



ST MARY'S

CATHOLIC INFANT AND JUNIOR ACADEMIES

Junior Academy Parent Handbook

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' Philippians 4:13



Welcome to the St Mary's Family

Dear St Mary's families,

Our ambition is for every child to fulfil their potential and we celebrate everyone's uniqueness and the gifts and talents they have. Every child is precious, and it is a privilege to play a part in their development. The ambitious ethos of our schools encourages our school family to aim high and live up to our school Christian values as we believe, *'We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.'* *Philippians 4:13.*

All our work with children and families, staff, governors, parishioners and the wider community is influenced by our core values which are: Compassion, Respect and Resilience. Our 2-form entry Academies work together to provide an excellent education for all our pupils in every area of the curriculum, within a caring Catholic community.

Our Infant School caters for children aged 3-7 across our Nursery provision and classes of Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children. Our Junior School caters for children aged 7-11 with two classes in each of the year groups 3, 4, 5 and 6. The children are taught a broad and balanced curriculum by wonderful teachers who set high standards.

We give all our children the opportunity to shine and be proud, having the confidence to have a go at anything and believe that they can succeed. We continue to teach our children to have pride in themselves and work harmoniously with each other. We are proud of our schools and the personal and academic achievements of our children. We hope you can get a sense of our energy, ambition and ethos from our website. If you need any further information our children and staff would love to show you around.

Best wishes

Mrs Samantha Birchall

Executive Head –St Mary's Catholic Academies



Letter from the Chair of Governors

Dear Parents and Carers,

On behalf of the Governing Board I would like to welcome you to St Mary's. Thank you for considering St Mary's Catholic Infant and Junior Academies for your child. I feel very privileged to be part of St Mary's. I have three children who have all attended/still attend the school and I am passionate and committed to improving our school and giving our children the very best. As a parent I know how pivotal the partnership between home and school can be and I'd urge you to take an active role within the St Mary's community. The joint efforts of the teachers, governors and parents will ensure our school is a success and our children excel.

As a Local Academy Council, we are extremely proud of our children and our warm and caring school. All our Governors bring with them a range of different skills. We believe this diverse range of experience enhances the leadership and management of the school. The role of the Local Academy Council is to ensure the schools statutory obligations are met. We review and monitor objectives throughout the year, help the school plan for the future, and make sure the vision for the school is challenging. It is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team to run the school on a day to day basis. It is the role of the Local Academy Council to support, challenge and strengthen this leadership, and to hold the school accountable for the outcomes of all children. Key decisions are taken by the whole Academy Council twice every term. A full list of all Governors and their appointments is provided on the school website. Please do familiarise yourself with these and if you wish to contact anyone directly you can do so via the school office.

I look forward to seeing you all at our next school event. Welcome to St Mary's and thank you once again for choosing our school.

Kindest regards

Vanessa Wells

Chair of Governors

Our Mission Statement

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'

Philippians 4:13



We are very proud of our mission statement, which is at the heart of all that we do. St Mary's Catholic Infant and Junior Academies are secure, friendly and faith-centred communities where we seek to realise the full potential of all our family through the living love of Christ. All our work with children and their families, staff, governors, parishioners and the wider community is influenced by our core values which are:

Compassion

Respect

Resilience

These values are underpinned by Oscar Romero's vision:

'Aspire not to have more, but to be more.'

To be more compassionate.

To be more respectful.

To be more resilient.

We promote these values by our words and deeds, and Catholic doctrine and practice therefore permeates every aspect of our school's activity.

Vision

As we aspire to form an ever-stronger relationship with Christ, we walk hand in hand with Him, striving for excellence in all we do. In doing this, our vision is to deliver outstanding Catholic education for children which is rich in content and has high challenge with low risk. Our vision is to also create a secure and welcoming environment based on Gospel Values where everybody feels valued and is treated with dignity and respect.

This vision is built on the firm belief that God continually guides us and gives us what we need.

"Dear children, our hands are a symbol for our hearts and only open, generous hearts can change the world."

Pope Francis

Aims

Here, at St Mary's Catholic Infant and Junior Academies, we will:

- Create a community that treats others the way we want to be treated (Matthew 7:12)
- Put Christ and our children at the heart of all we do
- Provide a warm welcome to all
- Build a happy, safe school filled with love and pride where children are excited to arrive and learn each day
- Create and develop a curriculum which encourages children to say, "I can" rather than, "I can't" (*'Together we can do great things.'* St Teresa)
- Foster a lifelong love of learning to ensure all children are given the opportunity to achieve their God-given potential
- Ensure every child has the opportunity to become a thinker, leader, organiser, communicator, explorer, creator, inventor, performer and artist.
- Build a worshipping community that nurtures and supports each child in their journey of faith.

'Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you. Do not be afraid to dream of great things.'

Pope Francis

Our Catholic Life

Our Academies are secure, friendly and faith-centred communities. United in our faith in Jesus, our school families will love, nurture and inspire every child to reach their full potential. All our work with children and their families, staff, governors, parishioners and the wider community is influenced by Gospel values.

Religious Education

As a Catholic school, Religious Education and Prayer and Liturgy are an integral part of the everyday life of the school. We use the 'Come and See' programme, recommended by the Liverpool Archdiocese.

Mass

Throughout the school year we celebrate a number of Masses together as the family of St Mary's. Families are also invited to celebrate Mass with the Church for special Family Masses on a Sunday.

Prayer and Liturgy

We understand worship to be a special act or occasion whose purpose is to show reverence to God. Prayer and Liturgy may involve all members of the school or a class coming together and participating in an act of worship. All children take part in daily prayer and liturgy with their classes.

We celebrate the Gospel and the word of the Lord in Prayer and Liturgy as a school family every Monday. Parents will be invited into school to celebrate with the class to celebrate at least once a year at the end of a topic.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE)

Our School's mission embraces the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and social development of children and young people, and through an agreed approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) using the Archdiocesan recommended resource 'Journey In Love' 2020 we believe that we can promote the development of the whole child, so that children can grow in virtue, wisdom and stature, understanding both the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing spiritually, as well as moral aspects of relationships within a context of a Christian vision for the purpose of life. The other aspects of the Statutory curriculum intent will be met by TEN:TEN; Life to the full.

Working together and celebrating success

As a parent, you are your child's first educator and all the experiences your child has acquired before coming into school are valued. We believe in working as a partnership with you to continue building on those experiences.

The Junior School Day

Arriving at School. The school opens at 8:45am. The bell will sound and the children come into school through their designated entrances and go straight to class. Please note children remain the responsibility of parents until the bell sounds and the doors open. Children should not play on the playground or use the equipment. Staff are available on the doors to liaise with parents who may wish to share home to school information. They then share this with the child's class teacher.

Timetable

8:45am	Junior doors open
9:05am	Registration and start of the day
10:40 – 10:55am	Morning break
12:15 – 1:15pm	Lunchtime
3:30pm	Junior school day ends

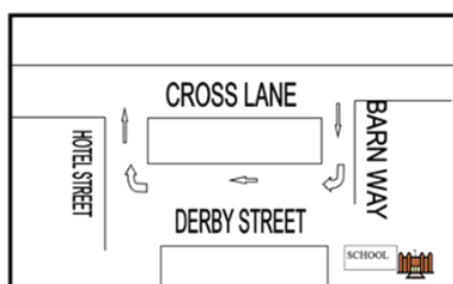
If you arrive after the doors close, please take your child to the School Office and sign them in using the Inventory system. This is essential so we know your child has arrived safely at school. At the end of the school day, the school gates open to parents at 3.25pm. Children should be collected from their own classroom doors at 3.30pm. For safeguarding reasons, the children do not travel between classrooms at the end of the school day. Teachers will release the children to parents or a responsible adult. If you are running late, please call the school office so we can inform your child's class teacher. Equally, if another adult is collecting your child, please inform the school office or your class teacher. Children who have not been collected are taken to the reception area where they will be looked after by a member of staff. Parents will be called and asked for expected arrival time.

Children Walking Home Alone

Children in Year 5 and 6 may walk home alone from school, however parental permission is required. Please complete the walk home letter available from the office.

Parking

There is no allocated parking around school and as a result the roads around school can get very congested. Please be aware that blocking the roads outside school can be very dangerous. Parking over driveways and on pavements upsets our neighbours and other parents. In Barn Way, a voluntary one-way system is in place to help with the flow of traffic.



School Rules

School rules are kept to an essential minimum and reinforce what we stand for, our values. Adults in school will demonstrate these rules and ensure all children in school follow them. Our rules have been developed with our children. They are all designed to promote good learning, develop courtesy, good manners and mutual respect.

