



## BULLETIN NOVEMBER 2024

The 2024-25 School Year has certainly got off to a great start. Well done to all the children who have earned Pupil of the Week, Full Attendance, 100% Golden Time, Athletics, Accelerated Reading, Lexia, Swimming, Core Kids or any other awards since September.

### Revised Vision and Values:

We have spent some time reviewing our school Vision, Values and Mission Statement over recent months. We have consulted with pupils, parents, governors and staff to identify what makes St Mary's great and what we want for the children now and in the future. Thank-you to everyone who helped us in this process. Our Vision is summarized as:

***'Be Kind, Be Curious, Belong'***

Our Values are summarized as 'FRIENDS':

***'Fostering: Respect, Inclusion, Empathy, Nurture, Dignity and Success'***

### IMPORTANT DATES:

NOVEMBER		DECEMBER	
21	Art Exhibition 2-3pm	5	P7 Trip to Omagh Folk Park
22	Christmas Jumper Swap	6	Santa Run (Wear Santa Hat / Hair Accessory
		8	P7 Enrolment for Confirmation (11.30am Mass)
23	Final SEAG Transfer Test for Grammar	10	P4-7 Trip to Pantomime in Grand Opera House
		11	P5 Carol Singing in Play Group and local shops
25-29	Most PT Meetings will be held this week		P2/3 Carol Singing E'killen Date to be Confirmed
		12	Christmas Dinner
26	School & Eco Council Meetings	15	P4 Preparation for Sacraments Mass (11.30am)
		18	<b>Carol Service in Church at 7pm</b>
27/28	School Photographer	20	School Closes at 12 noon for Christmas Holidays

***CHECK OUT THE CALENDAR ON OUR WEBSITE [WWW.STMARYSPS.COM](http://WWW.STMARYSPS.COM) FOR FURTHER UPDATES ON CLASS MASSES, CORE KIDS, COACHING, AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS, VIOLIN, PIANO, GUEST SPEAKERS, TRIPS ETC. WE HAVE RECENTLY ADDED A COMPLIMENTS CORNER TO THE WEBSITE, IF YOU ARE IMPRESSED BY ANY MEMBER OF OUR TEAM OR ASPECT OF OUR SCHOOL, PLEASE LET US KNOW.***

### ART EXHIBITION:

Don't miss our upcoming Art Exhibition, where we will display the impressive artwork created by our talented students. It's a great chance to see their creativity shine! We are proud of every piece. A special mention to those pupils who are also using their musical talent to provide some beautiful background music during the event.

### REVIEWED CORE POLICIES:

Many of our core policies have recently been reviewed. These are shared with parents when children start school. They will be reissued by email in the coming days. For ease of access these policies are available on our school website and paper copies are available in the school foyer.

### FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S:

We are always looking for enthusiastic parents to join the Friends of St Mary's. It's a wonderful way to be involved in the school community and help us organise fun events for the children. We have added a button on the school website, to make it easier for parents to express an interest in joining the group, or parents can always contact Sarah directly.

## UNIFORM:

Thank-you to parents for supporting our school uniform policy, by ensuring that your child wears **plain navy bottoms**. We try to keep uniform costs to a minimum, in keeping with DE Guidance. We do not require an additional PE uniform and parents are welcome to purchase plain polo shirts, trousers, skirts etc from any store for a reasonable price. Only the sweater must bear the logo. Following this simple uniform code is part of respecting the rules of our school and should be adhered to as such. Please note that children should bring a coat and it is not appropriate to wear shorts, in cold weather.

## TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL:

We have devised a 'Walking to and from School Policy, to formalise the unwritten policy which had been in place. This will also be emailed to parents in the coming days. A core element of this policy is that **P1 and 2 pupils should be accompanied by an adult**. **There is a strong recommendation that P3 children are**, but we acknowledge that in exceptional circumstances P3s may walk with a designated P6 or 7 pupil. **There is a form included in the policy, which parents should complete if they wish there P3 to walk with an older child.**

We do not currently have safe access to the school site to allow pupils to enter and exit on bicycles. **We therefore ask that pupils do not travel to and from school on bicycles at present**. We do however want to promote active travel and will arrange designated days during the school year when additional supervision will be in place to accommodate children safely entering the school on bicycles.

## ADDRESSING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

I want to reinforce our commitment to creating a safe and nurturing environment for every child. We have been actively addressing the issue of bullying and fostering kindness and understanding. The children particularly enjoyed the many extra cross-curricular lessons which have been linked to Anti-Bullying Week, such as the most recent Art Therapy Workshops for P3-7, funded by the Friends of St Mary's. As usual there was a very high standard in our Addressing Bullying Poster Competition, well done to the winners in each class. Thank-you also to those who completed our recent parent consultation through the school website. We assure all parents that in keeping with our policy, **extensive preventative measures are in place throughout the school year, there are clear procedures which are followed when bullying behaviour is suspected and if school have concerns that your child is being bullied, we will inform you.**

## CHRISTMAS PREPARATIONS:

The festive season is nearly upon us, and our school will soon start to buzz with excitement! We will be busy over the coming weeks, exploring the story of Christmas, rehearsing for our Christmas Carol Service, holding our traditional internal postal service and preparing for our traditional Christmas dinner. This year the School Council have selected the Cancer Fund for Children as their designated Charity. We ask that everyone brings £1 for this cause on Christmas Dinner Day. Children are invited to wear a Christmas Jumper to school that day. Following the success of our Halloween Costume Swap, we invite children to bring in unwanted Christmas Jumpers to swap on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

For any queries, feel free to contact us. If the matter is curriculum or pastoral in nature, parents should message the class teacher or request a call back. During teaching times, the priority is learning and teaching, therefore teachers will not be available to discuss concerns at these times. If queries relate to administrative matters, please contact Sarah. If there are persisting or more serious concerns, please request to speak with me directly.

Mrs. P Kelly  
PRINCIPAL

