



NEWSLETTER

St Mary's

Marian Procession

In RE, some of our Year 7 students welcomed Father Jonathon Bowes and Deacon Alison Rebello who led the class in a Marian procession around our school grounds. This was a wonderful way to mark the month of May which is dedicated to Mary.



ISSUE 9 - MAY 2025

Headteacher's welcome

Dear Parents and Carers.

I hope you and your families had a lovely half-term break. Our Year 11 and 13 students continue with their very busy examination programme. Well done to our students for working so hard and for being such wonderful role models for our younger students.

Our other students continue to work well in lessons and contribute fantastically well to the wider life of the school, with many examples in this newsletter of our students making the most of their God-given gifts and talents. We were also delighted to have winners in two recent Diocesan competitions, as outlined on this page and overleaf. Well done to Cellina and Jimena!

We are looking forward to lots of lovely celebration events and end-of-term activities this term, and we will be celebrating Jubilee Day on the 27th June with a special visit from Bishop Stephen.

Very best wishes,
Miss Patterson, Headteacher

Carlo Acutis Prayer winner

We were delighted to welcome Michelle Ross, the RE and Catholic Ethos Adviser for the Diocese, to present Jimena Areal-Lomba in Year 9 with her award for winning the KS3 category of the Carlo Acutis prayer competition.

Michelle visited St Mary's and spoke to all Year 9 students in their assembly. She shared the prayer written by Jimena and explained that she had been chosen as one of the winners out of over 700 entries! Well done Jimena!



Diocesan Competition: Signs of Hope

The Diocesan Education Team recently ran a competition called 'Signs of Hope' for schools in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle.

Students were asked to take a photograph of something they felt showed hope in nature. Many entries were received and we are delighted to share that Cellina Guan in Year 12 was chosen as the winner of the KS4/KS5 category. Cellina will be presented with her prize later this term. Please find her winning photo on the next page. Earlier in the year, Cellina took this photo on the way home from school and felt that the bright sun bursting through the black/grey clouds represented hope and God's creation. Well done Cellina!





Photograph by Cellina Guan in Year 12

Interschool Debate Competition

A group of our Sixth Form students represented the school at the interschool debate competition held at Newcastle University on Friday 9th May. The competition, judged by members of Northumbria Police and Newcastle University's debate team, saw Ann Maria Saji, Lily Yang, Vesta Kausilaite, Emily Holburn, Lola Wilson, and Anya Wardingham deliver exceptionally compelling arguments. Their poise and professionalism were so remarkable that the judges were genuinely surprised to learn it was the students' first time participating in a debate competition. We are incredibly proud of their achievement and the way they represented the school.



UKMT Pink and Grey Kangaroo Success

Four students: Meagan Cardozo, Zac Barbieri, Ethan Douthwaite (Year 11) and Hyab Okbay (Year 9) were invited to participate in the prestigious UKMT Pink and Grey Kangaroo follow-on rounds. This invitation-only competition is extended to high-performing students from the Intermediate Mathematical Challenges.

We are delighted to share that the students achieved fantastic results:

- In the Pink Kangaroo, Meagan Cardozo was awarded a Gold certificate and named Best in School.
- Zac Barbieri also performed exceptionally well, earning a Bronze certificate.

Congratulations to all four students for their effort and participation, and for their continued mathematical excellence!



Junior Mathematical Challenge 2025

On Thursday, 1st May 2025, 111 students from Years 7 and 8 took part in the annual Junior Mathematical Challenge: a 60-minute, 25-question multiple-choice paper designed to inspire mathematical reasoning through stimulating and thought-provoking problems.

In preparation, students engaged in targeted lessons during class time, with many also undertaking independent revision. This dedication has paid off, resulting in a fantastic set of results across both year groups. An impressive 70% of our students were awarded a certificate (Gold, Silver, or Bronze), reflecting a significant increase in success. Certificates are awarded to the top 40% of students nationwide, making this achievement even more remarkable.

Special congratulations to Oliver Quinn (Year 7) and Jiatong Wu (Year 8), who were awarded joint Best in School and Best in Year, in their respective year groups.

- Year 8 Gold Certificate Winners: Beatrice Tweddle, Adrian Coman, and Wiktor Leska
- Year 7 Gold Certificate Winners: Zayn Vasquez, Alex Donoval, and Indiana Heffernan

All eight students have qualified for the Junior Kangaroo follow-on round. A huge well done to all participants for their hard work and enthusiasm!

Fashion Design Workshop

We were delighted that Lynne from a lecturer from Teesside University, spent the afternoon with our Year 12 artists and designers, as well as our Year 9 fashion group, discussing digital fashion, the effects of AI, and their impact on the fashion world. She also explained how these technologies are used creatively by fashion brands and influencers. Some very interesting questions were raised about the ethics of using digital models.



