



HEADLINES 19TH NOVEMBER 2021

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter (Issue 10 2021-22)

“St Mary’s Award Marvels”

Acting Heads of School Update Mr Johnston & Miss McHugh



As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: **1 Peter 4:10**

As a school we strive for every child to reach their potential in their academic studies and in their extra-curricular and super curricular activities. A healthy and active body and mind allows every child to flourish. This week we had the absolute privilege to watch twenty-eight students perform in our annual Piano Recital. The sheer talent and

standard of the individual performances was outstanding. This reflected the dedication and perseverance of the students to harness their talent through practice - which leads to perfection! It really was the most wonderful showcase of our students sharing their talents and nurturing a culture of support and encouragement of each other.

This week's Headlines pays tribute to the great extra and super curricular work that is undertaken by our community of students. Students using their talents as leaders in their work as Anti-Bullying Ambassadors for their form class, Students competing in an online spelling bee, presenting and articulating their place as global citizens in COP26, running a half marathon are just a small range of the diverse opportunities we encourage the students to participate in.

Next week, we will be hosting our term's St Mary's Award Winners Assembly. Mr Johnston and I are delighted to see the



wealth of opportunities our students are participating in and to see the students' contribution to service, leadership and the common good through achieving the St Mary's Award. Please do take time to read through your child's St Mary's Award progress to encourage them to achieve this prestigious award.

Please do read the information contained within this weeks Headlines to keep you up to date with school life here at St Mary's Catholic School.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.

God Bless

Miss D McHugh

3rd December – Occasional Day (School Closure)

Further to our consultation this week regarding the extra day of school closure schools need to take this academic year in light of the Queen's Jubilee (which falls in half-term in June next year) we have received responses from just over 1% of parents. Whilst some of these responses were very positive about this proposal, just over half suggested that we try to end the Autumn Term early before the 21st December (which is the scheduled last day). We have exciting plans already in place to celebrate the Christmas period and our 125th Anniversary, alongside Mass in those final few days, which we are unable to move, and which are integral to our school culture and values. We will therefore continue with the plans to close on 3rd December for the day in line with the 99% of parents who accepted this without reservation or suggestion.

Golden Boy Bus Service — Spring Term 2022



There are spaces available on the Golden Boy Bus Service for the Spring Term. (January - Easter).

To book a place please email Miss McHugh d.mchugh@stmarys.net

The deadline for payments is **Friday 3rd December 2021.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

6th December
Mock Exams start
Y11 & Y13

15th December
Carol Service at
St. Josephs



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

www.stfrancistrust.net



Anti Bullying Ambassadors

In line with Anti-Bullying week and our wellbeing theme for this half term the year group assemblies have focused on theme of 'one kind word'. An powerful opening message was shared with all of our young people which is being promoted by the Anti-Bullying Alliance nationally which we encourage all of our young people to uphold on a daily basis in line with our Gospel values:

"In a world that can sometimes feel like it's filled with negativity, one kind word can provide a moment of hope. It can be a turning point. It can change someone's perspective. It can change their day. It can change the course of a conversation and break the cycle of bullying."

Our Anti-Bullying Ambassadors are doing a wonderful job educating their peers on what constitutes bullying and how to report any concerns that they may have to members of staff. A form pledge to work together to fight against bullying in line with our school policy was launched and signed by every member of our school community and this is displayed proudly in each form room.

Mrs G Tatman
Assistant Headteacher



Sumdog Spelling Challenge



Over the last week many of our KS3 students have been undertaking a range of spelling and grammar challenges using the sumdog interactive website. Here they are able to play games such as penalty shootouts and matching activities to support their literacy in a fun, novel way.

Many of the students spent a lot of time engaging with the website, but our top 3 students were :

- **Alexander M** (2160 words spelled, spending 183mins),
- **Anastasia G** (1823 words spelling, spending 191minutes on the website) and
- **Franklin O D** (a whopping 2360 words spelled, spending 341mins on the website!).

Congratulations to all – and keep on spelling!

