



January Newsletter 2025

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31.01.25

Dear parents and carers

As this is my final newsletter as Interim Executive Principal of St. Mary's as my Interim role comes to an end at half term, I would like to sincerely thank the entire community of staff, parents and LGB members for their ongoing support throughout the time that I have been in role. We are truly blessed to have such a committed and hardworking team to support each of the children at our school to learn, develop, grow and use their given talents for the benefit of others.

After half term, we welcome back Mrs Borriello to the role of Principal and I know that the children are excited to see her again! Mrs Borriello and I have met on many occasions and I know that she is looking forward to being back in school.

Thank you once again to all parents who completed the parent survey that focussed on school communication. Following my analysis and subsequent discussions with leaders in school, I am pleased to say that there are some very positive adaptations coming following the very valuable feedback that we have received. Thank you.

Finally, as we continue in the Jubilee year as 'Pilgrims of Hope', I now look to the wonderful children and staff at St. Mary's to continue to 'fan the flame of hope' and put their faith into action throughout the rest of the year to support those in need, care for the environment and develop their talents further. I wish you all very well, and have a lovely weekend.

Take care and God bless

Mr Wilkes

Interim Executive Principal

A further reminder of the updated attendance guidance from the local authority that came into force in August 2024. You will be aware that this guidance has updated and increased penalty measures for absences within the school year. Please do read through the guidance from the local authority at this link [School attendance advice | Dudley Council](#) as well as the updated Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Attendance policy - <https://st-mary-bh.sch.life/Files/Download/bd02f6dc-f985-4637-ab21-70941bc1df39/eea2616d-94ad-4362-95e6-6c97aa4d3211/Emmaus%20MAC%20Attendance%20Policy%20STM.pdf>

[St Mary's RC Primary School Brierley Hill - Calendar](#)

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

Jubilee Year 2025 Pilgrims of Hope



What is a Jubilee?

In the Catholic Church, a Jubilee or Holy Year is a special year of forgiveness and reconciliation, in which people are invited to come back into right relationship with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

What is the theme for the Jubilee Year?

The theme is 'Pilgrims of Hope' Pope Francis has invited Catholics to renew our hope and discover a vision that can "restore access to the fruits of the earth to everyone". We are also invited to rediscover a spirituality of God's creation in which we understand ourselves as "pilgrims on the earth" rather than masters of the world.

When does the Jubilee Year start and finish?

The 2025 Jubilee Year begins on Christmas Eve 2024 and concludes on 6 January 2026. Pope Francis will open the Holy Door on Christmas Eve 2024 to begin the Jubilee year. In schools, this officially launched 24th January 2025.

The Jubilee Prayer

The official Prayer allows pilgrims from all over the world to use the same words to express gratitude to God for the Jubilee experience and request the grace of forgiveness. The official prayer of His Holiness Pope Francis for the Holy Year, this can be found in other languages on the website of the Jubilee. The Jubilee is an experience of faith and a profound encounter with the Lord.

Prayer Father in heaven, may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ, our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for the coming of your Kingdom.

May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.

May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven. May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our Redeemer throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed, be glory and praise for ever. Amen

Our Gospel Value and Virtue for Spring term 1 are **Grateful** and Generous.



Pupils are growing to be grateful for their own gifts, for the gift of other people, and for blessings of each day; and generous with their gifts, both now and in the future.

What does this mean?

Our school helps our pupils grow by encouraging them to know and be grateful for all our gifts, developing us to the full so that we can be generous in the service of others.

What is your God given gift?

Our Catholic Social Teaching (CST) principle for Spring term 1 is:
Solidarity and the Common Good



The Headlines for this Newsletter:

- *January: The launch of the Jubilee*
- *Safeguarding*
- *Class Attendance*
- *Attendance - What does this mean?*
- *Rocksteady*
- *NSPCC Number Day*
- *SEND - Dudley's Local Offer*
- *Dyslexia support*
- *Black Country CAMHS Parent/Carer Workshops*
- *Dudley Family Information Service*
- *Celebrating our God-given talents*

- *Notices - Dates for the term ahead*
- *Pope Francis' Monthly Intention for December*
- *Contact School*

January - The Launch of the Jubilee



The Year of the Jubilee – Pilgrims of Hope

At St Mary's RC Primary School, we have embraced the **Year of the Jubilee 2025** with great enthusiasm and faith, guiding our children to be **Pilgrims of Hope**. Our **Jubilee Launch Day** was a special occasion, marking the beginning of a journey filled with faith, charity, and community spirit.