Be safe, Be responsible, Be respectful

	In class	Outside of class
Be safe	If you need help or are worried, tell someone. Be in the right place at the right time (punctual).	Share problems with an adult. Be aware of others in the playground.
Be responsible	Take care of the school and each other.	Take care of our school and our equipment. Take turns and share.
Be respectful	Respect one another. Use your manners and kind words. Listen when others are talking.	Be kind and show respect for each other. Always have good manners.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

St Mary's Catholic Junior Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare, both physical and emotional, of every pupil both inside and outside of the school premises. We implement a whole-school preventative approach to managing safeguarding concerns, ensuring that the wellbeing of pupils is at the forefront of all action taken. We follow a clear and consistent framework for delivering this promise, in line with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.

Attendance Matters

Attendance

We believe in promoting good attendance to develop positive attitudes towards school and learning. Research has proven there is a strong link between attendance and attainment. Benefits of good attendance and punctuality are:

- Builds confidence
- Promotes concentration
- Improved social skills and friendship groups
- Structured routines
- Academic achievement



We will endeavour to support pupils and families to resolve issues that prevent regular school attendance. School doors open 8.45am. Registers are taken at 9.05am. Registration closes at 9.30am. If a child arrives after the register has been taken, he / she must report to the school office and will be marked in as 'Late'. Arrival after 9.30am is recorded as an unauthorised late mark. It is important your child arrives at school on time. Being a 'few' minutes late can cause an impact on your child's learning and well-being. If a child arrives at school 15 minutes late each day they lose almost 2 weeks of education a year!

Absence

When a child is absent, parents need to contact the school before 9.15am informing the school of the reason for absence.

As part of our Safeguarding Procedures, the school will contact the parent or carer if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence. This may include a home visit by our Education Welfare Officer.

Medical Appointments

- a) A child coming into school late from a medical appointment is recorded as 'M' in the register which is classed as an authorised absence from school.
- b) Where possible, medical appointments should be arranged outside school hours. Pupils should attend school before and after appointments.
- c) If possible a medical appointment card/ letters by the doctors/ dentist/hospital should be shared with school.

Holidays

Parents planning to take children out of school in term time are required to complete a Leave of Absence Form, which needs to be submitted in advance to the Headteacher. The request is at the Headteacher's discretion and will only be granted in genuinely exceptional circumstances. Please note that schools are no longer allowed to authorise requests for holidays.

Uniform & Belongings

Uniform is worn at St Mary's to develop a sense of pride in being part of the St Mary's family. School uniform is available to order online from Touchline: www.touchline-embroidery.net/schoolshops.

Please choose the Junior school on the Touchline website. Alternatively, you can buy sweatshirts, cardigans and other uniform items from Whittakers and JayMax shops in St Helens.

All major supermarkets sell un-logoed school uniform and PE kits at a very reasonable price. Children will be expected to come into school wearing their PE kit.

It is essential that the children's belongings are clearly **named** for identification to avoid them getting lost.

Girls Uniform	Boys Uniform
White shirt Royal blue cardigan with or without school logo Grey skirt pinafore or trousers Blue & white gingham or candy stripe dress (Summer) White or grey socks or grey tights Sensible black shoes (no boots or trainers) P.E Kit white top with school logo or plain white T shirt blue shorts (no logo) pumps/trainers	White shirt Royal blue v neck sweatshirt with or without school logo Grey trousers / shorts Grey or black socks Sensible black shoes (no boots or trainers) P.E Kit white top with school logo or plain white T shirt blue shorts (no logo) pumps/trainers



P.E. bags, school book bags and water bottles are available to pick up at the school office but should be ordered and paid for using the schools online payment system.

Labels

Please ensure that your child's name is on **all** items of their clothing. It is often useful to have a recognisable key ring on their book bag and a prominent sticker on their water bottle, as well as their name. This will help them to recognise their belongings and help them to become as independent as possible.

Book Bags

School book bags are available to purchase at the school office. Character bags and back packs often do not fit letters in and therefore letters can become damaged or misplaced.

Hairstyles & Jewellery

All long hair must be tied back (from shoulder length). We do not allow any 'extreme hairstyles,' including tramlines, mohicans or partly shaved styles or hair that is dyed. If your child's hairstyle is unacceptable for school, you will be invited into school to discuss it. Jewellery is not allowed to be worn in school other than a watch. Smart watches are not allowed. Earrings are NOT to be worn due to health and safety reasons.

Personal Belongings

All personal belongings, such as coats, should be named to make it easier to return them to their owner. Only book bags are permitted in school. We ask that children do not bring backpacks due to storage space.

