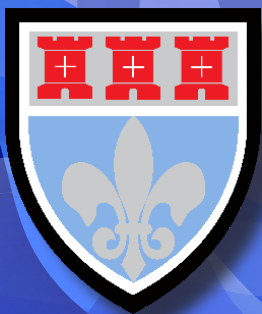


St Mary's Catholic School

Sixth Form Prospectus

2026 - 2027



Contents

Welcome	1
Sixth Form Ethos	2
Support in the Sixth Form	3
Students from Other Schools	4
Nurturing High Ambition	5
Curriculum	7
Choosing Your Subjects	9
Extra-curricular	10
Outreach Projects	12

Miss Patterson
Headteacher

Mr Turnbull
Assistant Headteacher - Sixth Form

Benton Park Road
Longbenton
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE7 7PE

0191 2153260
admin@st-marys.newcastle.sch.uk
www.stmarysnewcastle.co.uk

Welcome

We are delighted that you are considering joining St Mary's Sixth Form as the next step in your education. We recognise that this stage in your life is pivotal in developing the key skills and experiences that will shape your future beyond school, whether that be at university, further education, apprenticeships or in the workplace. Whether you are currently studying at our school or joining us from elsewhere, our Sixth Form offers a highly distinctive and enriching experience.

Our Sixth Form is a vibrant and energetic environment. Sixth Form life involves much more than simply academic study. At St Mary's, we are proud of the holistic approach to education that we offer, allowing students to develop a wide range of skills, talents, and knowledge, as well as providing numerous opportunities for students to develop as individuals socially, morally, ethically, and spiritually.

Our Sixth Form is defined by its strong sense of community, wide-ranging and diverse curriculum and broad offer of enrichment opportunities, both extra-curricular and super-curricular. We have an outstanding Sixth Form Area, a highly dedicated team of pastoral staff, teachers, and leaders, as well as highly talented and hard-working students, blessed with enthusiasm and wonderful gifts and talents, that make St Mary's a wonderful place to learn and thrive.

Ethos

At St Mary's Sixth Form, we take great pride in our Catholic/Christian tradition, which forms the foundation of our ethos and underpins our daily life. We have a very caring and supportive community where every student is valued, and their unique gifts, talents, and interests are nurtured, empowering them to reach their full potential.

Our students are provided with many opportunities to explore and develop in faith, whether that is through contributing to form assemblies, leading prayers, or developing their faith opportunities such as Masses, completing the John Paul II Award or being part of the Sixth Form Student Spirituality Team. Our Faith in Action is seen through much of the work we do. Students regularly make contributions to charity, by organising events such as cake sales, collections for food banks and donating spare change.

At the core of our Sixth Form is a commitment to living out Gospel values. These principles not only guide our community but also create an environment where all students can thrive, academically and spiritually. Christ's teachings are central to everything we do, and our Catholic/Christian ethos is a key part of the holistic education we offer.

St Mary's Sixth Form is dedicated to excellence, embracing diversity, inclusivity, and an aspiration to provide the best all-around education for all students irrespective of their faith, ability, culture, or ethnicity.

Achievement

At St Mary's, we are proud of the excellent exam results students achieve year on year. A-level results are consistently among the very highest in both the North East and the United Kingdom itself.

Since 2022, when external examinations resumed after COVID-19, 33% of A-Level entries have been graded A*-A and 83% graded A*-C, with our overall pass rate being 99.2%. Whilst 66% of vocational entries have been awarded Distinctions or Starred Distinctions with our overall pass rate being 99.8%. All Key Stage 5 results are above the national average and the North East average in all key measures.

Since 2022, an average of 24 students each year achieve 3 or more A/A* or Distinction/ Distinction* grades across various subjects. In recent years, an increasing number of students have gained places at Oxford and Cambridge to read Natural Science, Law, Medicine, Modern Languages, Mathematics, and Engineering, with more than half the cohort going off to other high tariff Russell Group universities. In addition, a growing number of students have also moved on to competitive higher-level apprenticeship opportunities.

Opportunities

Students at St Mary's Sixth Form have access to a wide range of exciting opportunities throughout their time with us. We offer many opportunities, not only to pass examinations and gain important qualifications for future career paths, but also to develop spiritual and to provide service to your community. In a competitive environment, we seek to ensure that our students stand out from their peers. For example, students are offered opportunities to lead others in the school community and provide service to others in the Student Leadership Scheme, carry out charity work throughout the city with our Mentoring and Volunteering Scheme, complete work beyond the traditional curriculum in Super-Curricular sessions, partake in enrichment sessions with local employers and educational providers, and participate in awards such as the John Paul II Award.

