

St Mary's Catholic Academy

School Prospectus 2026–2027




"Many Hearts, One Accord"

Many hearts, one accord: In God's love we grow and learn together to build the kingdom of God.

Contact Information

St Mary's Catholic Academy

Ford Green Road
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Leadership

Principal: Mrs. S Rathbone

Head of School: Mrs. D Statham

Chair of Committee: Mrs. J Clarke

St Mary's is a co-educational school catering for children aged 3+ to 11+, part of the **St Gabriel the Archangel** Catholic Multi Academy Trust — a family of 63 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

"There is a deep sense of belonging at St Mary's Catholic Academy. The school's mission statement, 'Many hearts, one accord: in God's love we grow and learn together to build the kingdom of God,' is understood and lived by all."

Ofsted Report, February 2026

Please follow this link for the full inspection report - [St Marys Catholic Academy - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted](#)

About St Mary's Catholic Academy

St Mary's Catholic Academy forms part of the **St Gabriel the Archangel** Catholic Multi Academy Trust — a newly formed family of 64 Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, united in one mission:



Forming Christ-centred messengers of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice

Governance & Leadership

Each academy has its own Academy Committee, which replaced the former Governing Body. The Collegiate is governed by a Board of Directors who determine policy and allocate resources across the entire collegiate. The Academy Committee comprises Foundation governors appointed by the Archdiocese, staff governors and a parent governor.

Day-to-day leadership is delegated to the Principal, who ensures the religious character of the school is maintained and developed through a high-quality curriculum.

Safeguarding

St Mary's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff share this commitment.

An enhanced DBS check is required for all adults in school.

Designated Person: Mrs Rathbone
Deputies: Mrs Statham, Mrs Scarlett.

Our school is part of Operation Encompass, a safeguarding initiative that enables us to receive timely information when a child may have experienced domestic abuse, so we can provide immediate, sensitive support to ensure every pupil feels safe, secure, and ready to learn.

The Aims of the School

St Mary's strives to provide a happy, secure and caring environment which fosters love and acknowledgement of Christ's presence as central to personal, social and academic experiences. Through daily collective worship, liturgy and religious education, we aim to develop children's understanding and commitment to the Catholic faith.



Faith & Values

Integrating our Catholic ethos with high-quality learning to enable every child to achieve their God-given potential.



Parish Links

Well-supported by St Mary's Catholic Church, with Catechists actively involved in sacramental preparation, Masses and liturgical celebrations.



Individual Worth

Helping children to value themselves as individuals whilst recognising their responsibilities within the school, parish and wider world.

"Pupils achieve highly at this school. From the start of early years, children learn the foundational knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics and communication that enables them to access the curriculum confidently."

Ofsted Report, February 2026

Joining St Mary's

Admission Arrangements

The Academy Committee exercises full control over admissions. Applications are invited from parents whose preference is a Catholic education. Procedures are in accordance with legal requirements and the recommendations of the Archdiocese of Birmingham. [St Mary's Catholic Academy - Admissions](#)

Induction Procedures

Parents of prospective pupils are welcome to visit the school by prior appointment with the Principal. Induction sessions are held for Nursery and Reception parents, with detailed information packs distributed. During the summer term, prospective Nursery parents are invited to join our **Mini St Mary's** group — one afternoon per week — giving children and parents the chance to get to know the school before September.

Class Sizes

Nursery

30 places available

Key Stage 1

30 pupils per class
(standard number)

Key Stage 2

30 places per year group
(Academy Committee limit)

Attendance

Regular attendance is crucial if children are to achieve their best. All pupils are expected to arrive on time every morning. The school works closely with the Educational Welfare Officer to manage attendance. Holidays during term time are not authorised as they significantly impact a child's learning and progress.

⚠ No child may leave school early unless prior notice has been given. The school must be informed if any other adult will be collecting a child. Pupils must be signed out from the office.

School Hours

Foundation Stage (Nursery & Reception)

Arrival: 8:30am – 8:40am

End: 3:10pm

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 & 2)

Arrival: 8:40am

End: 3:10pm

Key Stage 2 (Years 3–6)

Arrival: 8:50am

End: 3:20pm

Lunch: Nursery 11:30am | Reception 11:45am

School Year 2026–2027

Term	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Opens	Thursday 3rd September	Wednesday 6th January	Monday 12th April
Closes	Thursday 22nd October	Friday 12th February	Friday 28th May
Opens	Tuesday 3rd November	Monday 22nd February	Monday 7th June
Closes	Friday 18th December	Thursday 25th March	Wednesday 21st July

i School is also closed on **Monday 3rd May 2027** for Bank Holiday. Please refer to the school website for further information regarding term dates.