Mr R Graves
Head of English



Geography - COP 26

COP26



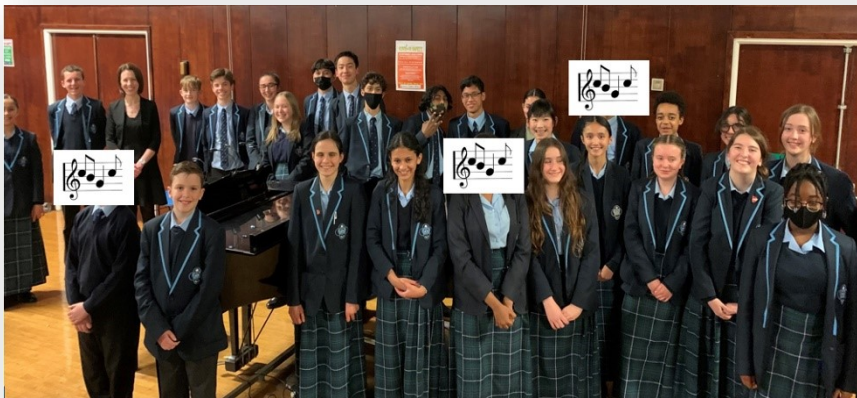
During the second week of COP26 St Mary's geographers held their own mini-climate change conferences. Students were assigned a role as either a climate witness or a world leader. They presented some excellent ideas for tackling climate change and had some thorough debates about how the ideas could be implemented. The students were showed great compassion for the developing nations and discussed ways in which the developed nations could provide support for tackling and adapting to climate change.

Mrs C Hughes
Head of Geography





Piano Recital



‘The school was alive with the sound of music’

This Tuesday we had our annual piano recital which took place in the main hall With student playing the Grand Piano

It was a hugely popular event with 28 performances on the night and some

students even on a waiting list! There were many spectacular pieces of music performed including a Toccata by Khachaturian, a movement from Beethoven’s Moonlight Sonata and Colours of the Wind from Pocahontas.

The students worked extremely hard all day, performing not only in the evening, to an audience of 100 parents but also to several classes of Year 8 and 9 during the day. It was great to have live music playing again and we look forward to the next musical event. It was a tremendous occasion to see such great talent, skill and fabulous performances from our Y7 through to Y12 students. We are exceptionally proud!



Miss J Matthews
Head of Music

Geography Competition - Year 7

Year 7 – Geography competition time – design a city of the future!

Are you a budding town planner? Could you create a city that will help to combat climate change?

Enter The British Museum competition for the chance to win a copy of ‘A History of the World in 25 Cities’ and a jigsaw. Have a look in the library at the book.

If you enter the competition email your entry to Mrs Hughes c.hughes@stmarys.net to enter the Internal school competition with a prize of the book for the best entry. Internal competition deadline **Monday 6th December.**

Ask your Geography teacher for the entry form and for more information. Good luck, we can’t wait to see your designs!

Mrs C Hughes
Head of Geography



Elizabeth - Y10. Thank you for your support.



Our school community are exceptionally proud of Elizabeth Y10 and her amazing achievements. A few weeks ago, we shared with you Elizabeth's "Just Giving" page for her half marathon challenge. The courage, determination and sheer will power has inspired Elizabeth, her sister Grace and Mum to get involved too!

Her Mum writes: "The training and the event itself has been great for Elizabeth, not only making her feel good, but for her to have something positive to focus on has been so good for her. The benefits of exercise are so undervalued."

During half term Elizabeth has also camping in Pembrokeshire and hiking 16 km for two days on hilly terrain, with 30 kg on her back, with her air cadets squadron, working towards her expedition part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Elizabeth and her family are an inspiration to us all! We are very proud of her!