The day began with the **CAFOD Jubilee Launch Film**, setting the tone for reflection on what it means to be a Pilgrim of Hope. We explored the **Jubilee logo**, understanding its meaning through artwork and creative writing. Each class then worked on their assigned section of the **Jubilee Prayer**, helping the children reflect on its powerful message in a meaningful way. Their work has been proudly displayed in our classrooms, reminding us daily of our shared commitment to this special year.

In the afternoon, our children made a **Jubilee Pledge**, recognising that we are all called to participate in this sacred year. The day concluded with a **liturgy**, where children reflected on their learning and offered prayers in an age-appropriate way.

Our Jubilee Prayer Journey

Each class has been entrusted with a special focus from the **Jubilee Prayer**, allowing them to explore its meaning deeply:

- **Year 6** focused on *Faith, Charity, and Hope*
- **Year 5** embraced the role of *cultivators of the seeds of the Gospel*
- **Year 4** reflected on *a new heaven and a new earth*
- **Year 3** learned about *God's eternal glory*
- **Year 2** explored *the treasures of heaven*

- **Year 1** spread the *peace of our Redeemer*
- **EYFS** celebrated with *praise forever*

As we continue this journey throughout the year, we encourage our school community to live out the message of the **Jubilee**, spreading hope, kindness, and faith in all that we do.

As one of our amazing children said it feels as though, "you're on a road of hope."

Let us walk together as **Pilgrims of Hope!**

Safeguarding



If you find you are ever facing something challenging in your family life, please come and see us. We are always here to help you and your child(ren).

Early Help

An Early Help Assessment is a great way of getting your family some support, whether it be with your child's behaviour, their sleeping pattern or social and emotional wellbeing, or something that effects the whole family, housing and finances, for example.

It involves a meeting with professionals from different agencies (dependent on your family's individual needs) and a plan will be put in place to show the different support you will receive and who is responsible for getting this done.

It is not input from Social Services: it is there as a support tool only, for a variety of different reasons.

If you have any questions, or feel you may benefit from this, please contact Ms Mosley on 01384 985 005, or contact the school office to arrange an appointment to see her.

Safeguarding

Please be aware that we have a duty of care to all children at St. Mary's and this may mean we need to contact Social Services/Family Support for advice or to report a situation. We understand that this can be distressing for those involved, but please be assured that we **always** have your child's best interests at heart.

If you have any concern or worry about another member of the St. Mary's School community, please don't hesitate to contact any of our DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads): Mr Lodge, Miss Clewley or Ms Mosley. Our Interim Executive Principal, Mr Wilkes, will also be a member of our DSL team too.

Class Attendance - January



Reception: 89.4%

Year 1: 92.9%

Year 2: 88.1%

Year 3: 91.5%

Year 4: 89.5%

Year 5: 91%

Year 6: 89.3%

National Average: 94.5%

Attendance record and lessons missed

- 95% attendance means 50 missed lessons. This means a child missed about 10 days or 2 weeks of lessons in the school year.
- **90% attendance means 100 missed lessons. This means a child misses four weeks of lessons in the school year.**
- 85% attendance means 150 missed lessons. This means the child misses almost 6 weeks of lessons in the school year
- 80% attendance means 200 missed lessons. This means the child misses over 7 weeks of lessons in the school year
- 75% attendance means 250 missed lessons. This means the child misses about 9 weeks of lessons in the school year

Punctuality

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year, that's 20 lessons missed
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day adds up to 2 weeks absence a year, that's 55 lessons missed
- Arriving 30 minutes late every adds up to 19 days absence a year, that's 123 lessons missed

Attendance - What does this mean?

Attendance Matters



This newsletters' attendance is **90.2%**, which needs improvement! If you're unsure about your child's attendance, worried about getting them into school or just want advice and support then please come and speak with us. Together, we can work hard to improve this.

On average, this would mean that:

- **90% attendance means 100 missed lessons. This means a child misses four weeks of lessons in the school year.**

Please do reflect on this; 100 missed lessons could cause significant interruption to children's learning and would mean that learning outcomes may not be as strong as they could be.

