



HEADLINES 26TH NOVEMBER 2021

St. Mary's Catholic School Newsletter (Issue 11 2021-22)

“Seeing Red!”

Acting Heads of School Update Mr Johnston & Miss McHugh



Thank you for your support of the #RedWednesday day this week which has so far raised almost £700 for [Aid to the Church in Need](#). The campaign this year has an important focus to stop religious persecution and sexual violence against Christian girls, in particular:

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

”

This subject of sexual harassment will continue to be covered in assemblies next week. We have a 'Zero Tolerance' approach to any incidents of sexual harassment, and promote diversity, and equality at St. Mary's. Student concerns relating to any of these safeguarding matters, can be reported through the link on our website and this will be followed up as a matter of priority. (See 'Useful Links' section).

If you've not yet had the opportunity to donate to our Red Wednesday appeal, the link to do so remains 'live' on Parent Pay until Monday 29th November.

Also in assemblies next week, we will focus on the students' responsibility in the classroom and for their learning, particularly taking a PRIDE in their exercise books, presentation, literacy accuracy and completing all the work. Tutors will be dedicating time, too, to ensuring that every child has books to be proud of and which help them to progress in their learning. It would be useful if you as parents could look through your child's books over the weekend and discuss the work, and the quality of what they are completing in each lesson. As ever, if you have any questions about this, or would like to discuss it further, please do contact your child's Form Tutor and/ or Learning Coordinator using info@stmarys.net.

It's another bumper edition of these Headlines— happy reading! Have a great weekend with your families.

God Bless,

Tom Johnston

COVID Measures—Reminder

Please continue to **TEST EACH WEDS & SUNDAY** – and follow all Covid guidance

Every student must bring the following to school EVERY DAY:

50ml Hand Sanitiser

X2 Masks



UPCOMING EVENTS

3rd December

OCCASIONAL DAY
SCHOOL CLOSED

6th December

Mock Exams Start
Y11 & Y13

15th December

Carol Service at
St Josephs



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST

www.stfrancistrust.net



#RedWednesday



#RED
WED
NES
DAY



On Wednesday 24th November, students were invited 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.

#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, including distributing food baskets, providing medical aid, and rebuilding homes and churches. There is a great need for this charitable work as 75% of all instances of religious discrimination worldwide are directed towards Christians. Millions of Christians experience discrimination, injustice, assault, kidnap, forced conversion, torture and death as part of their daily realities.



Please show your support and find out more by visiting <https://acnuk.org/our-campaigns/redwednesday/>

Donations are also still possible through ParentPay until 29th November 2021.

Bronze Award Presentations



Assemblies this week saw the first of this term's St Mary's Awards being presented and many students will now be wearing a smart bronze shield on their blazers.

This term's St Mary's Award will have been achieved by students who have taken part in a number of inter-house events, clubs or competitions, either sporting or academic, or perhaps just for fun and creativity; students who have helped at open evening, supported charity events, had excellent attendance and made progress in their assessment data. They will have read widely, taken on a leadership role, participated in a liturgy and perhaps performed in last week's piano recital.

All students take part in a range of opportunities but the challenge of the St Mary's Award is to achieve breadth across a wide variety. I am delighted to be presenting over 300 awards this term, with a large box of chocolates for the forms with most certificates awarded.

For those students who have not yet achieved their bronze award there will be many more opportunities coming up soon!

Mrs Wilkin
Assistant Headteacher



125th Anniversary: Year 10 Essay Competition

As it is our 125th Anniversary we are inviting Year 10 to take part in an essay competition launched in English this week.

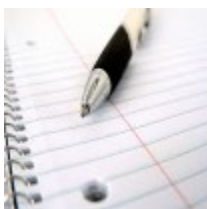
It is based on the essay competitions set by Oxford and Cambridge Universities ... let's aim high!

This is what our students may find themselves considering in the future:

<https://www.mindsunderground.com/oxbridge-competitions/overview>



Here are some examples of the essay titles they can choose from for our competition:



The motto of St Mary's is "Excellence for all". How has your Catholic education helped you to flourish?