Life in the Sixth Form is vibrant, fulfilling, and exciting. There is an atmosphere of focus and direction, but also a sense of camaraderie and mutual support. Our commitment to student success begins even before Sixth Form, with tailored guidance starting in Year 11. We work closely with students and families to ensure that each young person selects courses aligned with their interests, strengths, and future aspirations.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of Sixth Form life in more detail, please contact the Sixth Form Pastoral Team. We look forward to supporting you moving forward.

Miss Patterson
Headteacher

Mr Turnbull
Assistant Headteacher

Sixth Form Ethos

St Mary's Sixth Form is a unique place to study and has a distinctive ethos. We pride ourselves on being a caring school. St Mary's is a happy and inclusive place, where order and respect for others underpin all our dealings with one another. Our aim is to create an environment where every student feels safe, so they can flourish and fulfil their gifts and talents. The welfare of our students is our top priority and, if there are any concerns, we are committed to dealing with them effectively and swiftly.

Supporting students' spiritual growth is central to our mission. We warmly welcome students from all cultures, faiths, and ethnic backgrounds whose perspectives add to the richness of our community.

We believe it is our duty to provide a wide range of experiences to help our students grow into well-rounded, fulfilled individuals, ready to make positive contributions to



society when they leave Sixth Form.

Every day, students have the opportunity to join their Form Tutors and peers in Morning Prayer and Spiritual Reflection. Throughout the year, students have regular opportunities for collective worship, including voluntary Masses and special liturgies during significant seasons in the Church's calendar, such as Advent and Lent.

Our Sixth Form offers many enriching opportunities, including an annual Day of Aspiration, our Sixth Form Culture Day and involvement as CAFOD Young Leaders. Students can also participate in spiritual initiatives like the Pope John Paul II Award. This award recognises the work young people undertake in their local, school and parish communities, where they have used their God-given talents to serve others. We believe firmly in putting our faith into action, and students actively demonstrate this through their service.

In recent years, students have worked closely with a range of charitable organisations to raise awareness of the troubles women face around the world or provide aid to countries



hit by earthquakes, as well as supporting charities such as CAFOD, Macmillan and Trócaire by organising fund-raising events including bake sales, collecting for food banks, and donating spare change. Additionally, our students play a supportive role within the school, offering help to peers who are vulnerable or in need of extra guidance.

While we are a distinctly Catholic/Christian Sixth Form, we equally welcome and celebrate other faiths within our community. Our Sixth Form fosters a supportive and inclusive atmosphere, where every student is encouraged to thrive.

Our students have high aspirations and so there is a strong focus on achievement and diligence. Independent Study Periods are purposeful and structured: students remain on school site and make use of dedicated spaces—including the Sixth Form Silent Study Room, Sixth Form Library, and Sixth Form Work Area—to sustain focused, effective learning.



Personal Support

The transition into Sixth Form can feel daunting. Specialising in subjects, being expected to work independently and prioritising work, can be difficult for some. To support this transition, students have daily contact with their Form Tutor who will be experienced in supporting students and helping them to achieve their absolute best.

The relationship between the Form Tutor and student is essential to success in the Sixth Form. Form Tutors provide ongoing support and guidance throughout the two years of study, acting as both pastoral mentors and academic advisors. They will work with their tutees, getting to know them well as individuals, helping to nurture their talents and interests as well as supporting them academically. Form Tutors will have the holistic overview of how our students are progressing in the Sixth Form and they will be the first point of contact if parents or students have any concerns or problems.



In addition to their Form Tutor, students are supported by a dedicated Sixth Form Pastoral Team. This team includes two Heads of Year, one for Year 12 and one for Year 13, as well as an Assistant Headteacher leading the Sixth Form. As key leaders in the school, they work with students and their families to ensure their needs are met. They will monitor students' pastoral and academic progress very closely to ensure all students are fully supported in reaching their full potential and provide intervention, if this is needed.

At St Mary's, we place great emphasis on collaboration with parents and carers. The Sixth Form Pastoral Team is available to discuss any aspect of a student's needs or progress, ensuring a strong partnership that supports students throughout the academic year. We are committed to working together to ensure every student thrives.

