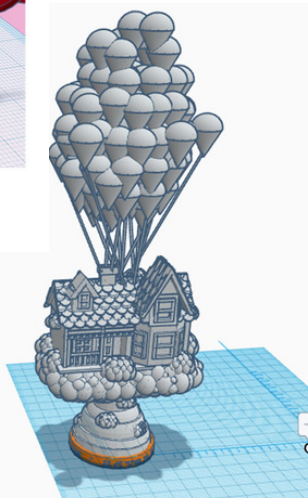
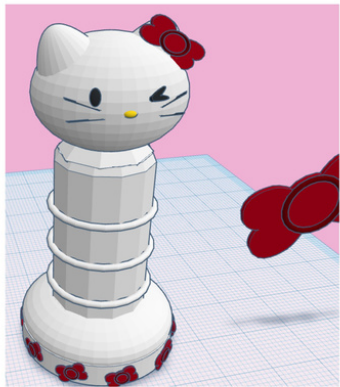
Some amazing news to share! Markus Schoefer in Year 13 competed in the WUKF European Karate Championships in Poland recently.

He won gold in the Team Kata (16-17) category, along with his teammates. Therefore, he is now a European Champion in Karate. A huge well done Markus!



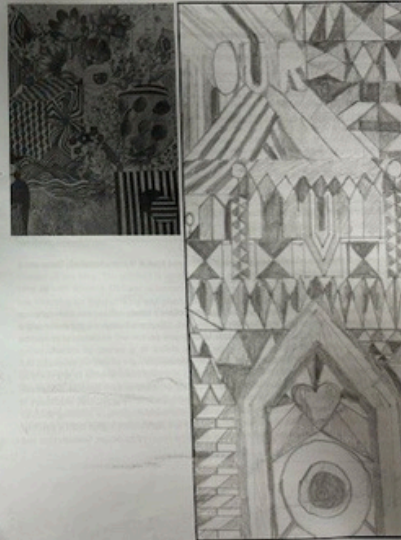
Tinkering with TinkerCAD

The Design & Technology Department would like to say a huge well done to their new GCSE students in Year 10, who have had a fantastic start to their course. One of their projects focuses on developing CAD/CAM skills using 2D Design and TinkerCAD alongside the laser cutter and 3D printers. So far students have been learning to use TinkerCAD and have begun to create their own film or TV show inspired chess pieces. As you can see, students have really enjoyed using the software to its full potential. As the end outcome of their project, they will be designing, prototyping and making a laser cut and 3D printed desk organiser inspired by an iconic artist. For their first homework, students were asked to research a designer of their choice and create a shape and pattern development from this inspiration. There have been some absolutely stunning pieces of work produced by students. Well done Year 10!



Create a shape and pattern development based on the style and products or designs from your chosen designer. Remember to use contrast in your work to add impact and interest e.g. thick and thin lines, rough and smooth textures, big and small shapes etc. Try to fill the whole of the outlined box with your shape and pattern development.

Below is an example of a shape and pattern development about Mary Quant to show you the quality which you should aim for.



Main School Student Leadership Team

Earlier this half-term, students from Year 7-11 were invited to apply for a position on the Main School Student Leadership Team. Interested students were asked to express an interest in one of the sub-committees: Spirituality, Inclusion and Diversity, Schoolwork, Physical and Mental Health, Extracurricular, Charity and Environment. The standard of application was extremely high and successful candidates attended their first meeting on Friday 25th October where they started to discuss their ideas on how to continue to develop our school within the areas above. Students had many ideas for the year ahead. We can't wait to see what this year's team has to offer and we are so thankful and proud of them for coming forward to represent our amazing student body.

Higher Education Fair

On October 10th, we held our inaugural Higher Education Fair for students in Year 12 and Year 13. With over 25 universities and higher education providers available for students to speak to and get information on next steps, the event was a great success. The students were able to get lots of useful information on potential future courses to apply to and different career sectors to work in. We look forward to our Careers Fair which next takes place in March 2025.



