

St Mary's



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3 - NOVEMBER 2025

Remembrance Services

On Friday 7th November, our school community came together to mark Remembrance with special services held in honour of those who have served and sacrificed their lives in conflicts and wars in the past and present. The services provided a meaningful opportunity for students and staff to pause, reflect, and show gratitude for the freedoms we have today. We were so impressed by all of our students who showed incredible reverence and respect throughout the services.

The services included prayers, readings, a moving drama performance and beautiful music sang by our choir. During the services, the last post was played and we all observed a minutes silence. This powerful moment of stillness reminded everyone of the importance of remembering those who gave their lives in service to others. Students from cadets and other uniformed groups took part in a parade and laid poppy wreaths, symbolising our collective respect and remembrance.

Our Remembrance Services were a truly special occasion that united the whole school in reflection, prayer, respect, and hope for a peaceful future.

Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers

We have had another busy period following October half-term with some wonderful events in school, including the Year 7/12 Tutor Evening and the Sixth Form Open Evening.

We also enjoyed our very moving Remembrance Services. Every student attended a service. There were superb contributions from the choir, students leading readings and prayer, as well as a drama performance and students from different uniformed services laying wreaths as the last post sounded around the atrium. Thank you so much to everyone who participated in and led this event.

We look forward to our advent services and other activities in the lead up to Christmas.

Very best wishes,
Miss Patterson, Headteacher.

St Mary's Christmas Concert

Preparations are in full swing for our St Mary's Christmas Music Concert which takes place on **Wednesday 17th Dec at 6.00pm.**

Our choir, our orchestra and our soloists are working hard practising their festive pieces to perform to you all in what promises to be a fantastic evening, guaranteed to get you all in the Christmas spirit. This year we even have the exciting addition of St Mary's band performing some Christmas hits which are bound to get us singing along.

Students, staff, parents and family members are all very welcome and we would love to see you all there to see the amazing gifts and talents of our wonderful students. Tickets are free. Please contact the school if you would like tickets.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Field Work Fun

Year 12 students had the opportunity to explore the Lower Ouseburn and its amazing transformation over the past 50 years. The area has transitioned from an industrial region to one for the creative and digital arts alongside the theme of "live, work, play". The Ouseburn Trust provided a fantastic and informative tour of the area, and some data collection on the environmental quality was also conducted. The day concluded with a History and Geography scavenger hunt using GPS, won by Polly, Annie and Millie in a hotly contested race!



UKMT Mathematical Challenge for Girls 2025

This year, 11 Year 12 students took part in the UKMT Mathematical Challenge for Girls, achieving outstanding results with Jennifer Whittaker awarded a Distinction and Ava Green, Stephanie Guan, Hannah McTernan and Imogen Smith students Merit Certificates. The Girls' Mathematical Challenge took place on Thursday 25th September. This 90-minute competition, organised by the UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT), provided an exciting opportunity for our students to demonstrate their problem-solving skills and mathematical reasoning.



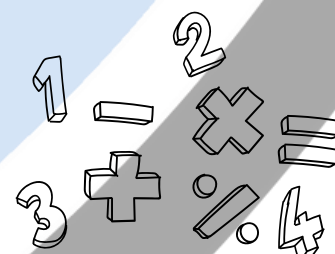
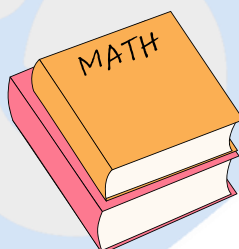
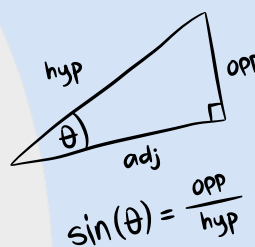
Congratulations to all participants for their hard work, enthusiasm, and success in this prestigious national competition!

Mathematical Olympiad for Girls 2025

Two of our senior students, one from Year 12 (Meagan Cardozo) and one from Year 13 (Lily Yang) took part in the UKMT Mathematical Olympiad for Girls, both achieving Merit. This outstanding accomplishment reflects their exceptional problem-solving ability, creativity, and perseverance.

The Olympiad took place on Thursday 25th September, the same day as the Girls' Mathematical Challenge. This demanding two-and-a-half-hour paper, organised by the UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT), consisted of five challenging problems that required both concise answers and fully reasoned written solutions.

We are immensely proud of both students for their dedication and success in this national competition.



Senior Mathematical Challenge 2025

The Senior Mathematical Challenge, organised by the UK Mathematics Trust (UKMT), took place on Thursday 9th November. This national competition challenged students to think creatively and apply their problem-solving skills in unfamiliar contexts. A total of 94 students from Years 12 and 13 took part this year, achieving excellent results: 10 Gold Certificates, 23 Silver Certificates and 33 Bronze Certificates.

