



**St. Mary's Catholic Academy**  
**February 2024**  
**Messenger**



## Executive Principal Comments

Dear Parents and carers,

Monday marks the start of 'Children's mental health week', where the theme of the week is **My Voice Matters**. My voice matters is about empowering children and young people by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. When we feel empowered, there's a positive impact on our wellbeing. Children who feel that their voices are heard and can make a difference have a greater sense of community and self-esteem.

On Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February we will also be marking 'Safer internet day'. Please see the attached leaflet from National Online safety website and the link as below in supporting you to keep your children safe online.

[St Mary's Catholic Academy - Online Safety \(stmarysstoke.co.uk\)](https://stmarysstoke.co.uk)

The link below is to a very short video on how to get the internet safety conversation started with your children.

[Safer Internet Day 2024 - Film for parents and carers - YouTube](#)

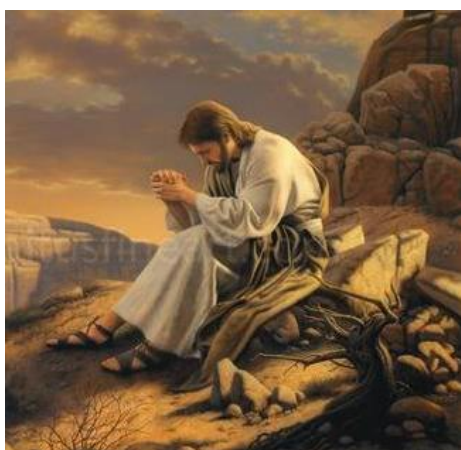
On a final note, please can I direct you to take a look at our new uniform page on the website. We have added pictures to support the uniform policy. We appreciate your support with adhering to the uniform policy – our children wear their uniform with pride!

[St Mary's Catholic Academy - School Uniform \(stmarysstoke.co.uk\)](https://stmarysstoke.co.uk)

Just a little reminder that this Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February is Family Mass day @10am. We look forward to seeing you all there.

I do wish you all a lovely weekend!

Mrs Rathbone, Principal



In this week's Gospel, we are reminded that Jesus' life was very busy, but He found peace by going to a quiet place to pray and be with His Father. We too can find peace in the busyness of our daily lives.

During this week where we are thinking about children's mental health, it is a reminder to us that we all have a co-responsibility to teach our children the importance of spending time with God to find peace and strength.

## Trip Consent

A reminder to please ensure that consent for trips are completed by the deadline date, which is stated on the parent letters.

Thank you for your co-operation

## **If your child is absence from school**

Please telephone the school on  
01782 234820,  
or email [office@stmarysnewman.co.uk](mailto:office@stmarysnewman.co.uk)  
no later than 9.30am

## SPRING TERM

**Half Term Monday 12th February to Friday  
16th February**

School opens to pupils Monday 19th February  
School Closes Friday 22nd March

Our term date are also available on our website,  
please click on the link below

[St Mary's Catholic Academy - Term Dates](https://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk)  
([stmarysstoke.co.uk](https://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk))



## **Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February**

The children will come to school 'dressed to express'. Children can bring a £1 to school to wear their favourite colour, a range of colours or a whole unique outfit to express how they are feeling.

All proceeds will go to the children's mental health charity 'Place2Be'.

# **VALENTINES DAY Special**

## **A choice of Valentine Cupcake or Shortbread Heart**

for dessert with your  
school lunch on  
Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February



## Parents

'Watch me learn' session has been rearranged  
to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.  
Please keep an eye out for the letter today.



Visual screening for  
Reception class will be on  
Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February



Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February stay & play session is  
cancelled.  
We will resume back on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup>  
after half term.

**Cancelled**



# Awards/Celebrations



We would like to congratulate all of the children who received awards

Year	Headteacher	Reading	Maths	Goldfinch
Nursery	Flynn	Ezra	Grace	Iasmina
Reception	Scarlett	Millie	Roman	Jonah
Year 1	Henry	Connor	Warren	Olivia
Year 2	Maggie	Ankinimbom	Jack	Finley



**Celebration Assemblies can be found on our website on our calendar tab:**

<https://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk/calendar/?calid=1&pid=8&viewid=1>



Well done to all our children who represented St Mary's at the World Resorts Arena, Birmingham on 11<sup>th</sup> January  
It was an amazing experience for them.