Employer Experience

Our Employer Experience goes from strength to strength, and it allows our students to gain an understanding of different career sectors and the route to take to enter these sectors by meeting local employers and companies. Over the past few weeks, Sixth Form students have had the opportunity to speak to a representative from the RAF, a lawyer from a law firm, and an intensive care nurse from a local hospital. The students enjoyed listening to a typical day in the life of... and got the opportunity to ask lots of questions about what it is like to work in these areas.

Careers in Art and DT

Our Year 12 Fine Artists and Designers recently met Mark and Fiona from the University of Sunderland. There was a great talk to get the students thinking about creative degrees in Graphic Design; Illustration; Fashion and Fine Art. The students also started to brainstorm ideas for their portfolios.



Future Apprenticeships

We were delighted to welcome Ask Apprenticeships into the Sixth Form to give our Year 13 students some information, advice and guidance on how to apply for apprenticeships in the future.



SEND Coffee Afternoon

On Wednesday 9th October, the SEND department held their first SEND Coffee Afternoon. This event saw parents being invited into school to find out more about the SEND provision on offer at St Mary's and to meet the team of LSAs who work tirelessly to support our students in lessons, at extra-curricular groups and through the interventions they deliver. Parents and LSAs really benefited from the opportunity to meet in person and begin to forge really positive relationships. We are looking forward to our next Coffee Afternoon in the Spring term. The picture of our wonderful team of LSAs below has been drawn by Amir Ibrahim, one of our talented artists in Year 8.



Year 10 Rugby

Rugby is continuing to thrive at St Mary's, with girls and boys from all year groups regularly taking part. Recently, our Year 10 boys' team played a match against Marden High School in Tynemouth. It was a fantastic game and very close, with Marden just edging it 15-17. Well done to the players in Year 10 who gave an excellent account of themselves.



Wilding Group

The Wilding Group continues to collect footage from around our school grounds of the wildlife that we have. The group have built new hedgehog houses and have provided some bird feeders. The group is now thinking about the whole school environment and how we can look after the nature we have and be sustainable.



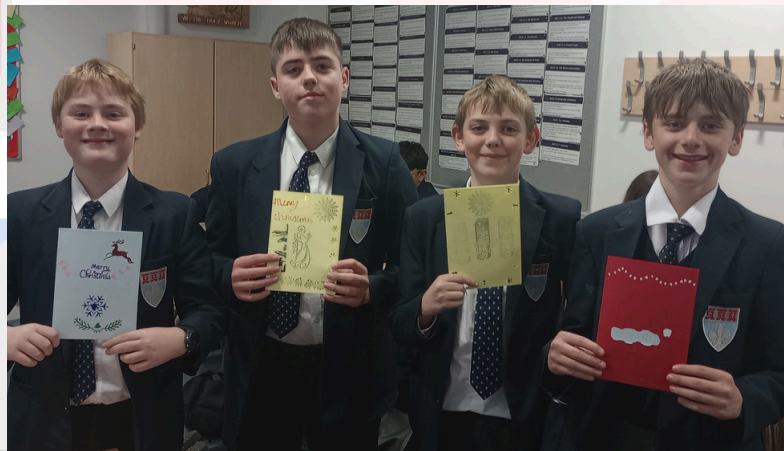
Year 7 Chapel lessons

During the first half term, Year 7 have had one of their RE lessons in the Chapel. During the lesson, students are introduced to the Chapel and the Catholic life of the school. Students also explore how they can get involved with this side of school life.



Christmas Club

We meet every Friday to make cards and decorations, which will be donated to St Cuthbert's Care. Everyone who comes to the club has a great time.



Year 10 Business Studies

Many of our Year 10 Business Students were delighted to meet Chelsie Leadbeater, Senior Designer at Frasers Group, which owns retailers such as Jack Wills and Flannels. The meeting took place on a Teams Conference call during one lunchtime recently. The students interviewed Chelsie, who provided them with lots of valuable insider information on what makes a successful t-shirt design. This was extremely useful for the market research that students need to complete as part of their Enterprise and Marketing coursework. We look forward to seeing their own designs soon.



Board Games Club

Board Games Club meet every Wednesday lunchtime in F24. It is a place to meet new people, chat with friends and take a break from studies. Everyone has lots of fun playing all different kinds of board games, both traditional and more modern. It's an excellent way to spend lunchtime. All students are welcome to join us.