Mr S Eddleston
Y10 Learning Coordinator



Menu in our Aspens Refectory

Autumn
Winter
2021

STREATERIES

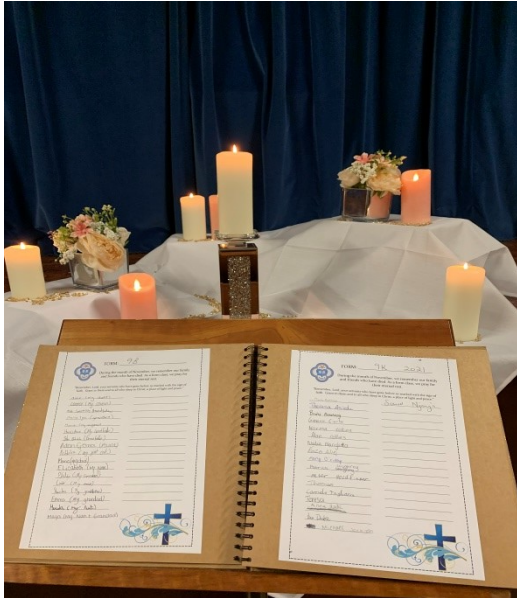
Aspens
☀☀☀☀☀

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
STREET	 All American Cheeseburger Burger Sauce Wedges	 Chicken Shawarma Pickled Red Cabbage	 Gammon & Parsnip Yorkshire Pudding Wrap Gravy	 Jamaican Jerk Chicken Wings Rice and Peas	 Hand Battered Fish & Frickle
VEGGIE	Chicken Style Strips Jambalaya Cornbread	Egyptian Koshari - Macaroni, Rice, Tomato sauce, Crispy Onions	Quorn Sausage Toad in the Hole Gravy	Cheesy Macaroni Pie	Vegan Mince and Pea Slice
SIDES	BBQ Beans	Pomegranate Couscous Mezze Salad	Smokey Roasties Roasted Roots	Spinach & Coconut Slaw	Chips Peas

WEEK 2



Chaplaincy News:



During the Month of November we pray for the Holy Souls. As a school community we have our book of remembrance placed in the school hall. Every act of worship and group prayer is centred on us praying for our loved ones who have departed. May their souls rest in eternal peace.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.



Amen

#RedWednesday 24th November 2021

#RED WEDNESDAY

On Wednesday 24th November, we would like each child to wear a red item of clothing in addition to their normal school uniform to show support for Christians across the globe, who are suffering persecution today, with a £1 donation (payable via Parentpay)

This could be any item of clothing that is "red" in colour, a coat, scarf, hat, gloves, tie, hair accessory, watch, lanyard, shoes, laces, etc. However, this does **not** include red 'make-up' (e.g., nails).

#RedWednesday 24th November 2021 is organised by the Catholic charity, Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), who support projects in over 135 countries worldwide.

#RedWednesday is YOUR chance to say 'NO' to Christian persecution and 'NO' to religious persecution and to use YOUR voice to call for CHANGE.

As a result of targeted violence, around the world, millions of Christians are now displaced or refugees. Countless numbers have been driven from the homes, lost their livelihoods and even their liberty and their lives because of their faith. This year the special focus is on the kidnap, forced marriage and conversion, rape and sexual enslavement of Christian women and girls.

You can sign the **#RedWednesday** Petition to the UK Government to help stop the sexual enslavement of Christian women. Visit <https://acnuk.org/our-campaigns/redwednesday/> to help to put an end to this suffering today.

Thank you for your generous support.

Mr D D'Cruz
Chaplain and Teacher of RE



In today's digitally connected world, children and adults are constantly presented with new ways to engage, react and contribute. We're sociable beings; it's a natural human instinct, especially amongst younger audiences, to want to belong and join in. Viral Challenges (as they're often known) draw on these emotions and, as the name suggests, spread and gather pace very rapidly. New challenges are constantly emerging and evolving. They're often completely innocent, raising awareness of worthy causes or simply providing amusement. However, they can have much more sinister undertones, putting children at risk of physical harm or, in extreme cases, fatal injury.



What parents need to know about ONLINE CHALLENGES

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

As well as having the potential to cause actual physical harm, some challenges can be extremely upsetting for children. Many are created with the sole purpose of instilling fear in an individual in order to coerce them into doing things that could have a long-term emotional effect on them.

VARYING LEVELS OF RISK

As a parent or carer, it's important to take a balanced view and understand that not everything online has the potential to do harm. Mass-following and interaction can be a force for good. For example, the Ice Bucket Challenge, which swept the nation, set out to raise money and awareness of Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). At its height, over 28 million people uploaded, commented on, or liked Ice Bucket Challenge related posts on Facebook. It's equally important to be aware though that online challenges often have a darker side. Malicious trends and challenges can expose children to dangerous or even life-threatening situations, so it's critical that parents and carers are aware of the latest risks and understand what steps to take to mitigate them.

'FOMO' - FEAR OF MISSING OUT

The 'Fear of Missing Out' (FOMO) is a strong emotional characteristic, particularly displayed in young people. The nature of viral challenges encourages children to explore and push boundaries. They tap into FOMO by feeding on a child's natural desire to join in, be accepted and share experiences with their friends and the wider online community. A recent study also found that FOMO is one of the greatest causes of Social Media addiction.