St Mary's Catholic School helps me to be a global citizen. How far do you agree with this statement?

St Mary's Catholic School helps me grow in responsibility. Discuss.

KEY POINTS

Word count: 550 words max;

Deadline: 10 December 2021;

An electronic copy to their English teacher;



Our English teachers will select 6 of the best from each class and they will be sent to some of our alumni who are at university or have graduated from university. From their recommendations we will then have one winner and some highly commended.

The first prize will be a silver cup with the runners up also given a prize. These will be presented in an assembly next term. During the assembly there will be a speech by Dr Paul Lynch (he was a pupil and then teacher at our school; lives and works in Switzerland as a teacher and is publishing a book about the British cinema and The Cold War).

If your child is in Year 10 please encourage them to enter the competition.



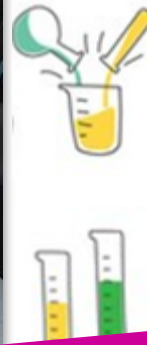
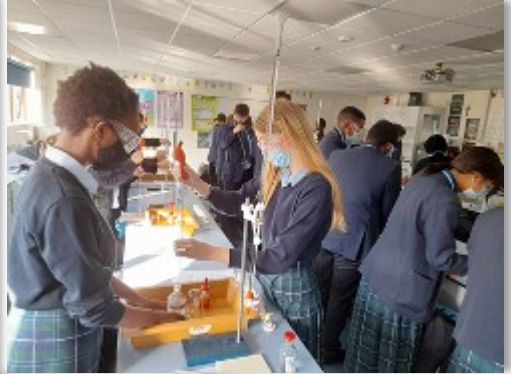
Mrs G Heslop
Associate Assistant Headteacher/ English



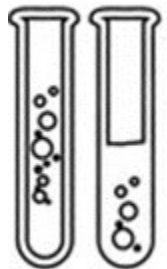
HEADLINES 26TH NOVEMBER 2021

#DedicatedtoExcellence

Y11 Chemistry Master Class



Year 11s experiencing St. Mary's Sixth Form lessons!





World Town Planning Day Competition Year 10 Geographers



Have you been inspired by COP 26?

Do you have some great ideas for creating sustainable communities?

Year 10 Geographers are being asked to create a new sustainable community. The top 20 entries will be entered into the Royal Town Planning Institute competition for the chance to win a £50 Amazon Gift Voucher. The winner of our internal competition will also receive a prize.

Ask your geography teacher for more info – deadline 6th December.

We can't wait to see your plans!



Mrs Hughes
Subject Leader Geography

District Cross-Country Championships

Well done to the St Mary's students who took part in the District Cross-Country championships on Tuesday 16th November. The students ran really well, with the stand out performances being Evan Johnson (3rd), Zak Fellows (2nd) and Katie Hallam (3rd). There were also some strong team performances with the senior boys and year 8 girls both coming second in the District.



Mr S Wright
Subject Leader PE

'Non-Fiction November' at the Library

This month's library focus has been on factual books, to celebrate 'Non-fiction November', an annual event organised by the Federation of Children's Book Groups.

The theme this year is *Heroes*, and students have been borrowing autobiographies from inspirational modern-day heroes, such as Michelle Obama, Malala, and Marcus Rashford. They have also read about heroes who are not so famous, like Matthew Henson, the Arctic explorer.

There are details of a competition to win a copy of 'You are a Champion' by Marcus Rashford and Carl Anka in the library (deadline for entries is Friday 3rd December).



In December we'll be looking at books with wintry themes and settings Brrrr!



Mrs Frino Librarian



St Mary's Acts of Kindness

To support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others we are challenging students to commit an act of kindness every day for the remainder of the term.

You may have heard of the 5 ways to wellbeing which have been found to boost our mental wellbeing. One of these is to give to others.

(<https://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/five-ways-wellbeing>)

Research into actions for promoting happiness has shown that committing an act of kindness once a week over a six-week period is associated with an increase in wellbeing.

