

“ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me to be a safe, happy, proud, loving person who flourishes in life. ”

## Chaplaincy News

We continue in school with our theme of Lent. Pupils will notice that their daily prayer resources in their forms have changed from green, which means ordinary time – most of the year – to purple, which shows we are in the season of Lent. The Church changes its colours, called liturgical colours, to reflect the season of the year, a little like the way we do in moving from our winter coats to the lighter clothing we usually need during spring. If you would like to submit a prayer or prayer request for our prayer board, you can do so using this link:

<https://forms.office.com/e/iCLChQECsW>

This week in school, we have celebrated World Book Day and our prayer focus in forms and in Liturgical Prayer has been about the Bible. Pupils have heard from their teachers about what their favourite texts from the Bible are. You might like to do the same at home and talk about your favourite parts of the Bible and why.

## Prayer

The Bible says, ‘Let all that you do be done in love.’ (1 Corinthians 16:14)

Holy God,

We pray for all who study and work in our school community.

Help each one of us to act in a way that shows compassion and respect to others,

So that all we do is done in love.

Amen



## Big Lent Walk

We have two school weeks and three Lent weeks left for the Big Lent Walk. The school has exceeded its target of 500km with the efforts of our pupils on retreat at Savio House and our 6<sup>th</sup> form students in New York. Amazing work!

Pupils and their families can still log their donations here: [St Mary's Astley Community Fundraising is fundraising for CAFOD](#) Thank you for donations already made.

All money raised goes to CAFOD which works with people in developing countries to help develop education, healthcare and farming. CAFOD also provides emergency help, such as food, medicine and shelter, during time of emergency.

If pupils haven't yet signed up, they can do so by asking their RE teacher for a form.

## Savio House Retreat

Our Year 10 pupils attended a retreat to Savio House in Bollington. Savio House exists as a retreat centre for young people, which means that everything that happens there is to benefit young people in their spiritual and social lives. There was time for lots of games and free time, as well as opportunities to reflect and pray. Pupils also took part in the sacrament of reconciliation if they wanted to and all attended a really joyful celebration of Mass where our pupils shared their gifts and talents in leading music, singing, dancing and prayer. We were very proud of our pupils in how they conducted themselves and became involved in the retreat, and staff from Savio House commented upon how very polite our pupils were.

Pupils wrote:

- I thoroughly enjoyed my retreat to Savio House. I found the walk relaxing, the views were really pretty and I was able to take pictures.
- I really enjoyed the free time. I love playing air hockey, table tennis and *Dobble*, as well as just chatting. I was really happy to spend time with my friends
- I found the games in our small groups were challenging but I learned that communication is key.
- (Lily, Emily and Brianna)

Another pupil said that the only improvement he'd make is that the retreat would be longer!





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Ofsted  
Good  
Provider

Open to all of  
our families  
every Tuesday  
3pm-4pm

St. Mary's  
Community  
Food Bank

Please bring  
your own bag!

## St. Mary's Community Food Bank – in conjunction with MCKS Charitable Foundation



We are delighted to announce the presence of St. Mary's Community Food Bank on our school premises, a service open to all parents and carers every Tuesday from 3:00pm to 4:00pm during term time. This initiative stands as a beacon of support and solidarity within our community, offering essential store cupboard food items to those in need. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the MCKS Charitable Foundations UK (MCKS) and various generous donors whose contributions make this invaluable service possible. Their unwavering commitment to social welfare ensures that families in our community have access to nourishing food, fostering a spirit of compassion and togetherness. We invite all members of our community to avail themselves of this wonderful resource, embodying the ethos of care and support that defines St. Mary's Catholic High School and Sixth Form College.

If any parents/carers cannot attend at the specified time please do make contact with the school: [enquiries@st-maryshigh.wigan.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@st-maryshigh.wigan.sch.uk) we will do our best to accommodate you and your family's needs.

Please don't forget to bring your own bag!!

## Key Stage 5 Paired Reading Students

Presentations were made this week to our Key Stage 5 students who have completed the paired reading programme at Ambrose Barlow primary school. Students have used their study periods to help at the primary school listening to reading. All students received a certificate and celebration breakfast.

Thank you to Mrs Brahms and Mr Doherty for supporting the programme. The celebration breakfast was attended by Minnie Mouse on World Book Day.



### Sports News



### Congratulations

A huge congratulations to Thalia in Year 11 who has secured a contract with Liverpool FC U-21 Women's team and Emma in Year 10 who has been chosen for the U-15's England Women's football training camp. We are very proud of these achievements – well done and good luck!

