



Newsletter No.5 – Wednesday 19th February 2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well. As we reach the mid-point of this academic year, I want to thank you for your on-going support. Thank you to those who attended the parent meetings with class teachers in the final week before half term. Please take on board all your class teachers' advice and support your child at home with their learning. A little reading each day is so important; enjoying a bed time story and practising number facts can really make a difference to how your child performs in school. Little and often is key!

Enjoy a restful half term break. Kind regards, *Anne-Marie Bell*

Whole School Dates for your Diary

Mon 17 th – Fri 21 st Feb	Half Term Holiday
	Lent Term – Half Term 2
Monday 24 th February	Children return to school
Tuesday 25 th February	OPAL Launch Day
Thursday 27 th February	9am Chaplaincy leading a Celebration of the Word – all welcome
Friday 28 th February	Reception and Year 6 Height and Weight check at 1pm
Wednesday 5 th March	10am KS1 and KS2 attend Ash Wednesday Mass in church
Thursday 6 th March	World Book Day – Come Bedtime Ready (sensible warm PJs)
Thursday 13 th March	Aspens Feed the Family – session 2.
Tuesday 18 th March	Theatre Company visit – Treasure Island
Wednesday 26 th March	Big Lent Walk raising money for CAFOD – weather permitting
Wednesday 2 nd April	2pm Year 3 and 4's Easter Performance – not to be missed!
Thursday 3 rd April	9:30am and 2pm EYFS Easter Bonnet Parade
Friday 4 th April	Final day of Lent term – break up for Easter holiday
	Pentecost Term
Monday 21 st April	Easter Monday – school remains closed (Easter Bank Holiday)
Tuesday 22 nd April	Return to school
Monday 12 th May	Year 6 SATs week

St Mary's School Leadership February – July 2025

I hope you received a letter sent on Arbor Friday evening on 14th February. It explained that I will be supporting Sacred Heart School in Carlton over the next term and a half, following the letter you received from Our Lady of Lourdes Trust. Though days may need to be flexible, I will aim to be as consistent as possible. Ms O'Neill will lead St Mary's on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. I will be at St Mary's on Wednesdays and Thursdays, in the main. We will ensure St Mary's community continues to run smoothly and the children will continue to thrive and be cared for by our wonderful team.

OPAL Launch – Tuesday 25th February

Thanks to everyone's hard work, especially our OPAL team led by Ms O'Neill and Mrs Brady, St Mary's is ready to begin our OPAL lunchtime sessions next week.

Lunchtime play will be very different and the children have lots to learn. There is certain to be much fun to be had in the weeks ahead, especially when we get our Welly storage! Using the field for a greater amount of the year will be brilliant.

Children will be invited to play with equipment as it is introduced gradually and OPAL assemblies

will focus on kindness, safety and rules they will need to follow.



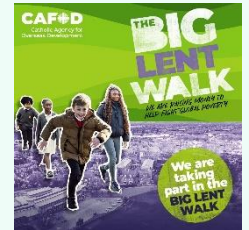
Jubilee 2025 – Pilgrims of Hope

Last half term, we celebrated the start of the Jubilee 2025 and learnt about how we can be Pilgrims of Hope. It is a global initiative marking the celebration of faith, unity, and renewal. For schools, it provides a chance to teach our children more about community, compassion, and the importance of hope in our world. It encourages values like kindness, respect, and working together for a better world. Here are a few dates of events to come:

Thurs 27th February 9am our Heart-to-Heart Chaplaincy team are leading a Celebration of the Word on 'Creation' – one of the Jubilee themes. All are welcome.

Wednesday 26th March is our Big Lent Walk. KS1 children will complete a sponsored walk around school with prayer stations linked to Pilgrims of Hope. KS2 will be making a pilgrimage to Nottingham Cathedral. If the children have a little spare energy, we may have time to explore a little of the Cathedral's Pilgrim Trail.

We will need a few adult helpers for each class in KS2. Please save the date if you can.



National Child Measurement Programme: F2 (Reception) and Year 6 Height and Weight Check

Every year in England, school children in F2/ reception and year 6 have their height and weight checked at school as part of the National Child Measurement Programme.

Height and weight measurements are used to calculate weight status. The information is collected to build a picture of how children are growing to help plan better health and leisure services for families.

The checks are carried out by staff from Public Health Nursing Services, not by school. Please read the information sent to you carefully.



<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/>

What is more important than getting your child to eat their vegetables, to toilet train them, to encourage them to have a love for books, to be safe crossing the road?

Helping your child to navigate their childhood without the need for a phone is one of the most precious gifts you can give to your child. Please take a few moments to visit the link above and learn about the values of a Smartphone Free Childhood.

At St Mary's a significant amount of our children are presenting at school with lower communication and language skills, shorter attention spans and poorer self-regulation skills, all of which can be linked with the use of mobile phone usage.

As parents / carers we open the door to the possibility of addiction, harmful content, cyberbullying. Children do not see the power and impact of such a device. Please make the choice for them and either delay them getting a phone or consider, at a minimum, restricting their use to an hour a day, handing them in before bedtime and enjoy phone-free family time.

St Mary's is joining Instagram

[st_marys_catholic](https://www.instagram.com/st_marys_catholic)



As we start our OPAL journey, we have decided on a more effective way to share school news and the excitement of all we do at St Mary's day-to-day. Instagram seemed the most popular route from the parents we spoke to. We will start posting after half term. Please ensure **polite respectful use** when commenting and ensure ADULTS-only are accessing the app. More information to follow.