STRIVING FOR LIKES

In a major study by the Children's Commissioner, it was found that children as young as ten years old are reliant on 'Likes' for their sense of self-worth. A major concern around viral challenges is not knowing how far children will go to earn 'Likes'. Couple this growing appetite for acceptance with commonplace peer pressure and the potential problem is compounded. The result is that when young people are drawn into online challenges, because it is what all their friends are doing, saying 'no' can seem like a very hard thing to do.

"The coolest person at school will start a trend and then everyone copies her"
Merran, 12, Year 7

"If I got 150 likes, I'd be like that's pretty cool it means they like you"
Aaron, 11, Year 7



National Online Safety®



Top Tips for Parents



COMMUNICATION & MONITORING

It's important to talk to your child regularly and monitor their online activities. Encouraging honesty and openness, will give you a much clearer viewpoint of how your child is interacting online and what concerns they have. Create an atmosphere of trust. Ensure they feel they can confide in you or another trusted adult regarding anything they may have seen or experienced online that's upset them.

THINK BEFORE ACTING

As with most concerns in life, let common sense prevail when it comes to Viral Challenges. Young people need the freedom and space to explore and going in all guns blazing may well be counter-effective. Address the importance of safety and wellbeing, both online and offline, by getting the facts and understanding the risks. Start a discussion about the Online Challenges that may have captured your child's interest, gauge their likely involvement and explain the importance of thinking and acting independently when it comes to participating.

SETTING UP EFFECTIVE PARENTAL CONTROLS

As with all online activity, ensuring you have effective parental controls set up on all devices will help filter and restrict the dangerous or inappropriate content you don't wish your child to access. Additional measures for protecting your child include checking the privacy settings on your child's devices, monitoring their friends list, ensuring their personal information is safe and secure and keeping a watchful eye on the content they're sharing.

REPORTING & BLOCKING

Parental controls can only go so far in blocking potentially harmful content. A rise in the decoding of social media algorithms, has led to age inappropriate content increasingly appearing on platforms and apps used by children. Where possible, you should regularly monitor what your child sees online and flag/report any content which is inappropriate or dangerous. You should take the time to talk to your child, define what you consider to be appropriate content and show them how to report and block users/accounts themselves.

VALIDATE SOURCES

Not everything is as it seems. Some people create fake content that's designed to 'shock' in order to encourage rapid sharing. If your child has seen something online that has triggered concern you should encourage them to, check its origin, verify that it came from a credible source and check the comments made for any clues to its validity.

FACING REALITY

Trends and Viral Challenges can be tempting for children to take part in; no matter how dangerous or scary they may seem. As a parent or carer it can be difficult to keep pace with the very latest Online Challenges emerging. In recent months these have included potentially dangerous crazes, including the 'Bird Box' challenge, which was inspired by Netflix's popular film and encourages followers to upload videos of themselves attempting everyday tasks while blindfolded. The best advice is to keep talking to your child. Show that your taking an interest and not just prying. Ensure your child knows they don't have to get involved and if they're unsure, let them know you're there to talk before they consider participating. Children often need reassurance that not everything they see online is real. If your child has viewed distressing or frightening content it's important to talk to them about their experience, support them and, if required, help them find additional support.

SOURCES:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/fake-news-twitter-spreads-further-faster-real-stories-retweets-political-a8247491.html> | <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2209452/Teen-dies-copying-pass-game-time-YouTube.html> | <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6307331/Boy-11-dies-YouTube-choking-challenge-mother-warns-parents-son-strangled-himself.html> | Children's Commissioner Life in Likes report - RSPH - Status of mind report | <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-20013767> | <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-health-wellbeing/fear-of-missing-out-fomo-one-of-greatest-causes-of-social-media-addiction-study-finds-36075206.html> | <http://www.itp.co.uk/news/children-as-young-as-eight-addicted-to-social-media-360/>



We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST



Office Administrator (part time, 26.5hrs)

- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Hoddesdon
- Required as soon as possible
- Closing date: 26th Nov, 3.30pm

Enquiries: admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk



Breakfast Care Playworker (part time & term time only, casual contract)

- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Hoddesdon
- Closing date: 26th November

Enquiries: admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk



Learning Support Assistant EYFS (part time, 27.5hrs) term time only

- Based in Bishop's Stortford
- Closing date: 15th November 2021

Enquiries: recruitment@stmarys.net



Exam Invigilators (casual)

- St Mary's Catholic School, Bishop's Stortford
- Closing date: 30th November 2021

Enquiries: recruitment@stmarys.net

**WE ARE
HIRING!**

For all enquiries, contact:

Recruitment@stmarys.net