Financial Support

16-19 Bursary

Students at St Mary's have the opportunity to apply for financial support to help them continue with their Sixth Form studies. The 16-19 Bursary was introduced by the Government and is administered by the school. The bursary should be used to help students fund such things as:

Travel to and from school

Stationery/other resources/books/revision guides

Travelling to University Open Days/attending school trips

There are two types of bursaries, discretionary and vulnerable. Your child can only apply for one of these, depending on their personal circumstances.

The payment of the bursary will be conditional on your child meeting the requirements of the St Mary's Sixth Form expectations on behaviour, attendance, and punctuality. More information on the 16-19 Bursary can be found on the school website. Students who are currently registered for Free School Meals will be automatically enrolled on the Bursary. Where this is not the case, but the student is experiencing exceptional financial hardship, a written application may be submitted.

Students from Other Schools

We warmly invite students who are currently studying their GCSEs in Year 11 at other schools to apply to our Sixth Form. The process is straightforward. Complete our online application form available on the school website, and submit it electronically by **Friday 20th February 2026**. The Sixth Form is available for all Year 11 students at St Mary's subject to students fulfilling the school entry requirements. When there are more applications received than places available in the Sixth Form, places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. See the admissions policy, available on the school website, for more information on the oversubscription criteria.

Any offer of a place at St Mary's will be subject to entry requirements being met for specific courses and for successful completion of the admissions process.



Student Views

"I felt at ease immediately at St Mary's, like I always belonged here even though I studied for my GCSEs elsewhere. The staff were really welcoming as were the students. Choosing to come here was the best choice I have ever made as St Mary's has helped me to develop my character and given me a chance to succeed."

"St Mary's Sixth Form had a friendly but focused atmosphere that allowed me to achieve everything that I wanted to from my A-Levels. The extra-curricular music opportunities offered were excellent, and I enjoyed being able to take part in, and help run, the Music and Drama departments' yearly production. This was a highlight for me."

"I thoroughly enjoyed the extra freedom Sixth Form granted, both academically and otherwise. The support available for the UCAS process was especially good and helped me obtain a place at my first-choice university."

"I joined St Mary's in Year 12 from another school and felt welcomed despite the challenges of changing schools. Not only did I receive guidance and encouragement with my A-Levels but also support with my UCAS application (especially interview preparation) that helped me to achieve my goals."

"I love that St Mary's genuinely cares about our opinions and how we feel as students. They always make us feel listened-to and respected. They encourage us to ensure that our learning environment feels as comfortable and safe as possible. This was especially apparent during stressful exam periods when teachers would always treat our worries and concerns with importance and make sure we were supported both emotionally and academically."

Nurturing High Ambition

St Mary's Sixth Form prides itself on fostering a learning culture of high expectations, where every student is actively encouraged to reach their full potential. Our aim is for students to leave as confident, articulate, and compassionate young adults who are well-equipped with the academic skills to succeed and excel in higher education or the workplace. At St Mary's, lessons are stimulating and challenging and, as an inclusive and diverse Sixth Form, we endeavour to ensure that the needs of our talented and ambitious students are met in a variety of ways.

As well as ensuring our students are catered for through excellent teaching in lessons, our talented and ambitious students are invited to participate in different opportunities

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ): Students undertake an independent research project on a topic of their choice, resulting in a 5,000-word essay. Guided by the Head of EPQ and EPQ Mentors, the EPQ helps students develop critical study skills, including research and source evaluation, and is highly valued by universities.

Thinking Skills AS Qualification: Offered in Year 12, this course strengthens students' ability to think independently, construct logical arguments, and critically assess claims from various sources. It is an excellent way for students to refine their reasoning and problem-solving abilities and look at how to construct and de-construct thought processes.

Core Maths AS Qualification: Offered in Year 12, this course strengthens quantitative reasoning and data skills, complementing A-Level subjects such as Psychology, and the Sciences, equipping students to apply mathematics confidently to real-world contexts, university study and the workplace.

Employability and Careers Programme: This initiative helps students secure placements in industries such as law, banking, and STEM. Our KS5 Law Society and STEM Club provide insight into careers in these fields. Additionally, Year 12 students can gain hands-on experience through work placements in the summer term.

Enrichment Sessions and Workshops: Students regularly attend focused sessions and workshops at local universities, as well as talks from employers and apprenticeship providers, both in-person and virtually. We offer a KS5 Higher Education Fair, Careers Fair, and provide regular bulletins to help students explore opportunities and prepare for life beyond Sixth Form.