(Source: Mind.org)

The challenge encourages students to perform one small daily act of kindness and one larger act of kindness every week.



Examples of small acts could be



- Send an encouraging message to a family member or a friend.
- Pick up some litter, even if it isn't yours.
- Saying some kind or encouraging words to someone who needs it.
- Holding a door open for someone.
- Lending someone a pen.

Small things can make a BIG difference to some one's day.

Larger acts of kindness could be

- Spending time with elderly family members, maybe asking them about their childhood.
- Cleaning the family car.
- Preparing a meal for the family.
- Committing to help with a local community youth project.
- Hand writing a letter.



These are just a few ideas. I know our students will be able to think of many more acts of kindness. I am sure they do several every day without even thinking about it.

Please encourage these acts of kindness and ask your child about what they are planning to do, maybe you will get to benefit from a day off from cooking the family meal or the leaves being swept up in the garden!

Mrs Hutchin
Teacher of Maths



- Connect:** Spend time with family and friends. Enjoy doing things together and talking to each other.
- Be active:** It keeps you physically healthy, and makes you feel good.
- Keep learning:** Try something new. Try a new hobby, or learn about something just because it interests you.
- Take notice:** Take a break to see how you feel. Relax and look around you or listen to music, take a few deep breaths.
- Give:** Do something for a friend or relation/adult, as well as making them feel good, it can make you feel good too!



Chaplaincy News:



CHRIST IS COMING!

The arrival of a friend or family member at Heathrow is always a matter of logistical planning and organisation. One must carefully plan for parking at the right terminal and anticipate potential hold-ups on the M25 and flight delays. If the friend or family member is staying with you, then ensuring that their stay is comfortable and enjoyable adds extra pressure to the business of life, and especially so if that occurs at Christmas. Yet, the excitement of the impending arrival can fill us with joy and energise us to make the extra efforts needed to create fantastic memories. The strife is certainly worth it, and the joyful moments spent together can strengthen friendships and renew relationships.

During Advent we prepare for the coming of Christ. For the first two weeks, we look forward to His Second Coming, as Lord, King and Judge. It is a time for us to reflect on his words, especially the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew's Gospel (Chapter 25). If He were to arrive today, where would I find myself? Would I be among those who recognised him in the weak, vulnerable, homeless, and stranger and responded with love and compassion OR among those who ignored him in the weak, vulnerable, homeless and stranger? Here in our Diocese, Caritas is coordinating the diocesan response to the Afghan refugee crisis and is looking for support and volunteers.

More details can be found here (<https://www.caritaswestminster.org.uk/afghan-refugees.php>) and here (<https://www.caritasvs.org.uk/volunteer-to-support-afghan-refugees.php>).

Advent Charity Collection  Form.....

Advent Charity Collection

Next week, we are launching our annual Advent Charity Collection for the Cardinal Hume Centre in London that supports families and young people facing poverty and homelessness by helping them to thrive. The collection will be made from the 6th to the 9th of December, and we intend to take what we have collected to the Centre in London on Friday the 10th of December. The Centre will then distribute the food and other items to those in need before Christmas. Our year 12 students are leading this collection and they will be speaking to our students during assembly next week. Please see the attached poster that shows the variety of items we are collecting. We thank you in advance for your generous support of our Charity collection.



Collection Date: 6th- 9th December

RED WEDNESDAY FUNDRAISER

Thank you to all those who so generously contributed to our annual #RedWednesday fundraiser for Aid to the Church in Need. It was great to see so many students and staff wearing something red as a show of their support for those who suffer persecution around the world. At the last count, we have raised just over £650 - which is fantastic. Here are some of our students proudly sporting red items of clothing on the day.





Careers Carousel

Last week students from Year 11 and 13 took part in our annual mock interview day. This was the first time we had been able to hold the event since 2019, so it was great to be able to bring this fantastic opportunity back for the students.