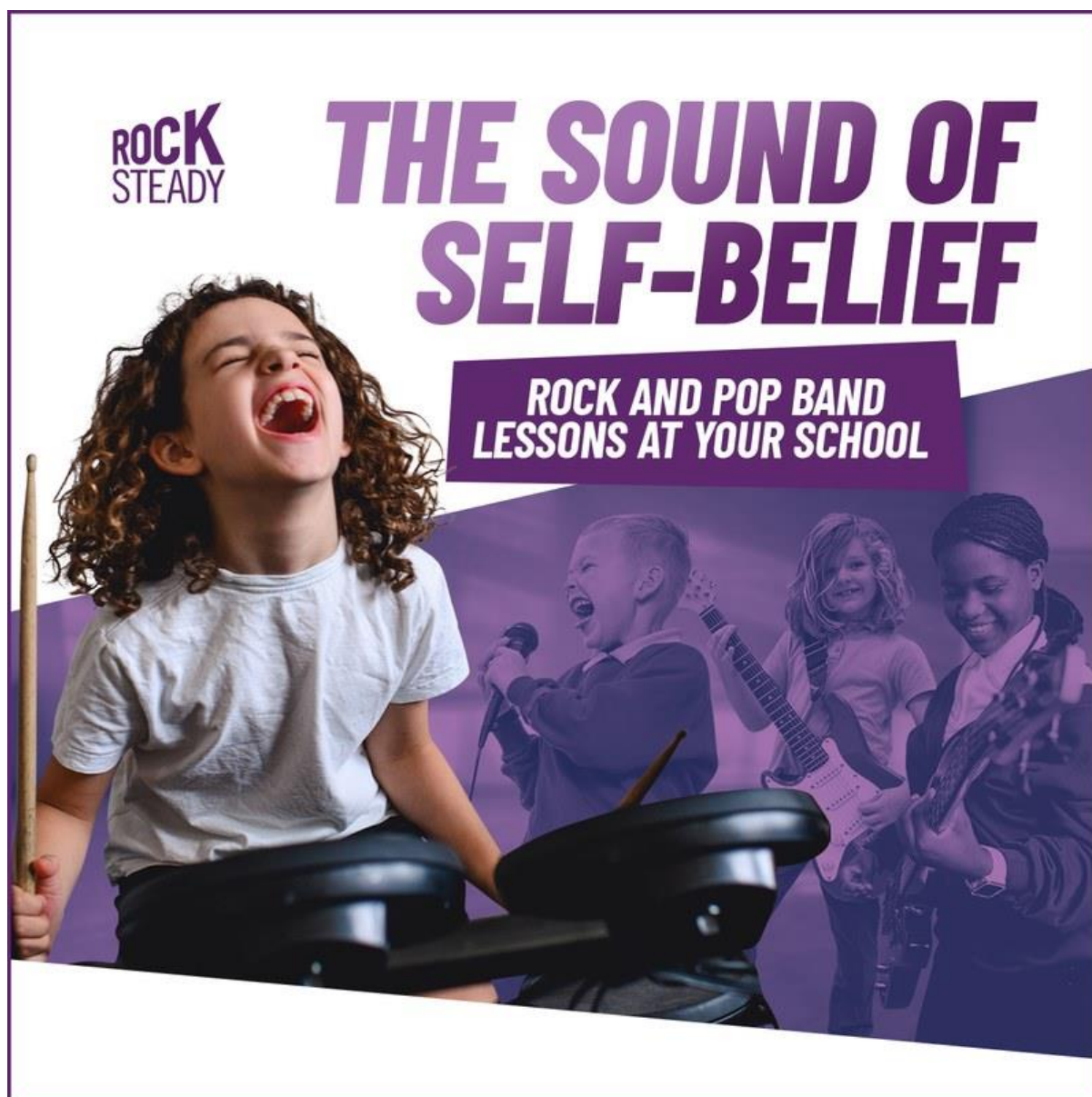
We would obviously love to be as close to 100% as we can. The government, rightly so, has a huge focus on attendance as, ["research found that pupils who performed better both at the end of primary and secondary school missed fewer days than those who didn't perform as well."](#) There is a clear link between attendance and better outcomes so well done to everyone that has focussed on this; by doing so, you are prioritising a brighter future for your child/children.

Attendance is everyone's responsibility just like the safeguarding of every child and young person.

Please understand, that if attendance shows deterioration, you will be contacted - this is to establish a path forward so that we can raise the level of attendance, which is heavily linked to raising the performance of your child in their crucial education. We need to prioritise this so join us and work with us!

Thank you and God bless, Mr Lodge.

Rocksteady - 1 bursary available!



We partner with Rocksteady Music School to deliver fun and inclusive rock and pop band lessons.