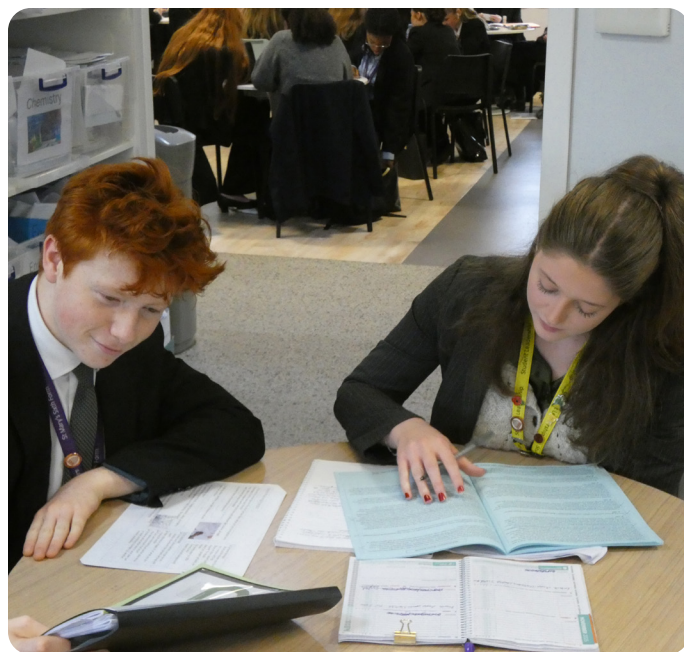
Mentoring and Volunteering Programme: This initiative allows students to contribute to their community by volunteering in primary schools, care homes, and charity shops, and mentoring younger students in school. We also offer care-based placements at Freeman Hospital and the RVI, giving students valuable hands-on experience in healthcare settings.

Aspire to Oxbridge Society: Designed to help students prepare strong applications to Oxbridge and Russell Group

universities, this programme includes residential visits to Oxford and Cambridge, admissions test preparation, bespoke sessions from Oxbridge alumni, advice on courses and colleges, and practice interviews.

Medicine and Dentistry Society: This society offers insights into these competitive fields. Students are given opportunities to build relevant experience and receive guidance throughout the application process.

Super-Curricular Activities: Through weekly sessions, students are encouraged to take on projects that extend beyond the KS5 curriculum, helping them develop skills that prepare them for higher education and the professional world.