Following their impressive performance, 12 students Ewan DOnnelly, Hyunwoo Lee, Oliver Cass, Leo Gray, William Crawford, Vesta Kausilaite, Finn Koepl, Vincent Lin, Alex Rudzenis, Ruwaid Kokrees, Mico Manso and Jack Davidson qualified for the Andrew Jobbings Senior Kangaroo on 19th November, a follow-on round for top achievers nationwide. Congratulations to all participants for their enthusiasm and success in this prestigious national competition!



Students Shine in First-Ever Boccia Competition

Last week, a group of our students took part in an inspiring and inclusive sporting event, representing the school with great enthusiasm and determination. Rida Jain, Tilly Wake, Ben Rose, Mikey Kosa, Thomas Pugh and Isobel Stafford all competed in their first-ever Boccia competition and delivered an outstanding performance.

Mrs Mullan, who accompanied the team, shared that the students did incredibly well, showing teamwork and confidence throughout the event, despite it being their debut. Their positive attitude and willingness to try something new made the experience especially memorable.



Year 8 Girls Netball

Earlier this month, the two Year 8 netball teams played matches against Westfield. In two very keenly contested games, one of the St Mary's teams ran out winners 8 goals to 0. The other match was a lot closer, with Westfield just edging it at the finish 3-2. All the students put in excellent performances and were a credit to the school. Special mentions go to Angel Imasuen and Sophia Bould for their outstanding contributions.



Main School Student Leadership Team

The Main School Student Leadership Team began its work for the new term on Friday, following a successful round of applications last half-term. The newly formed committees came together for their first official meeting, marking an important step in shaping student-led initiatives across the school.



During the session, students spent time getting to know the members of their respective committees, sharing initial ideas, and discussing the goals they hope to achieve over the coming weeks. According to Gethin, who helped oversee the meeting, the atmosphere was focused, positive, and highly productive.

A group photograph of the full team was taken to mark the occasion, accompanied by a list of the students involved. The image captures the enthusiasm and collaborative spirit that defined the meeting.

Staff praised the students for their commitment, noting that their willingness to contribute to the school community reflects both leadership and dedication.

Year 11 Student Performs at the Royal Albert Hall

Maja Iwan of 11M achieved something truly remarkable, performing recently at the iconic Royal Albert Hall as part of her Steel Band. This world famous venue has hosted some of the most celebrated musicians and events in history, making Maja's appearance an outstanding accomplishment.

The performance was a fantastic showcase of the band's talent, energy, and dedication. Maja's involvement highlights not only her musical skill but also her commitment to performing at the highest level. We are so proud of her achievement.



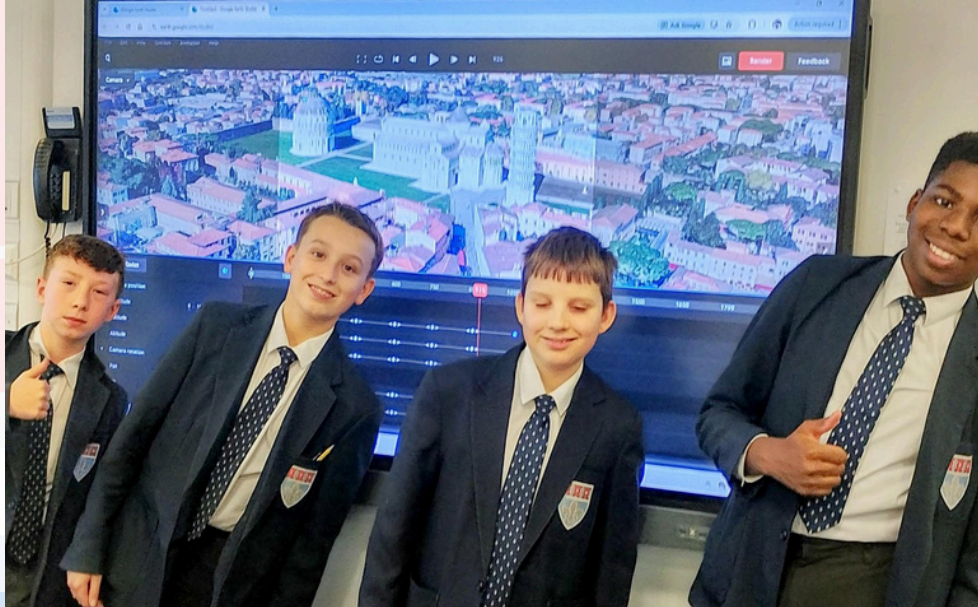
Students Support Operation Christmas Child with Generosity and Heart

The Art Department has been busy this term leading Operation Christmas Child alongside groups from the Fundraising Club and class 11Y. Students have shown exceptional kindness as they worked together to prepare donations that will bring joy to children around the world this Christmas. Mr Arkell, who has helped coordinate the project, shared how impressed he has been by the students' generosity and their willingness to give their time and energy to support others. From collecting items to organising and packing the boxes, students have embraced the spirit of the season with enthusiasm and compassion.