These weekly music lessons take place in school and are led by professional musicians who make learning music fun. It's the perfect way to learn new musical skills, make friends and have a great time – all at school! Rocksteady lessons are also shown to amplify confidence, wellbeing and social skills. How does it work?

- There's no experience necessary and all instruments for lessons are provided.
- Watch as your child performs in their end of term concerts, showing just how far they have come.

- Children learn up to 300 instrument, band, and performance skills, whilst playing songs they love.
- Children can achieve an Ofqual-regulated Music qualification, accredited by Trinity College London, without having to take a single exam.
- You'll receive regular progress updates, including photos.

I can currently offer 1 free place as a bursary with St Mary's RC Primary School please let me me (Mr Lodge) know ASAP. If there are multiple families that request this, then I will 'draw from the hat' to ensure that this is a fair process.

There's a money-back guarantee for the first month and you can cancel at any time. Places are offered on a first come, first served basis. To sign up today, visit rocksteadymusicschool.com or call 0330 113 0330 (Mon-Thurs 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-6pm, local rate) or email info@rocksteadymusicschool.com

NSPCC Number Day

On **Friday, 7th February 2025**, we will be taking part in **NSPCC Number Day**, a fantastic opportunity to celebrate maths while raising money for a worthy cause.

This will be a **special dress-up day**, where children are invited to come to school dressed as their **favourite number**! Whether it's a simple t-shirt with a number on it, a creative homemade costume, or even a football shirt with a lucky number – we encourage everyone to get involved and have fun with numbers.

To take part, we ask families to make a **monetary donation** to support the vital work of the **NSPCC**. If every child donates just **£1**, we will be able to send **nearly £200** to help protect vulnerable children and support this incredible charity's mission.

Throughout the day, children will take part in fun **maths-based activities**, showing how numbers are all around us and can be exciting to learn about.

Thank you for your support – let's make **NSPCC Number Day 2025** a **fun and meaningful day for all!**

Take a look at what's been happening around School



1 - Year 2



2 - Year 4



3 - Year 4



4 - Year 4



5 - Year 4



6 - Year 5



7 - Year 5



8 - Year 6



9 - Year 6



10 - Year 6

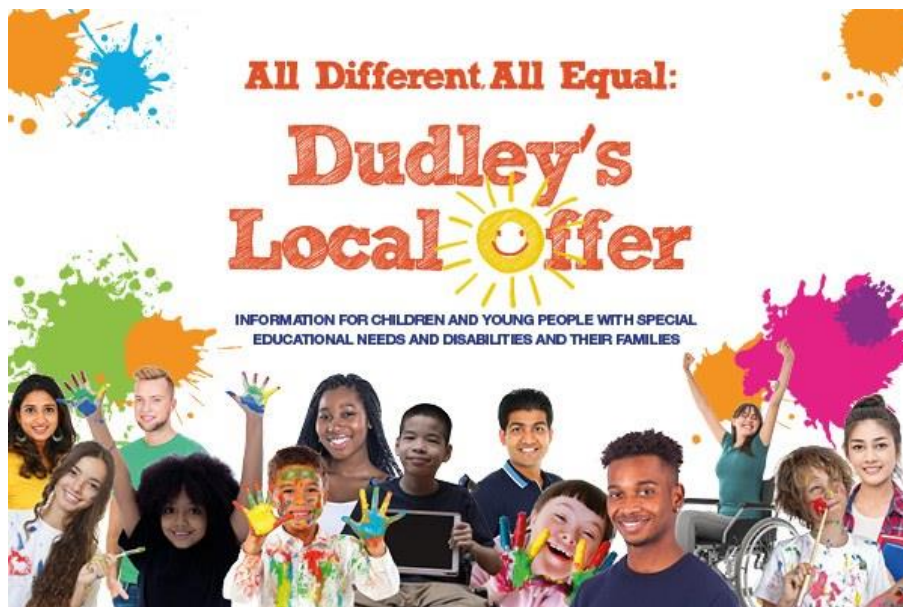


11 - Year 6



12 - Year 6

SEND - Dudley's Local Offer



Dudley's Local Offer

The Local Offer is full of information and advice on things to support you and your child with Special Educational Needs or disabilities. If you need advice on health, education, social care and community support for you and your family visit the Local Offer website:

www.localoffer.dudley.sch.uk

Dudley Parent Carer Forum

Parents and carers from across Dudley borough who have children with disabilities and special needs are being invited to join the Dudley Parent Carer Forum.