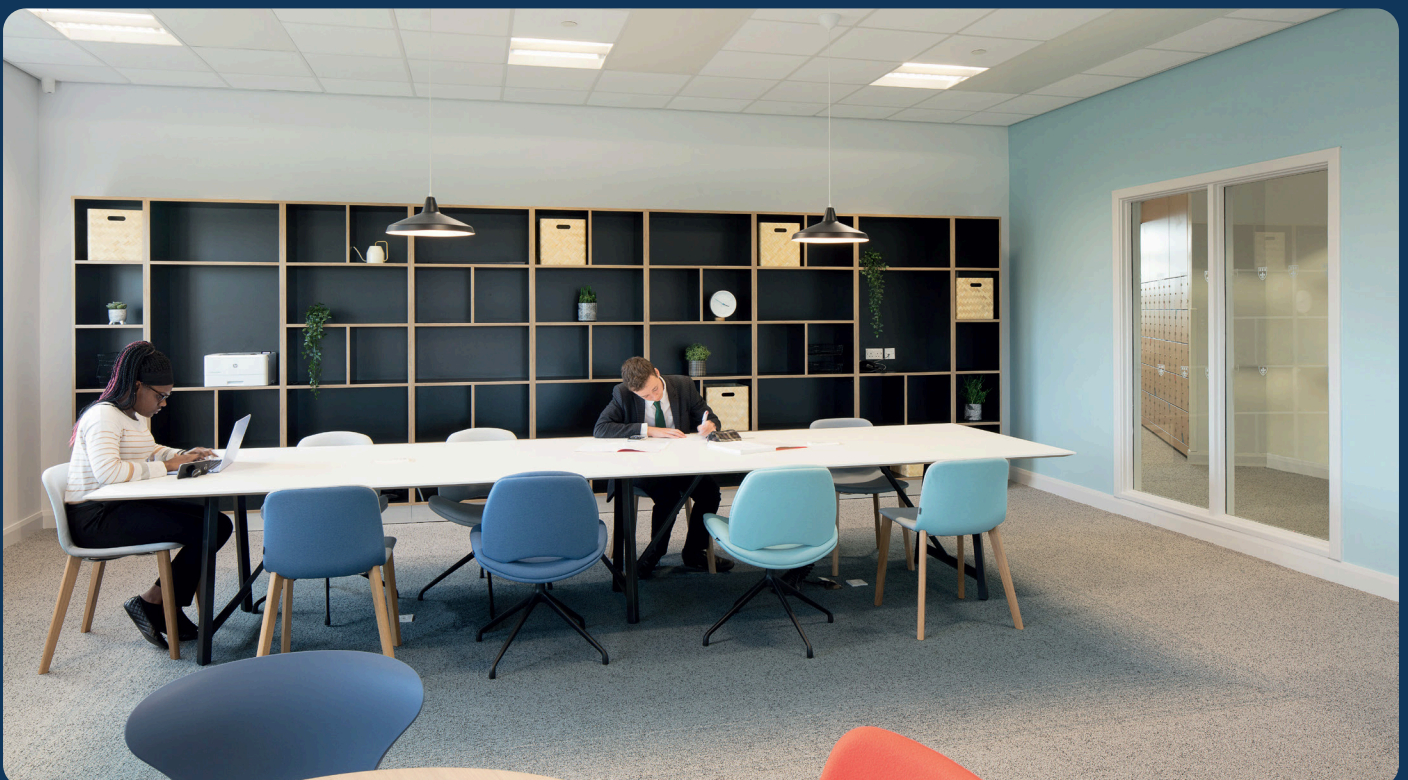


Progression

At St Mary's, we take our responsibility to prepare students for life after school very seriously. Whether their next step is university, an apprenticeship, further education, or entering the workforce, we are committed to equipping our students with the skills and confidence they need to succeed. Through our Personal Development lessons and Future Opportunities programme delivered both during tutor time and in after-school sessions we focus on developing employability skills and guiding students through important decisions about their future.

Our track record for students securing places at their first-choice universities is excellent. In 2025, the vast majority of students were successful in gaining entry to their preferred courses/destination. For those who decide that university is not their path, we offer support through our Apprenticeship and Employment Society, and we are part of the Apprenticeship Early Connect Scheme.

Our dedicated, state of the art Sixth Form Area, includes a Sixth Form Café, Sixth Form Work Area, Sixth Form Library, Sixth Form Quiet Study Area, and Sixth Form Activity Room. These rooms also have advanced ICT facilities for the students to use. The facilities have proved to be a huge success with the Sixth Form, and this specialised space is a key part of the school's outstanding facilities.



Curriculum 2026-2027

From September 2026

Each year, we welcome approximately 140-160 students into the Sixth Form. This group is largely made up of students from our current Year 11 and, additionally, a group of students who join us from other local schools.

Students enrolling from September 2026 will follow one of several academic pathways, which are outlined in further detail below. The majority will study 3 A-levels or equivalent qualifications during Years 12 and 13, while a very small number may opt to take 4 A-levels.

For students starting Year 12 in September 2026, all A-levels qualifications will be linear. This will involve studying for courses where the content is assessed entirely by examination at the end of Year 13 in June 2028.

Choosing the right pathway and subjects is, therefore, vitally important for achieving their academic potential.

Pathways

At St Mary's, we take great care in guiding students through the process of selecting their subjects. It is very important that students start with an appropriate programme of study. We must balance several elements, including aspirations and interests, with the relative difficulty level of courses, in order to ensure that our students leave St Mary's having achieved their full potential.

We use a range of national data to identify the relative difficulty of subjects. This information is then used to guide students towards choosing a suite of subjects for which they are suitable. At St Mary's we offer the following pathways to students:

- 4 A-levels
- 3 A-levels and an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)
- 3 A-levels
- 3 A-levels and either Thinking Skills or Core Maths
- A combination of A-levels and vocational courses
- 3 vocational courses.

Students are directed towards a pathway and advised to choose subjects based on their GCSE performance and their average GCSE grade. Many students at St Mary's complete 3 A-levels and an EPQ.

Entry Requirements

Students who join our Sixth Form do so voluntarily. In signing up for Sixth Form, therefore, students agree to abide by all the general requirements of students at our school. The decision to join Sixth Form should be carefully considered. Our high expectations of all students in school, also extends to Sixth Form students. All Sixth Form students are expected

to adhere to the Sixth Form Expectations and Student Learning Agreement throughout their time in the Sixth Form. An excellent work ethic, attendance and punctuality record are all essential for success, as is a contribution to the wider dimension of Sixth Form life, such as full attendance at, and participation in, all aspects of our Core Curriculum and support for the school ethos. A student with poor attendance (unless this is for genuine reasons), poor punctuality or a poor work ethic in Year 11 is unlikely to succeed in Sixth Form where the academic demands are greater. Throughout Year 11, all these factors will be reviewed and, if necessary, discussed with students during the transition process to the Sixth Form.