There was an air of nervous anticipation as the students waited patiently for their allocated interview time. A large number of Year 11 students had taken the opportunity to come dressed in smart interview attire rather than their uniform which added to the occasion. In preparation for the interview students had received CV writing and mock interview lesson preparation sessions. With CVs tightly clenched in their hands and nervous glances at their peers the students waited to be called forward. With a few words of encouragement from me as they entered the hall, and a few deep breaths, one by one the students made their way to their interviewer. For the majority of them this was their first experience of an interview situation. As they confidently made their way to the table with

their head held high they sat down to begin. 15 minutes later the students thanked their interviewer and made their way out of the hall. This time smiles of relief lit up their face and the realisation that they had just completed their interview experience gave them a newfound confidence, one student stands out in my mind as he came out of the hall with the happiest expression saying, 'that was the best thing ever.'

It is great that we are able to build students employability skills and prepare them for the world of work, giving them the skills and confidence needed for the job application process. In a world where it is common for people to change careers five times during their lifetime getting the skills to navigate the job application process is invaluable.

I hope that all of the students are proud of the way they conducted themselves during the day. I received a great deal of good feedback from our interviewers.



"...I was very impressed with the standard of interviews and maturity of the students that I spoke with."

"...I have done a large amount of "Young Person" interviewing in my career – we are talking three figure numbers – and the standard of the Year 11 and 13 students that I interviewed was generally very high (indeed better than a lot of second year university engineers I have interviewed). The CVs were good and the interviewees were obviously well prepared. They are a credit to their families and St Marys."

"All the students were so polite, really switched on and so friendly a real credit to your school. Your students were prepared and every single one had a CV and took the interview seriously. They took the feedback constructively. At the end of the interview I ask them to reflect before I give feedback. They were all very honest about areas they could have improved on. I can very honestly and genuinely say that I would have offered every student that I interviewed a job. They were polite and all had very positive approaches."



Well done Year 11 and 13.



Mrs K Gaulton
Careers Leader & UCAS Coordinator

At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.



Instagram is a hugely popular social networking app with over 1 billion snap happy users worldwide. The app, which is accessible on iOS and Android devices, allows users to upload images and videos to their feed, like an online gallery. Images and videos can be transformed with an array of filters to edit the shot before sharing. Anyone with an account can see others' online 'galleries' if their account is not private. To make posts easier to find, users can include searchable hashtags and captions to their uploads. The app has additional features like an 'Explore Page' which contains videos and images tailored to each user based on accounts and hashtags they follow.

Publish date: 23/05/18
Edit date: 06/03/19



What parents need to know about **INSTAGRAM**

HOOKED ON SCROLLING

Instagram revealed that young users spent a minimum of 32 minutes on the app per day. Many social media platforms, Instagram included, have been designed in a way to keep us engaged on them for as long as possible. Behavioral economist Nir Eyal calls this the 'Hook Model' and the Instagram feed is a great example of this. Children and adults may find themselves scrolling to try and get a 'dopamine release'. Scrolling may become addictive and it can be difficult to stop scrolling until they find that 'something' they are looking for. Children may quickly lose track of time as they get deeper into their Instagram feed.

SLIDING INTO DM'S

Direct messages (or DM's) on Instagram allow users to share posts, images, videos, voice messages and calls between each other privately (or in a private group). Even if your child's account is set to private, anybody has the option to message them and send them content. If the person is not on your child's friends list, the message will still be sent to their inbox but the user has to accept their request to see the message.

INFLUENCER CULTURE

Influencers are sometimes paid thousands of pounds to promote a product, service, app and much more on social media. When celebrities or influencers post such an advert, they should add a disclaimer somewhere in the post which states that they have been paid for it. Commonly, this is well-hidden in the hashtags or in the comments of their post, making it unclear that their photo/video is actually an advert. This can be very misleading to young people who may be influenced into buying/wanting something promoted by somebody they admire. Dr Daniella Wagstaff, a psychology professor from Federation University Australia, said that social media and influencer culture can sometimes lead us to "derive a false sense of what everyone else is doing" and that this "can definitely have a negative effect on our mental health and wellbeing."