Dudley Parent Carer Forum is an independent group of parent carers of children and young people (0-25 years) with disabilities and additional needs. The forum provides a safe environment for parent carers of children with disabilities or additional needs to share their

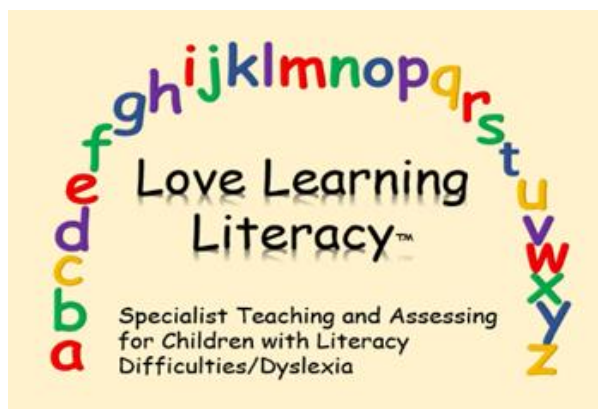
thoughts and concerns and to empower them to have their voices heard in a way that influences change and service design.

Any parent carer of a child with a disability or additional needs, residing in Dudley borough can become a member.

For more information contact the forum via their Facebook page or by their website: www.dudleyparentcarerforum.co.uk/

Events and workshops for people with SEND

Dudley SENDIAS (special educational needs & disabilities information advice and support) Service is running a range of online activities over the coming months to help parents and carers or young people with SEND. Find out more at <https://dudleyci.co.uk/workshops-and-events>



13 - Does your child have literacy difficulties/dyslexia? Would you like them to improve their reading and writing in the comfort of their own home?

I create and teach interactive, multisensory Online lessons using Dyslexia Action's highly effective Structured Literacy Programme. After an informal assessment, each lesson is tailored to your child's needs to ensure enjoyable progress. Lessons are for children aged 5-11 years and can be 30/40 minutes or one hour.

For more information, please contact Vee Bird (Specialist Dyslexia Teacher) on 07554 253 703 or write to: //lovelearningliteracy@gmail.com

Thank you,

Vee Bird (MSc, PGCE, Associate of The Dyslexia Guild)

Black Country CAMHS Parent/Carer Workshops



CAMHS Parent/Carer Workshops

Come and join our Parent/Carer Workshops, run by Black Country CAMHS services (on Zoom for 1.5hours)! Groups held 12pm - 1.30pm.

We know that suffering from mental health difficulties does not only affect the person struggling, but also the family around them. Parenting a child/young person with mental health difficulties can create additional challenges for parents.

We are running workshops exploring a range of difficulties that children/young people may experience, that can impact their emotional wellbeing.

10.07.24- Trauma and Attachment

11.09.24 - Autistic Spectrum Conditions

23.10.24 – Speech and Language

20.11.24- Depression / Low Mood

18.12.24 – Anxiety / OCD

15.01.25 – Self-harm

12.02.25- Anger / Conduct difficulties

12.03.25 – Anxiety

To register your interest telephone **Andrea Ehgartner** on **01922 607400**



Dudley Family Information Service



Please click on the following link to access the latest bulletin from Dudley's Family Information Service:

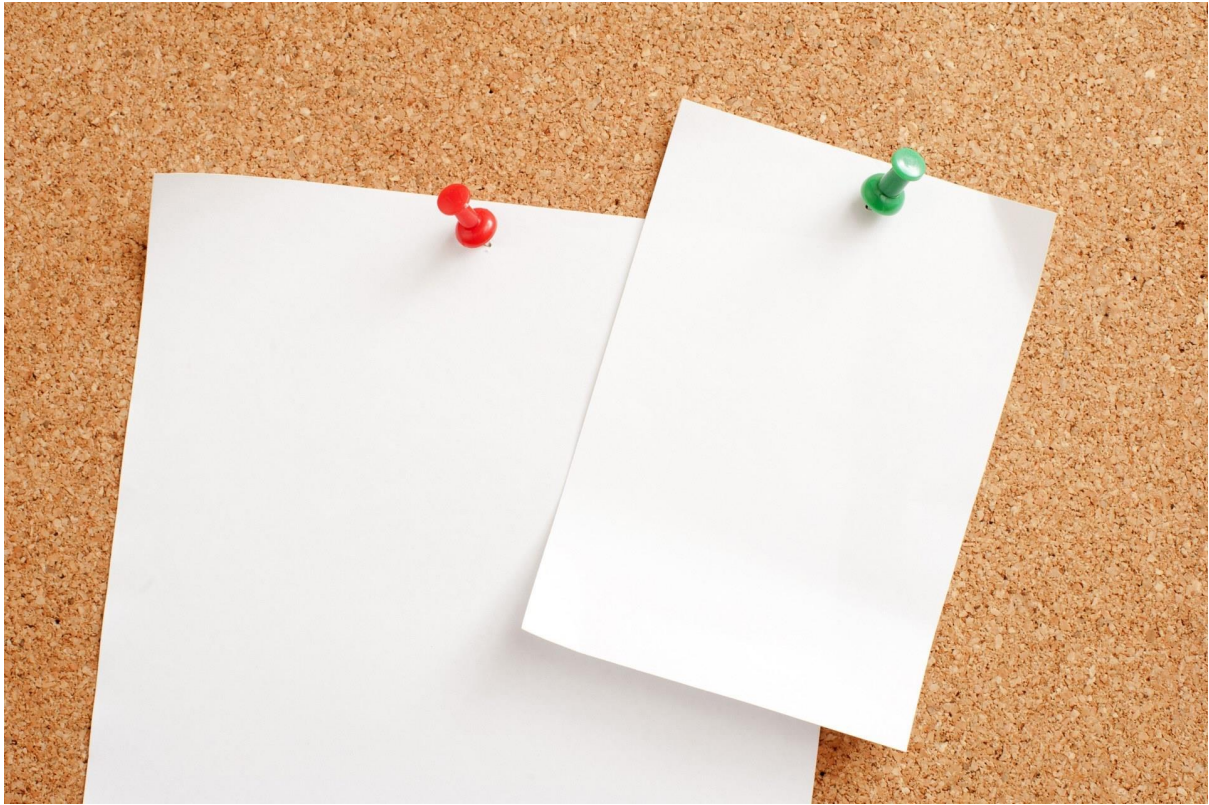
[Family Information Summer Newsletter \(govdelivery.com\)](http://govdelivery.com)

Celebrating our God-given gifts



Keep your eyes on this section as we are in the process of an exciting update for our next Newsletter!

Notices



Dates for the new school year:

Further dates for the term ahead are available on our website. If you require support accessing these, please contact our friendly office administrator, Mrs Bate, for additional help

Pope Francis' prayer intention for January



For the Right to Education:

Pope Francis releases his prayer intention for the month of December, and invites Christians to pray that each of us may become pilgrims of hope as a result of the 2025 Jubilee.

In December, we pray with Pope Francis that the forthcoming Jubilee may strengthen us in our faith, helping us to recognise the Risen Christ in the midst of our lives, transforming us into pilgrims of Christian hope.

‘We must fan the flame of hope that has been given to us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart, and far-sighted vision.’ – Pope Francis.

In January 2025, Pope Francis has dedicated his prayer intention to uphold the **right to education**, especially for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war. He emphasizes that education is essential for building a better world and should be accessible to all, regardless of their circumstances.

[vaticannews.va](https://www.vaticannews.va)

The Pope highlights the severity of the current situation, stating, "Today we're experiencing an educational catastrophe. This is no exaggeration." He points out that due to wars, migration, and poverty, approximately 250 million children are deprived of education.

[vaticannews.va](https://www.vaticannews.va)

He further underscores the transformative power of education, noting, "Education can save migrants and refugees from discrimination, criminal networks, and exploitation." By providing educational opportunities, we can help them integrate into new communities and contribute positively to society.

[vaticannews.va](https://www.vaticannews.va)

Pope Francis calls upon the global community to join him in prayer: "Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected."

[vaticannews.va](https://www.vaticannews.va)

As a school community, let us reflect on the Pope's message and consider how we can support and advocate for the educational rights of all children, fostering a more just and compassionate world.

For a deeper insight into the Pope's message, you can watch The Pope Video for January 2025: [JANUARY, 2025 - FOR THE RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION | The Pope Video](#)

Please join Pope Francis and the whole Church in praying these monthly intentions, particularly on Fridays at 12.30pm.

For a shared mission: We pray that the Church continue to sustain in all ways a Synodal lifestyle, as a sign of co-responsibility, promoting the participation, the communion and the mission shared among priests, religious and lay people.

Polite reminder - teachers can be contacted using the class email address or through making a telephone appointment through the Main Office. Teachers will reply as soon as possible, during normal working hours. Out of school hours, in an emergency, you can contact us by completing this form here: <https://st-mary-bh.sch.life/page/detail/contact-school-1>



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Visit us on the web at [St. Mary's Website](#)