For each specific course in Sixth Form, entry requirements will vary, depending on the degree of difficulty of the course, as well as each student's track record over their two years study of the subject in Key Stage 4. We consider not just the overall GCSE grade but the profile of component results. For example, a student may have a 6 overall at GCSE in a particular subject that they wish to pursue at A-level but, if the key written exam component was a 5, our strong advice might well be not to take the subject at A-level, if extended writing is a key feature of the A-level. Some courses will require a higher minimum entry grade, either in the subject itself or in a related subject. For example, entry to certain Science courses will have a minimum requirement not only in that science course, but in Mathematics too, given the level of Mathematics involved in the A-level. Many subjects will also have minimum English requirements if written work is a significant component.

Finally, we also look very closely at the combination of A-levels that a student is proposing to study. For example, we may feel that a student has the potential to succeed in one of the harder A-levels, but a combination of two or three such subjects may well prove too much, and, in such cases, we may well advise strongly against the proposed combination.

In general, students are most likely to succeed in the traditional academic A-levels if they have obtained GCSEs that include, as a minimum, several grades in the 7-9 range and some at grade 6. Ideally, a student would have a 7 or higher in their chosen subject, but some of these subjects may consider a 6 if there is evidence of strong performance in some of the key components of the GCSE or mitigating circumstances that affected the GCSE grade. In several A-levels (for instance, some with a strong practical component), grade 6 or above will be considered and, exceptionally, a grade 5. Students achieving grades largely in the 4-6 range will be best suited to our vocational courses. Further details about individual courses can be found in our curriculum booklet, and throughout Year 11, students will have individual interviews to discuss entry requirements.

Subjects offered

The subjects we usually offer at A-level are the following. Please note, however, that not all courses run each year if the numbers of students opting for the course are very low.

Biology	Geography
Business	History
Chemistry	Mathematics
Computer Science	Music
Design Technology	Philosophy and Ethics
Drama	Photography
English Language	Physics
English Literature	Politics
Film Studies	Psychology
Fine Art	Sociology
French	Spanish
Further Mathematics	Sport Studies

The vocational subjects that we usually offer (depending on demand each year) include:

Health & Social Care	Applied Science
IT	Child Play, Learning and Development
Business	

Our curriculum is reviewed regularly, and subjects being offered are subject to viability. For further information on subjects, please refer to the Curriculum Booklet included in this prospectus. Our Core Curriculum is part of what makes our Sixth Form distinctive, as all students also study as part of their timetable Religious Education, Sport, Super-Curricular Activities and the Personal Development Programme. Students are encouraged to take part in a wide and varied Enrichment Programme including our Student Leadership Scheme and Sixth Form Volunteering Scheme where students are encouraged to lead Main School students in activities and provide service to the local community. This curriculum provides excellent foundations for studying in the Sixth Form and allows the students the opportunity to develop a variety of skills that will enhance their overall Sixth Form experience.

Core Curriculum

Catholic/Christian Sixth Form

All students in the Sixth Form continue to study Religious Education. As part of a Catholic/Christian Sixth Form, students are encouraged to study and reflect upon moral, ethical and philosophical issues that have an impact on our lives. Studying RE provides students with an opportunity to explore the pressing and relevant issues of a modern society, as well as to share and develop their own understanding of living by the Gospel values in a modern world.

We begin by developing further an understanding of spirituality, theology and ethics that continues from our work

at GCSE. As a part of this, students are taught to understand the demands of religious commitment in everyday life and to consider different faith traditions within contemporary society. Moving from Year 12 to Year 13, we extend our work to focusing on the relationship between religious belief, personal faith and lived experience. Students leave St Mary's with a National Level 3 Qualification in Religious Education.

Sport

Keeping fit is central to a healthy life so we encourage all students to keep fit and take part in sport, whatever their ability or interest. In doing so, students are able to develop self-confidence, learn the importance of teamwork and explore their own strengths. All students are encouraged to engage in a wide variety of sports and physical education opportunities throughout the year. All students are allocated two hours per fortnight to take part in a variety of sports activities, promoting a balanced, healthy lifestyle.