DAMAGE TO CONFIDENCE, BODY IMAGE & MENTAL HEALTH

In a recent report by the RSPH, Instagram was ranked the worst for young people's mental health. Using filters on photos on Instagram can set unrealistic expectations and create feelings of inadequacy. Children may strive for more 'likes' by using realistically edited photos. Judging themselves against other users on the app might threaten their confidence or self-worth. In early 2019, Instagram boss Adam Mosseri promised to ban images of self-harm, following the suicide of 14-year-old Molly Russell, who had reportedly been looking at such material on the platform.

LIVE STREAMING TO STRANGERS

Live streaming on Instagram allows users to connect with friends and followers in real-time and comment on videos during broadcast, but this feature can be turned off. If your child's account is private, only their approved followers can see their story. It's important to note they may have accepted a friend request from someone they don't know, which means they could be live streaming to strangers. Children also risk sharing content they later regret, which could be re-shared online for years to come. Public accounts allow anybody to view, so we suggest your child blocks followers they don't know. In February 2019, the NSPCC demanded a crackdown on Instagram's 'labeled self-regulation' after it was revealed grooming and abuse via the app had more than tripled. 3,000 cases of sexual communication with children, some as young as 5, took place in 18 months.

IN-APP PAYMENTS - Instagram allows payments for products directly through the app. It operates under the same rules as Facebook Payments, which state that if you are under the age of 18, you can only use this feature with the involvement of a parent or guardian.

EXPOSING LOCATION

Public locations can be added to a user's photos/videos and also to their stories. While this may seem like a good idea at the time, it can expose the location of your child. This is particularly more of a risk if it is on their story, as it is real time. Posting photos and videos is Instagram's biggest selling point, but with sharing images comes risks. A photo which includes landmarks in the area, their school uniform, street name, house and even tagging in the location of the photo uploaded to Instagram can expose the child's location, making it easy to locate them. If their account is not set to private, anyone can access their account and see their location.

HUACKED HASHTAGS

Like Twitter, hashtags are also an extremely prominent tool in Instagram and with that comes dangers for your child. One person may use a seemingly innocent hashtag with one particular thing in mind, and before you know it hundreds of people could be using the same hashtag for something inappropriate or dangerous that your child certainly shouldn't be exposed to.

IGTV

Instagram TV (IGTV) works similarly to YouTube. Users can watch videos from favourite accounts on the platform, or create their own channel and post their own videos. It's important to note anyone can create an Instagram TV channel and doesn't have to be friends with a person to follow an account and watch their videos. In 2018 Instagram apologised and removed some of its TV content which featured sexually suggestive imagery of children. As the feature may encourage spending more time using the app, it's important to set time limits to avoid children's sleep or education being disturbed.

Top Tips for Parents

RESTRICT DIRECT MESSAGES

If your child receives a message from somebody they do not know, encourage them not to accept their message request and 'block' this person; this is the only way to stop them messaging your child again.

LOOK OUT FOR #ADS

In January 2019, the UK's Competition and Markets Authority launched an investigation into celebrities who were posting adverts on social media and not declaring that they were paid for, influencers most clearly state that they have been paid for their posts, for example using a hashtag like #ad or #sponsored. Teach your child to look out for the signs of a paid post/advert and discuss with them that not everything they see from celebrities is their personal choice and opinion.

REMOVE PAYMENT METHODS

If you are happy for your child to have a card associated with their Instagram account, we suggest adding a PIN which needs to be entered before making a payment; this will also help prevent unauthorised purchases. This can be added in the payment settings tab.

SCROLLING

Instagram added a 'You've completely caught up' message in late 2018. This message breaks up the feed and notifies you when you are up to date and there are no more new posts from followers. This feature is enabled automatically, but have the conversation with your child about how much time they are spending on the app and set healthy time limits.

PROTECT THEIR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Your child may unknowingly give away personal information on their profile or in their live streams. Talk to them about what their personal information is and make sure that they do not disclose anything to anyone during a livestream, comment, direct message or any other tool for communication on the platform, even to their friends.