Engineering Society

As part of their Student Leadership Scheme activity, Sixth Form students have founded an Engineering Society. In the first session, students looked to see who could construct the tallest object from just spaghetti and marshmallows.



Year 9 Netball

.On Tuesday 15 October, the two Year 9 teams played against Westfield. Both teams played exceptionally well, with one team team winning 13-2 and the other winning 4-3. This was a fantastic result for both our teams who put in lots of effort in the matches. On Thursday 17 October, St Mary's played Jesmond Park Academy, running out winners by a large margin, a phenomenal result. Well done to the girls!



Coding Club

This term, students in the Key Stage 3 Coding Club have been diving into the basics of Python Programming. They have used their new skills to create interactive chatbots, which can hold conversations with users. Some students have also been working with Kodu, a program that allows them to design their own video games. It has been a fun and exciting way to explore both coding and game development.



Year 8 Boys' Football

The Year 8 boys football team have started their season with a win and draw. In both games, the boys showed excellent commitment and teamwork. They were a credit to the school.



Year 8 Girls' Rugby and Handball

This half-term, has been a really busy one for sport. Our Rugby coach, Dan, from Newcastle Falcons, has been coaching Year 8 girls, working on the basics of passing, moving into space and losing markers. The girls have made excellent progress. Handball coach, Marlen, from Newcastle Vikings, has also visited the school to deliver a coaching session to Year 8 girls.

Year 7 Girls' Football

A big pat on the back for the Year 7 girls who recently competed at home in the County Cup against John Spence from North Shields. It was a great first half, with the girls leading 2-0 at the break. Both goals were netted by Eden. Unfortunately, the second half proved a little more tricky, with the home team conceding 3 goals towards the end. Despite the narrow defeat, the girls did themselves proud with a fantastic performances all-round.



First Aid Club

As part of their Student Leadership Scheme activity, Sixth Form students have started to run a First Aid Club with our younger students. Students have been looking at how to help someone who collapses unexpectedly.



Dutch Students Visit

In the very last week of the half-term, we once again welcomed students and staff from the Het Schoter School from Haarlem in the Netherlands. Over the course of the two days, 83 Dutch students went to Year 8 lessons in Maths, English, PE, Drama, Art and MFL. It was a fantastic experience for both sets of students, with the Dutch students experiencing life at a school in England. For our students, it was a great opportunity to meet, work and interact with their peers from another European country. With excellent links between the two schools, this is the third year running that staff and students from Het Schoter have visited St Mary's. We are already looking forward to 2025.



Year 10 Girls' Netball

The Year 10 netball team recently competed in the City Championships, playing against eight schools across the city. The girls won 5 of their games and came fifth overall. Everyone played their part, performing exceptionally well. Special mention goes to captain Lily Houghton who showed exceptional leadership and communication skills during matches.



Xeriscaping

In Year 8 Geography lessons, students have been designing Xeriscapes, these are landscapes that are prone to drought and require water conservation. The students have learnt lots and have really enjoyed working in teams to plan their gardens.





St Mary's Catholic School

Term and Holiday dates for 2025-2026



Below are the Term/Holiday dates for next academic year, 2025-2026 (also saved on school website).

SEPTEMBER 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

OCTOBER 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

NOVEMBER 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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DECEMBER 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

JANUARY 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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FEBRUARY 2026						
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MARCH 2026						
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30	31					

APRIL 2026						
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27	28	29	30			

MAY 2026						
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25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JUNE 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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29	30					

JULY 2026						
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

AUGUST 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term	Bank Holiday	School Holiday	INSET day
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Upcoming dates and events ...

Wednesday 13th November: Year 7 and Year 12 Tutor Evening (in school), 3.25pm -5.25pm

Wednesday 27th November: Sixth Form Open Evening (in school), 5.00pm-7.00pm

Friday 29th November: School Holiday

Monday 9th December: Year 12/13 Parents' Evening (in school), 2.45pm-6.00pm

Friday 20th December: Final day of school before the Christmas break