Congratulations to the Y7 Girls Rugby team who have qualified for the national finals competition! Some of the girls were trying rugby for the first time and have been outstanding. Congratulations to the whole team!





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### St Mary's Sixth Form trip to New York City – a student review

Our trip to NYC was incredible. A fantastic immersion of American culture and the pinnacle of the Western World. New York is rather like a unification of world culture into one, from Hollywood movies to Italian restaurants. After the tiring flight from Manchester, we arrived at JFK in the late evening, we made a quick stop at a 7-Eleven and then retired for the evening in Chelsea. The following day, we traversed New York's grid system to lower Manhattan towards Battery Park. An added bonus was that it was snowing. We then took the ferry toward Liberty Island and witnessed the spectacle that is the Manhattan Skyline. Liberty Island was much larger than we anticipated but nonetheless it seemed significantly more peaceful than the city centre. Then, our local guide Senta provided us with a tour of the New York Financial District where we were able to see the New York Stock Exchange. Following this, Senta walked us to the 9/11 memorial at the World Trade Centre Complex. It was strange standing on the site of such a significant historic event as we had all been aware of the events of 9/11 and to stand right where it happened was quite meaningful. That evening we experienced a different side of New York: Little Italy felt quite comforting dining in an area reminiscent of Europe. The next day we awoke early, and indulged in a typical American breakfast of bagels and coffee. We then journeyed across Central Park which was a very unique part of our trip as we left the bustling metropolis to the peace and tranquillity of a Sunday morning walk through the park with little to no tourists, only the odd runner journeying their way along the snow lined path. Once through the park, we reached the American Museum of Natural History. After the museum we took an excellent photo in Grand Central Station and then reached Rockefeller Plaza. We had lunch and then arrived at the Top of the Rock where you can find, arguably, the best view of the New York vista. Some of us had our pictures taken on the famous beam. That evening we had dinner in Times Square. The next day was a later start as we were going to Macy's. We spent hours wandering the store taking in all of the different shops. Some of us parted with our dollars in Ralph Lauren whilst others bought customised crocks from Footlocker. For our final evening, we had dinner in and around the neighbourhood of Chelsea. The next day, we visited the United Nations headquarters which was a truly fascinating experience as we were walking the halls of an active world institution, passing Generals and walking past the UN Security Council vote on a ceasefire in Gaza. After the U.N. we took the coach out of the city to J.F.K. We arrived in Manchester at 6 am GMT. Jet Lag!!



## Measles

Cases of measles are rising across England, including among children. It is an infection that spreads very easily and for some people can cause serious problems. Measles usually starts with cold-like symptoms, followed by a rash a few days later. More information can be found on the NHS website <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/>

Please may we ask that if you suspect your child may have measles you ask for an urgent GP appointment to confirm and advise school as soon as possible. If your child is diagnosed with Measles they may return to school 4 days after the onset of the rash if they feel well enough.

The NHS advise that as there is no specific medical treatment for measles, it is important to get vaccinated as it is the best protection against becoming seriously unwell. If you are unsure whether your child is vaccinated your GP will be able to confirm this.

## Student Leaders

The student leaders have been planning for the launch, next week, of our first two student committees. Students from across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 have volunteered for these committees, which are going to be run by our student leaders, supported by various staff members. The student leaders have been learning skills they will need in order to lead these meeting successfully, such as how to make an agenda and how to chair a meeting.

The first groups meeting next week are our Diversity Committee and Catholic Community & Environment Committee. The student leaders are excited to get these groups started and to contribute to the school community. The Anti-bullying and Mental Health Committees will be starting later on in the term.



### Key Stage 3 News

Year 9 have been busy choosing their options with the support of staff and families, we are really excited for their next stage into Key Stage 4, they have been exceptional throughout the process.

The spotlight is on you! Year 7 are leading the way by celebrating one another for their kindness and good manners around school, anyone nominated by their peer receives an achievement point and is in the draw to win a voucher. Year 8 and Year 9 will be following suit next week - watch this space!

### Key Stage 4 News

Next week sees our Celebration Assemblies for both year groups and we will be celebrating those that have really shone in bringing light and goodness into school. We have been having a real push on reminding our whole community about the etiquette of greeting one another and looking after one another as a way of promoting Belonging and well-being; it has been delightful to have so many of our young people trying to make our community a happier place. Well done!

Year 11 were again excellent in their mock exams last week and we are looking forwards to seeing their data when it comes out in a few weeks. Prom planning is well underway and next week sees a series of fundraising concerts for that event. Don't forget that hoodies can be purchased from Rainbows.

Year 10 have responded very well to the messages about manners and etiquette with a massive improvement in how they greet staff and each other; keep going!