Organisation of the School

Foundation Stage & KS1

- **Nursery:** Mrs Blocksidge
- **Reception:** Miss Wallace
- **Year 1:** Mrs Scattergood (Assistant Principal / KS1 Leader)
- **Year 2:** Miss Gilbert

Key Stage 2

- **Year 3:** Mrs Roberts
- **Year 4:** Mrs Kealey
- **Year 5:** Mrs Sigley
- **Year 6:** Mr Spencer (Assistant Principal / KS2 Leader)

Leadership & Support Staff

- **Executive Principal:** Mrs Rathbone
- **Executive Head of School:** Mrs Statham
- **HLTA:** Mrs Fenton
- **Safeguarding Officer:** Mrs Scarlett
- **Office Manager:** Mrs Edge
- **Admin Support:** Mrs Hackworthy
- **Site Supervisor:** Mr Murphy
- **Catering Supervisor and staff:** Mrs Cooke, Mrs Brady and Mrs Johnson
- **Lunchtime Staff:** Mrs Bruce, Mrs Sidley
- **Breakfast Club:** Mrs Bruce, Mrs Massey, Mrs Smith

The School Curriculum

All pupils within the Foundation Stage engage in learning experiences based upon the **Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum** — 3 Prime areas and 5 Specific areas. In Key Stages One and Two, all pupils access the **National Curriculum**.

Core Subjects

- English
- Mathematics
- Science

Foundation Subjects

- Religious Education
- Computing
- History
- Geography
- French (MFL)
- Design Technology
- Music
- Art
- Physical Education
- PSHE

The Curriculum is Designed to:

- Instil respect for religious and moral values, and respect for other races, faiths and ways of life
- Help pupils develop lively, enquiring minds and the ability to question and debate rationally
- Teach pupils to use language and number effectively
- Facilitate pupils' understanding of the world, their own responsibility and the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations
- Nurture an enthusiasm and love for learning, equipping children with independent life-long learning skills
- Involve pupils in setting realistic and challenging targets to achieve success and raise aspirations

- Planning in each year group is carefully structured to accommodate the needs of every pupil, providing a broad and balanced concept-led curriculum which secures knowledge, promotes creativity, excellence and enjoyment.

Religious Education & Core Subjects

Religious Education

As a Catholic School, Jesus Christ remains central to every aspect of school life. All pupils are educated in the beliefs and devotional practices of the Catholic Church. The Diocesan scheme 'Discerning Disciples' is followed throughout the school.

- Daily collective acts of worship every morning and afternoon
- Year 3: Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion
- Year 6: Preparation for Confirmation
- Year 5: Visit to Alton Castle — spiritual retreat with outdoor activities
- Rosary Club during May and October before school

Oracy & Language Development

At St Mary's, we help children develop as enthusiastic, confident, independent users of language. The **Phonics Bug programme** plays a vital role in developing speaking, reading and writing skills.

- Daily English lessons and Guided Reading sessions in KS1 & KS2
- Core class texts chosen by teachers in every year group
- Children read to daily by their class teacher
- KS1: daily phonic sessions; KS2: three spelling sessions per week
- Drama, group discussions, debates and role play

Mathematics

Taught using the **Power Maths Scheme**, focusing on fluency, problem solving and mathematical reasoning. Multiplication tables and number bonds are strongly emphasised.

Science

Strong emphasis on **investigative learning** — pupils work collaboratively, undertake practical activities and draw their own conclusions. Enquiry-based teaching promotes independent thinking.

PSHE

Using the **Jigsaw Programme** and **Ten:Ten – Life to the Full** for RHSE, our PSHE curriculum promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development.

The Wider Curriculum

History

Lessons delivered half-termly, framed around a **big question**. Children learn about significant events and people locally and globally, developing cultural capital and understanding of their locality.

Geography

Carefully designed to promote a love of learning. Children explore local, national and global areas, developing fieldwork skills. Lessons driven by a **big question** each half term.

Art & Design Technology

An '**Art Rich Curriculum**' contributing to the quality of children's lives. Children experiment with a wide range of materials and techniques, taking influence from artists, designers and movements.

Computing

A concept-led, knowledge-rich curriculum covering algorithms, coding, logic and data representation. Online safety is paramount. KS2 children develop logical reasoning and computational thinking.

Modern Foreign Languages

French taught across KS2 with progressive units. Year 5 & 6 benefit from **specialist MFL delivery** in collaboration with St Margaret Ward, enhancing transition and cultural capital.

Music

Taught by a **specialist music teacher**. KS2 pupils learn violin, trombone, flute, clarinet or trumpet. Year 3 learn recorder. Performances include Young Voices at the LG Arena.

Physical Education

All children are taught by a **specialist PE teacher** alongside their class teacher, using government PE funding. Pupils from Reception to Year 6 attend swimming lessons. Extra-curricular activities include netball, cross-country, street dance, multi-skills, football, gymnastics and cycling proficiency.

Supporting Every Child

"The school is highly inclusive and welcomes everyone." "Pastoral care is a real strength of the school."

Catholic Schools Inspectorate - February 2025

Special Educational Needs

The school follows the DfES Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (0 to 25 years). The four broad areas of need are: cognition and learning, communication and interaction, sensory and/or physical needs, and social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

SENCO: Mrs Rathbone co-ordinates all SEN provision, liaising with parents, staff and support agencies. Children with an EHCP have **Pupil Passports** drawn up to provide a picture of the child and their needs. Parents are consulted via termly parent/teacher meetings.

i Mrs Rathbone (SENCO) can be contacted through the school office. A copy of the SEN Policy is available from the office or on the school website. [St Mary's Catholic Academy - SEND](#)

Behaviour in School

→ Positive Praise

Children are praised verbally, offered commendations and awarded during school assemblies. Achievement points are awarded for displaying positive qualities.