Geography Club

Open to all year groups, the Geography Club meets every Thursday lunchtime. This half term, the students have been improving their map skills and using a programme to locate a famous world landmark, then converting the map view to street-level photographs. In this image, the students have been finding out about the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and, of course, copying the lean as they pose for the photograph.



History Board Games Club

Every Friday lunchtime, one of the classrooms in the history department is a hive of activity. In a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, the students who come along play a range of popular board games with a historical connection, such as Brain Box, The Board Game, Top Trumps and, of course, Horrible Histories. It is a great way to test your knowledge of history, find out some really interesting facts and meet new people.



Crochet Club

This term we have started a lunchtime crochet club and it is proving to be very popular among our younger students. They have really enjoyed finding out about this valuable traditional skill, which involves making looped stitches with a yarn of wool and a hook. What the students attending have liked most of all is the opportunity to be creative and productive, whilst being able to socialise at the the same time.



Year 8 Boys Football/Table Tennis

Year 8 Boys Football takes place every Thursday after school in the Sports Hall. However, with the Sport Hall being used during part of this month for Year 11 mock exams, indoor football had to be cancelled. Not to be deterred, the boys were still keen to meet up and do some kind of sporting activity. As a result, for a limited period, the football club was converted into the table tennis club, with the students playing ping pong in the atrium and really enjoying themselves.

Law Society

Year 12 members of our Law Society recently enjoyed a fascinating workshop with Northumbria University Law lecturer, Tony Storey. Tony led an engaging session on criminal law, guiding students through a series of real and hypothetical case studies and asking them to decide whether the scenarios showed criminal activity. Students were challenged to apply key legal principles, justify their reasoning, and consider how small changes in the facts could alter the legal outcome. The session gave a flavour of degree-level study, strengthened their analytical skills, and deepened their interest in pursuing Law and related subjects at university.

Girls in Sport

Year 12 girls recently enjoyed an inspiring Core PE session led by representatives from Newcastle University, focusing on the importance of fitness and exercise for young women. The speakers highlighted how regular physical activity supports both physical health and mental wellbeing, particularly during the pressures of Sixth Form and beyond. Students also explored the benefits of joining sports clubs at university and in the wider community, from making new friends and building confidence to developing resilience and leadership skills. The visit encouraged our Year 12 students to see exercise not just as a school requirement, but as a lifelong habit.



Sporting Success

Recently a group of Year 9 girls represented the school brilliantly at the School Games Badminton Tournament at Tyneside Badminton Centre. The girls, Wiktoria Leska, Emma Harwood, Florence Brown, and Sandra Abraham all played with incredible skill and determination and showed great team spirit.

In addition November saw a fantastic effort from our Year 7 & 8 Boys at the School Games Indoor Athletics Championships. The Year 7 Boys team stormed to 2nd place and booked their spot in the next round, while Year 8 battled hard for a strong 3rd place finish. We were so proud of the excellent performances demonstrated at the event.



National Portrait Gallery

Earlier this term, we shared the exciting news that Abe Brough in 7S had been invited to an awards ceremony at the National Portrait Gallery in London. This honour came after a striking photograph of Abe was selected for display as part of a prestigious exhibition. Abe, a talented ballroom dancer, was chosen to be photographed for the project in recognition of both his skill and dedication to his craft. Recently, Abe and his family visited the gallery for the ceremony, where he was able to see his portrait proudly exhibited among other celebrated works.



City Library Arts Award Exhibition

Our Arts Award students recently showcased their creativity and teamwork at a beautifully curated exhibition held at the City Library. The event featured an impressive collection of artwork, carefully arranged and presented by the students themselves. Judith, who supported the group, shared how brilliantly they worked together to curate the display and how much they enjoyed organising the accompanying art sale. The exhibition drew a strong turnout, creating a warm and vibrant atmosphere throughout the event. Thanks to the generosity of visitors and the efforts of the students, around £230 was raised for CAFOD, adding a meaningful charitable impact to the occasion. In addition to the artwork, the exhibition included a wonderful display of poems created by students from the English Department. Each poem was inspired by a piece of art, demonstrating a thoughtful and imaginative blend of visual and literary creativity.



Key dates and events ...

Mon 8th December 2025 2:45pm-5:15pm- Year 13 Parents' Evening

Fri 19th December 2025- Final day of term before the Christmas break (early finish for all students)

Mon 5th January 2026 - INSET day (no students in school)

Tues 6th January 2026 - All students return to school