### Key Stage 5 News

A reminder that our Key Stage 5 Parents' Evening takes place on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March. We look forward to seeing students and parents on the evening. This is an important opportunity to ask staff questions about what is going well as well as what are the steps that can be taken for further improvements.

## World Book Day

Lots of activities have taken place this week to celebrate World Book Day which this year fell on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. Liturgical Assemblies exploring our favourite parts of the Bible were held for each year group; Years 7-9 got to watch an author Masterclass in their English lessons, given by Jennifer Killick who is an author of horror books written for children – they then got the chance to write their own horror story! Many students took place in our toilet roll decorating competition where tubes were reinvented as characters from literature. We also held a Book Day Quiz after school on Wednesday in the Library. Staff have been ‘catching students reading’ in their spare time and giving them raffle tickets to enter into a prize draw – this competition closes on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March. Staff also took the opportunity to dress up in costumes on Thursday for the students’ amusement and delight. Thank you to all who took part in whichever way to make this week truly special.



### Winners:

Book Quiz – ‘Agents of Epic’ (1<sup>st</sup>) Danny, Brianna, Austin and Lucas

. 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize went to ‘Meet me at the Library’: Mairead and Isabelle

Toilet tube decoration: Anya (1<sup>st</sup>) Willow (2<sup>nd</sup>)

Costume Prize (in Book Quiz): Willow

Winners of ‘catching students reading’ will be announced Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March





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## Wigan Central Family Hub Programme

We are delighted to share information regarding the Wigan Central Family Hub Programme for March. The following link provides up to date information regarding their activity programme [Family Hubs \(wigan.gov.uk\)](http://wigan.gov.uk)

Additionally, they are looking to develop their Parent Carer panels and are looking for parents and carers to join their Family Hub parent/carer panel to share their experiences and have a voice about Family Hub development in their neighbourhood. The opportunity is live on the volunteering hub and further details are shown below and can be accessed via this link [VO10378 – Wigan Borough Volunteering Hub \(wiganboroughvolunteerhub.co.uk\)](http://wiganboroughvolunteerhub.co.uk)

Here are some examples of what you might find in a Family Hub network within your neighbourhood:

- Health visiting, midwives and antenatal appointments and classes
- Activities for babies and children aged 0-5
- Activities and support for families of young people who have special educational needs and disabilities
- Support with a range of housing situations including homelessness, help with affordability, repairs and tenancy arrangements
- Help with debt and money worries including access to food parcels/pantries
- Ways to improve whole family health and wellbeing
- Ways to improve parenting and relationships including learning opportunities
- Activities and opportunities for young people
- Support with things like job searches, housing applications and booking appointments.

### Where will family hubs be?

We are planning to have seven family hub networks operating across the Wigan Borough, which means if you live locally, you should always be able to find support in your neighbourhood.

### When will they be here?

We have launched our first family hub, the rest will be in place by December 2024.

### How can I find out more?

[www.wigan.gov.uk/FamilyHubs](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/FamilyHubs)



Family Hubs are a new way of bringing together all the support a family may need, from pregnancy through to young people turning 19 (or 25 if they have special educational needs or disabilities).

Family hubs are here to help the whole family.



[www.wigan.gov.uk/FamilyHubs](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/FamilyHubs)

Working together to support families



## Are you a parent/carer?

## Are you passionate about shaping services for families in Wigan?

We are looking for parents and carers of children aged 0-19 or children up to 25 years old with a special educational need and disability (SEND), to join our Family Hub parent/carer panel.

### What is the Family Hub parent/carer panel?

The parent/carer panel is where parents and carers work together with local service leads and commissioners to help design, deliver and evaluate services.

### Why should you join?

You could make a real difference in your local Family Hub for you and your child. You will be given the opportunity and environment to share your thoughts and ideas, and be a voice for your local community. There will also be activities in place to support you including access to free training opportunities to assist you in your role as a panel member.

### What will I have to do?

As a member of the parent/carer panel, you will be kept up to date about developments across the Family Hub network.

You may also be asked to:

- Share personal knowledge and experiences of services
- Take part in meetings, workshops and other projects to help shape the way services are run in your area
- Complete surveys and on occasion, help to design surveys

If you have any further questions or want to be part of our parent/carer panel, please contact us by emailing [earlyhelpvolunteering@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelpvolunteering@wigan.gov.uk) or visit [www.wiganboroughvolunteerhub.co.uk/vo10378](http://www.wiganboroughvolunteerhub.co.uk/vo10378)

[www.wigan.gov.uk/FamilyHubs](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/FamilyHubs)