Super-Curricular

Our Super-Curricular programme is designed to help students develop independent study skills essential for success after Sixth Form. Weekly Super - Curricular Tasks are developed to students to work independently on tasks and challenge their understanding beyond the taught curriculum. These tasks not only broaden their perception of subject areas but also help them stand out when applying for university or employment by demonstrating intellectual curiosity and initiative.

Personal Development

Our varied and exciting Personal Development Programme offers students the opportunity to develop skills that will help them in their studies and in their preparations for life after Sixth Form. Students spend two hours a fortnight in the Personal Development Programme.

The intent of the Personal Development curriculum is to prepare our students for the modern world. This includes ensuring students are well versed in issues prevalent in the modern world, have the appropriate skills for employment and further education, understand the responsibility of adulthood and are well prepared for any academic assessment.

This curriculum provides a well-rounded foundation for students, ensuring they not only succeed academically but also leave St Mary's as confident, capable, and compassionate individuals, prepared to contribute positively to society. The programme is designed to dovetail with our various enrichment activities to ensure that the students receive an exceptional holistic education.

Choosing your subjects

Which subjects should you choose?

Choosing subjects to study in the Sixth Form can be a difficult task and requires careful consideration. Here, we offer some advice and key questions to ask, when thinking about which subjects you might want to study to help you make confident, well-informed choices.

Which subjects do you enjoy the most?

The amount of time you will have to spend studying your subjects in Sixth Form means you should choose subjects you enjoy. In Year 12, you will have nine hours for each A-level every fortnight. In Year 13, this increases to ten hours. You should then look to ensure these are subjects that you will be able to cope with at a higher level and that you enjoy studying. You must also meet the entry requirements for the course.



In which subjects are you expecting to excel?

Your predicted performance in your GCSE subjects will be a real indicator as to what you want to study at A-level. The work you do at GCSE will lay the foundations for the work in the Sixth Form. Talk to your subject teachers to discuss whether they think it would be suitable for you to study their subject in the Sixth Form.

Do you have a career/university course in mind?

Some degree courses specify subjects that should be taken in the Sixth Form. For example, to study Medicine you will need to secure a high grade in A-Level Chemistry. Think carefully about what you may want to do after Sixth Form and then look to see if you are required to have certain subjects. If you

do not yet know what you want to do after Sixth Form, then opting for a range of subjects will help keep your options open. You will, of course, must ensure you meet the entry requirements for these courses.

Which subjects will be most useful and will give you the best chance of success?

If you wish to keep options open—especially for selective high tariff Russell Group universities, you should consider a combination that includes subjects widely recognised for their academic rigour (often referred to as “facilitating” subjects), such as English Literature, History, Modern Foreign Languages, Geography, Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. That said, many students secure places on leading courses without taking only these subjects. Aim for a balance: choose subjects you enjoy, in which you can thrive, and which support your future aspirations.

Who can you talk to about your options?

All students in Year 11 at St Mary's will complete an online form via Microsoft Teams to outline their future plans, including the Sixth Form options they are currently interested in studying next year. Students will then have the opportunity to discuss their options with a member of the Sixth Form Pastoral Team in a dedicated 'Next Steps' interview. They will discuss with you, and help guide you, to choose the most appropriate options and pathways. Students will also have the opportunity of an appointment with our dedicated careers advisor. Remember, discussing your options with subject teachers will also help you to get a good idea of what is involved in a subject in the Sixth Form and your suitability for studying different courses.

Extra-Curricular

Drama and Music

At St Mary's Sixth Form, we offer a vibrant range of opportunities in Drama and Music, with ample opportunities to perform and showcase their talents. Students enjoy taking part in drama and music productions including the yearly whole school production. We have many talented musicians in our student body and there are also various opportunities to take part in the orchestra and the school choir, whilst also participating in whole school concerts.

Student Leadership Scheme

All Sixth Form students participate in the Student Leadership Scheme completing weekly activities and is integral to the Sixth Form experience. As the most senior students in the school, Sixth Form students are expected to act as positive role models for all other students in the school community guiding them both academically and pastorally. Students are entrusted with leadership roles in various aspects of school life, with activities such as running extra-curricular activities, acting as classroom assistants, supporting at school events and assisting school staff with activities. It is of paramount importance that Sixth Form students are visible in all aspects of day-to-day school life to assist and enrich the experience of other students whilst preparing them for leading others in their future lives and careers.