→ Weekly Recognition

Each Friday, selected parents receive a positive phone call celebrating their child's successes. Congratulatory letters also recognise accomplishments.

→ Annual Presentation Evening

Awards presented for excellent progress, outstanding effort, high attainment, carer awards and exceptional contribution to school life.

General Health

If a child is poorly, parents must contact school on the first day of absence before 9:30am by telephone or email. A note should accompany the child on return.

Every child receives regular health checks by the school nurse. Regular dental checks are given in Reception.

School Meals

School meals are cooked and served on the premises. All payments are made through **Arbor**. All children in Reception and KS1 are entitled to **universal free school lunches**.

St Mary's operates a **healthy food policy**. Foundation Stage and KS1 children receive a free piece of fruit and milk daily. Children must bring a named water bottle with fresh water — juice and sugary drinks are not permitted.

Communication with Parents

At St Mary's we value and recognise the benefits of an effective partnership between home and school. Good communication is essential to the well-being of children, parents and staff.

The Messenger

Our monthly school newsletter providing information and guidance for parents on all aspects of school life.

Open Evenings

Held during autumn, spring and summer terms — opportunities to discuss individual progress and attainment against personal targets.

Home-School Diary

Every child is supplied with a diary to record homework. Parents sign to indicate completion of reading and written homework at least three times per week.

Curriculum Information Sheets

Each half term, class teachers send out a sheet containing intended learning, topics and significant dates for the half term.

Stay and Play

Weekly sessions during term time where children under 5 are welcome with a parent or grandparent to play, sing, share stories and meet new friends.

- ☐ The Principal and Head of School operate an **open door policy** and will endeavour to meet with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity. A copy of the formal complaints procedure is displayed in the main entrance area.

"The school keeps us well informed and always makes us feel part of our child's learning journey."

"There is a real sense of partnership between home and school, and communication is always friendly and helpful."

Parent Voice Summer 2025

Homework

Foundation Stage

- 3–5 new vocabulary words per week
- Rhyme of the week to sing at home
- Creative homework on Thursdays

Key Stage 1

- Daily maths homework (4 calculations)
- 5 new English words per week with sentences
- Minimum 3 reading sessions per week

Key Stage 2

- Daily maths and English homework
- Weekly English or Maths focus task
- Weekly foundation subject homework
- Minimum 3 reading sessions per week

Extended Services & School Uniform

Extended Services & Extra-Curricular Activities

At St Mary's we offer an extensive range of extra-curricular activities from Foundation Stage to Year 6, including cookery, art and craft clubs, computing clubs, music clubs and a wide variety of sports clubs.

We work in partnership with the **Children's University** — children earn credits for hours attending extra-curricular activities, leading to a graduation ceremony at the university or school.

- **Breakfast Club:** 7:30am – 8:45am
- **After School Care:** 3:15pm – 6.00pm
- Safeguarding Officer available for family support
- Close links with school nurse, educational psychologist and local children's centre

✔ **100 Things to Do at St Mary's** — We want to give our pupils as many experiences as possible to develop their academic, spiritual, cultural and moral identities. Please see the school website for further information. [St Mary's Catholic Academy - 100 Things to do at St. Mary`s](#)

⚠ **Please Note:** Jewellery, make-up and nail varnish are not allowed. Hair should be conventionally cut with no visible lines. Shoulder-length hair must be tied back using navy blue and white accessories. Highlights, bleaching or colouring of any kind are not permitted. All items of clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name.

School Uniform

- Navy V-neck sweater or cardigan — with school logo
- White school shirt (not fashion shirt)
- School tie
- Dark grey trousers / skirt or pinafore (knee length or below)
- Grey or black socks
- Black shoes

Summer Term

- Girls: navy blue and white checked summer dress
- Boys: grey shorts
- All: black or navy summer sandals

PE Kit

- White T-shirt (with/without school logo)
- Navy cotton shorts
- Navy sweatshirt with school logo
- Navy jogging bottoms (winter)
- Black plimsolls

Charging, Data & School Policies



Charging & Remission

Voluntary trip contributions aim not to exceed £15 per trip. Residential trips cost approximately £150. Bi-annual France trip available for Years 5 & 6. All trips payable by instalments; reduced charges available for eligible families.



Data Protection

A copy of the collegiate Data Protection policy is available on the school website and in the main entrance area.



School Policies

All policies are produced by the Governors in full consultation with staff and parents. Pupils contribute to relevant policies via the school council. Policies are displayed in the main entrance. Copies available from the school office.



Parental Volunteers

We warmly welcome volunteers into our school community. All regular volunteers require an enhanced DBS check. If you can offer your time, please contact the school office — your support is greatly valued.