It has been lovely to see so many children representing St. Mary's during January.  
Participating in a range of Competitions/Sport festivals.

Well done to you all.



### Music Service Activities

We are so proud of how so many of our children are making progress with singing and instrumental learning. To further your child's skills please take a look at the wide range of FREE Music Groups on weekday evenings, 5.45pm - 7.15pm, provided by Stoke-on-Trent City Music Service at The Bridge Centre, Birches Head.

There are also several groups on Saturday mornings in the local area, please ask Mrs Amison for further details.



# Save the date



<b>Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February</b>	Y2 Gladstone Potteries Museum
<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup> – Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Children's mental health week
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Y4 River study
<b>Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Y3-Y6 VR workshop
<b>Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Year 3 Swimming (x 5 weeks)
<b>Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> February</b>	Y1 Middleport Potteries Museum
<b>Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February</b>	Y5 Walker Art Gallery
<b>Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March</b>	Y3 Inspire workshop
<b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> march</b>	Parent target meeting (in person) 3.30-6pm
<b>Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Parent target meeting (school cloud) 5.30-8pm
<b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> march</b>	World book day
<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Foundation stage – Mother's day activities (morning)
<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March</b>	Mothers day breakfast/Prayer service

We will soon begin our Lenten Prayer Services in preparation for Easter.

Each class will have the opportunity to prepare and lead a Prayer.

Our first Prayer Service will be held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> February by Year 6.

Please click on the link below for further dates and times:

<https://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk/calendar/?calid=1&pid=8&viewid=1>

## TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

### Are you a parent or carer who wants to talk to your child about mental health?

This Children's Mental Health Week we want all children and young people, whoever they are, and wherever they are in the world, to be able to say – and believe – "My Voice Matters".

We visited primary and secondary schools to ask students what they wanted from the week – to help shape the activities we create for schools, the messaging we give to teachers, the tips we give to other children, and the advice we give to parents, carers and families.



### LOOKING FOR FREE PRACTICAL ADVICE TO HELP YOU SUPPORT YOUR CHILD?

Parenting Smart, Place2Be's site for parents and carers, is full of expert advice and tips on supporting primary-age children, and managing their behaviour, and act on their views.

[PARENTINGSMART.ORG.UK](https://parentingsmart.org.uk)

### Here's what children and young people told us they need from you:

- 1** We don't need to have 'one-off conversations about our mental health' – sometimes a chat on a journey or at bedtime is enough.
- 2** I need to know it's okay to talk to you about any and all of my feelings. Please hear what I have to say, without interrupting me.
- 3** Please listen to me carefully and acknowledge how I am feeling – it might seem silly to you but what I am going through is important to me.
- 4** Playing with pets can make me feel better. Same with playing football, basketball or whatever type of sport I am into.
- 5** Don't compare my experiences to your own when you were a child.
- 6** Sometimes I just need you to listen and hear what I'm saying – I don't always need answers (or lectures)
- 7** Please don't worry about trying to fix things for me – I often just need to know you are there for me and understand what I am going through.
- 8** If you are open with me about your feelings, this can help me to be more open about mine.
- 9** Sometimes I don't want to talk. Please trust that I will come to you (or another grown-up or someone my own age) when I'm ready. Sometimes it's easier for me to talk to someone nearer my own age – my siblings, cousins, friends, younger teachers at school - because they 'get it'.
- 10** Sometimes a hug is all it takes to make me feel supported.



### WHAT MATTERS TO YOU? CREATIVE VIDEO ACTIVITIES FOR FAMILIES

These wellbeing activities can help children and young people think about and share what matters to them.

[For primary children: bit.ly/3PzCG18](https://bit.ly/3PzCG18)

[For secondary children: bit.ly/3LBD2wK](https://bit.ly/3LBD2wK)

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

Some ways to start a conversation with your child about mental health could be...

TELL ME ABOUT  
YOUR DAY

WHAT WAS THE BEST  
THING ABOUT TODAY?

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST  
STRESS / WORRY IN YOUR  
LIFE RIGHT NOW?

WHAT'S YOUR  
ONLINE LIFE LIKE?

WHO WOULD YOU TALK  
TO IF YOU WERE FEELING  
WORRIED ABOUT YOUR  
MENTAL HEALTH?

WHAT CAN I DO  
TO HELP YOU?