Sixth Form Sport

There are many opportunities to develop sporting interests at St Mary's. We currently have a very successful basketball team, as well as netball and football teams. Sixth Form students are always very keen to also train and mentor teams in the younger year groups of the school. Not only do we offer a range of team sports, but students also have access to a modern, Fitness Suite. Students who have a keen interest in sport and fitness are encouraged to share their expertise by taking on a Sports Leader role, in conjunction with a programme from Newcastle University. With this responsibility, students help other students as well as staff to use the gym and help run sporting activities, such as Running Club and Handball Club. Students who are talented in sport and who compete at a high level post-16 are supported by the Sixth Form to ensure they can adequately train for this sport whilst studying their Sixth Form subjects.



Sixth Form Leadership Team

Sixth Form students are also encouraged to become involved in leadership, by taking on key roles and responsibilities within school. This includes students being elected to our Sixth Form Leadership Team, who are a visible and respected group of students whose presence can be seen across a huge variety of school events. Students are asked to apply for a position on the team in Year 12 and fulfil their responsibilities until they must focus on their preparations for their examinations at the end of Year 13. Students can hold various roles in different committees on the team, in key areas of school life such as Academics, Mental Health, Charity, Inclusion/Diversity and the Environment working with senior staff on key school issues. Students can be assigned as a Senior Lead for a key area of school life or a Main School Lead where they lead and co-ordinate the leadership team in the Main School.



Sixth Form Dress Code

We are extremely proud of the way in which our Sixth Form students present themselves, both in school and more widely. Our Dress Code ensures that our Sixth Form students lead by example in school, as mature young adults who are role models for our younger students. Our Sixth Form Dress Code helps to create a purposeful, academic environment in which our students are able to achieve highly, both academically and holistically. The Dress Code also helps to prepare our students for the world of work, where the vast majority of professional workplaces expect such attire. Students take great pride in their appearance and the dress code standards at St Mary's are excellent. We appreciate the support of parents and carers in ensuring that students always follow the Dress Code below.

Dress Code

- Plain, dark smart tailored/suit trousers.
- Plain, dark suit jacket or blazer jacket.
- Plain formal shirt with clear collar in white, black, grey, blue, or cream.
- Tie.

OR

- Plain, dark smart tailored/suit trousers or skirt, or plain, dark knee length dress.
- No skirts or dresses higher than 2 inches above the knee.
- Plain, dark suit jacket or blazer jacket.
- Plain formal shirt or blouse with traditional collar in white, black, grey, blue, or cream.
- Neat, sensible hairstyles only. No 'extreme' haircuts.
- Natural hair colour only.



- A student who, for religious reasons, wears a head covering must ensure that it is a dark colour.
- Only one pair of stud earrings. No other piercings.
- Only one ring and a wristwatch is allowed.
- Plain, dark ankle socks or plain, dark, or natural tights only.
- Make-up must be discreet and natural.
- Dark shoes.

Outreach Projects

Our Catholic/Christian ethos welcomes students from all faiths, nationalities, and backgrounds, and, to further the inclusive nature of our school, we have developed many exciting and successful outreach projects, both at home and abroad. Sixth Form students have visited destinations such as the Philippines, Zambia, Peru, and India, where they have helped local communities by working on charity projects that have been made possible through tremendous fund-raising efforts.

The visit combined hands-on volunteering with guided learning and reflection. Students developed leadership, teamwork, and communication skills while gaining a deeper understanding of civic responsibility and the role of faith communities in public life. Staff were immensely proud of the maturity, humility, and commitment shown throughout.

Experiences like this enrich our students' personal development and strengthen future applications to university, apprenticeships, and employment. Most importantly, they offer an invaluable perspective on social justice, encouraging our young people to put their values into action and to contribute positively to the communities they serve.



In October 2025, fifty Sixth Form students travelled to Edinburgh for a community outreach visit rooted in service and social action. During the trip, students worked alongside local partners to clean and restore a community park, and they supported a local Catholic parish in a project strengthening their teamwork, communication, and leadership skills. Through meetings with parish teams and community organisations, students explored how the Catholic community supports vulnerable people, both historically and today, through initiatives such as outreach, hospitality, and practical assistance. Alongside their volunteering, students enriched their knowledge of the wider world by engaging with the city's heritage and everyday life, visiting key sites around the city, and reflecting on how Edinburgh's history and diversity inform contemporary approaches to community support.





St Mary's Catholic School

Benton Park Road, Longbenton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7PE

Telephone: 0191 2153260

admin@st-marys.newcastle.sch.uk

www.stmarysnewcastle.co.uk