USE A PRIVATE ACCOUNT

By default, any image or video your child uploads to Instagram is visible to anyone. A private account means that you have to approve a request if somebody wants to follow you and only people you approve will see your posts and videos.

FILTER INAPPROPRIATE COMMENTS

Instagram has an 'anti-bullying' filter, which hides comments relating to a person's appearance or character, as well as threats to a person's wellbeing or health. The filter will also alert Instagram to repeated problems so they can take action against the user if necessary. This is an automatic filter, but it can be turned off. Make sure it is turned on in the app's settings.

TURN OFF SHARING

Even though this feature will not stop people from taking screenshots, it will stop others being able to directly share photos and videos from a story as a message to another user. This feature can be turned off in the settings. We also recommend turning off the feature which automatically shares photos and videos from a story to a Facebook account.

DON'T FORGET TO BE VIGILANT & TALK TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT THEIR ONLINE ACTIVITIES!



SOURCES:
Instagram
NSPCC
RSPH
UK Competition and Markets Authority



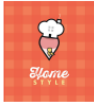




Menu in our Aspens Refectory

Autumn
Winter
2021

STREATERIES

Aspens
🌿🌿🌿🌿

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
					
STREET	Spicy Andhra Chicken Curry	Sweet Potato & BBQ Pulled Jackfruit Burger	Roast Chicken & Stuffing Bap Gravy	Mongolian Lion's Head Beef Meatballs	Hand Battered Fish & Fricke
VEGGIE	Keralan Egg Molee Curry	Veg Chilli Nachos Homemade Salsa	Quorn Roast & Stuffing Bap Gravy	Korean Spicy Rice Bowl with Fried Egg	Homemade Fishless Cake Lemon Yoghurt
SIDES	Turmeric Rice Masala Roasted Cauliflower	Garlic & Herb Wedges Rainbow Slaw	Fennel Seed Roasties Roasted Carrots	Beggar's Noodles Sweet Chilli Broccoli	Chips Peas

WEEK 1

Golden Boy Bus Service — Spring Term 2022



REMINDER:

Payment for the Autumn Term 2021 Golden Boy service is due by 3rd December 2021 to secure your child's place on the route for Spring Term 2022.

If you are not a current passenger, and would like your child to travel by Golden Boy for the Spring Term please do contact me d.mchugh@stmarys.net

If you require financial assistance:

Your child might be able to get free home to school transport if your family has a low income. That's if your child is entitled to free school meals or you get the maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

Children in Year 7 to Year 11 (compulsory secondary school age) who are eligible will get free transport either to:

- (a) 1 of the 3 nearest schools within 6 miles of the child's home. This is where the child lives between 2–6 miles from that school, or
- (b) The nearest school preference based on the **family's religion or belief**. The school must be the nearest school to the home address having regard to the relevant religion or belief, and be within 2–15 miles of the home address.

For further information and to find out how to apply please visit:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/Schools-and-education/School-admissions/Home-to-school-transport/Home-to-school-transport.aspx>

Miss McHugh
Acting Head of School



We are hiring!



St Francis of Assisi
CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST



School Office Administrator (part time, 26.5hrs, 4 days)

- St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Hoddesdon
- Closing date: 26th November 2021

Enquiries: admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk



Learning Support Assistant EYFS (part time, 27.5hrs)

- St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Hoddesdon
- Closing date: 26th November 2021

Enquiries: admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk



Breakfast Care Playworker

- St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Hoddesdon
- Closing date: 26th November 2021

Enquiries: admin@staugustines.herts.sch.uk



Exam Invigilators (casual)

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

Enquiries: recruitment@stmarys.net



Learning Support Assistant

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

Enquiries: recruitment@stmarys.net

St Mary's Catholic School—Applications in writing using the forms available on our website <http://www.stmarys.net/about-us/vacancies/> Please contact Recruitment@stmarys.net to submit an application or for more information.

**WE ARE
HIRING!**

For all enquiries, contact:
Recruitment@stmarys.net