University Campus Visits

With decisions regarding post-18 pathways approaching for Year 12 students, the students have been given the opportunity to visit two of our local university campuses, Newcastle University and Northumbria University. On these private campus tours, the students have been given an insight into university life, the facilities on offer at university and the benefits to studying at university. The students also had the opportunity to speak to current students about their experiences at university.



The Day in the Life of a Project Manager

We were delighted to welcome the ESH Group into the Sixth Form as part of our Employer Experience Programme. Our Year 12 students attended a workshop looking at working as a project manager in construction and all of the different tasks involved.



Year 13 Leavers Day

We recently celebrated our amazing Year 13 students on their Leavers' Day before their Key Stage 5 examinations began.

The day marked 7 unforgettable years in our St Mary's school community. It was a day full of laughter, memories and heartfelt goodbyes. The students leave with our prayers, pride and best wishes for the future.



Water Safety

We were delighted to welcome in Tyne and Wear Fire Service into the school to speak to our Year 7 students about water safety as we move towards the summer months and sunnier days. They were provided with very important reminders about how to keep safe in the summer months.



Sixth Form Student Leadership Team

After a rigorous application process which included a letter of interest and an interview, our new Sixth Form Student Leadership Team was selected. The leadership team is divided into various committees such as spirituality, mental health, charity, diversity and inclusion and academics.

The students have been given the remit to work on different schemes in school. This includes working with outside agencies, such as our Environment Committee meeting the OASES charity to look at how we can implement more sustainable strategies in the school.



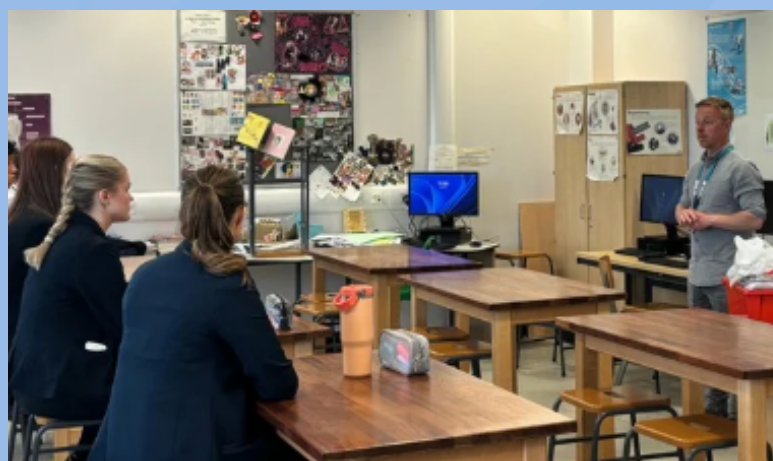
Chemistry Visit

Our Year 12 Chemistry students were recently able to spend the day at the Newcastle University science laboratories carrying out required practicals for their A-Level courses. They were a credit to the school.



Enrichment Sessions

Over the past few weeks we have been delighted to welcome in various universities and professionals into the school to give students various insights into different career paths. These include working as a sports therapist, clinical psychologist and architect.



Year 9 Netball

Throughout the Netball season, the two Year 9 teams performed exceptionally well and have really developed their all-round netball skills. They competed well against some very difficult opponents and always played in the best of spirit of the game.

Well done to the following students: Erin Knox, Jemima Lane, Emily Thompson, Evie Nealings, Anna Matthews, Olivia Dowden, Amelie Lyall, Nell Younger, Emily Li, Pearl Fairlamb, Emma Baek, Polly Cleghorn, Lan McLaughlin and Elizabeth Mavatikua. We are already looking forward to next season!



Law Society

Our Sixth Form Law Society continues to go from strength to strength. Designed to inspire students to study law in the future, students have looked various aspects of the law. This has included the students attending several law seminars with local lecturers from the University of Sunderland and Northumbria University.

Year 10 Netball

The Year 10 Netball team has performed to the highest standard this season, with some exceptional wins against some challenging teams.

As captain, Lily Houghton led by example and demonstrated excellent teamwork and leadership skills throughout the matches, offering advice and guidance during team talks at half time, as well as switching tactics very effectively during games.

All players had a fantastic teamwork ethic and boosted the confidence of each other throughout the season. The Year 10 team included: Lily Houghton, Molly Swinhoe, Jessica Butler, Lauren Brooks, Bethany Duncan, Ella Moor and Isabella Walton. This was an excellent season. Well done girls!



Future Bollywood Star

Well done to Rida Jain in Year 8 who has started singing lessons to learn Bollywood songs.

Rida has also been teaching herself the dance moves by watching her favourite movies and recently performed for some students in school who were very impressed with her talents.

Upcoming dates and events ...

Monday 9th June- Year 8 Parents' Evening (online).

Friday 27th June- Jubilee Day and Bishop Stephen Visit.

Monday 30th June- Year 7 Parents' Evening (in school).

Friday 18th July- Last day of term before the summer break.