Stationery

All stationery is provided at school therefore there is no need to buy anything or for the children to bring in their own filled pencil cases.

Mobile Phones

Children in Year 5 and Year 6 may make their own way to/from school and therefore may need to be able to communicate with parents. In this circumstance, we will allow the children to bring a mobile phone to school.

The phone must be switched off as the children enter the school grounds.

Phones must be handed to the class teacher in the morning, these are then stored at the school office and taken back to the class at the end of the day ready for dismissal.

Phones must only be switched back on as children leave the grounds.

School Meals and Healthy Eating

School Lunches

All children at the Infant School are entitled to Universal Free School Meals.

All meals are prepared daily by our School Cook and her team at the Junior site. The menu is available from the School Office if you need a copy. The children make their selections daily during morning registration.

If your child prefers to bring a packed lunch please ensure it is healthy and nutritious. Please note that fizzy drinks, sweets or products containing nuts are not permitted in packed lunches. We are a nut free school due to a number of our children having allergies.

If your child has any food allergies please inform the office and the class teacher as soon as possible.

Free School Meals

Children are entitled to receive Free School Meals if their parents or carers are in receipt of certain benefits i.e. elements of Universal Credit. Please check your eligibility and apply online at <https://www.cloudforedu.org.uk/ofsm/sims>

Registering for free school meals could raise an extra £1,455 for school, to fund valuable support such as extra tuition, additional teaching staff or after school activities. This additional money is available from central government for every child whose parent is receiving a certain benefit.

Snacks & Water

We encourage children to eat healthy snacks at morning break. They are welcome to bring in a piece of fruit or a snack of vegetables from home. Snacks such as crisps, chocolate and cereal bars are not permitted at this time.

Children are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school. We ask that these are sports-cap type to prevent spills and leakages.



Communications

At St Mary's we value and appreciate your support. We understand that communication with parents is an essential part of a good home school partnership. It is important that we have up-to-date contact information for all children and parents. Please inform the school office of any changes to your address, email, landline or mobile telephone numbers. Please also inform us of any changes to your child's medical history or dietary requirements. Communication will be through Arbor and the school office.

Schoolmoney (Arbor)

We currently use an online money system called Schoolmoney for parents to make online payments for school meals, trips, clubs and the school shop. Login details and passwords will be sent out to parents once your child has started School in September. *(Please note this will change to Arbor once change over is completed, information will be provided)*

Arbor communications

To aid effective communications between school and home, our school subscribes to an email and text messaging service through Arbor. We will use this service in a variety of ways e.g. to issue newsletters, reminders and information about clubs. Consent to use parent data to communicate in this way is required under the latest General Data Protection Regulations

School Newsletter (Sway)

A weekly newsletter is produced every Friday containing a round-up of news for the week. The newsletter is emailed out each week through Arbor. Paper copies are available from School Office reception area upon request.

Website

Please visit our website regularly which is updated often. There is a calendar with the key school dates as well as important news and useful information including our school policies.

Parent Consultation Meetings

Parent consultation meetings are held in the Autumn and at the end of Spring term. Meetings are an important opportunity to discuss your child's progress and share information.

School Reports

Annual school reports are sent home in the summer term and they will include progress to date together with targets for future progression.

Day to Day Communication

Staff are available each morning to take messages for the Class Teacher. If you have any concerns or worries please do not hesitate to speak to the class teacher at the end of the school day or contact the School Office to make an appointment.

Teaching & Learning

Curriculum

Our curriculum provides the children of St Mary's with an introduction to the essential knowledge they need to be educated citizens. It introduces them to the best that has been thought and said, and helps engender an appreciation of human creativity and achievement.

As with all aspects of school life, our curriculum is underpinned by our new Mission Statement; *'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'* Philippians 4:13 and also our core school values of Respect, Resilience and Compassion.

Homework

School has a homework policy which outlines the types of homework we set. As well as reading, we focus on spelling, maths and English activities that reinforce learning that has been covered throughout the week. The children also get opportunities to complete home learning projects at different times throughout the year.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Year 3 & 4)	Reading. Children are to read 3 times a week at home and parents/carers are asked to sign their diary at least once a week. Discussion about what they are reading and some prediction activities are encouraged. The children cannot read enough! Weekly Book Bingo home activities also support your child's reading. Times Table Rockstars Activities will be set on a weekly basis.
Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5 & 6)	Reading. Children are to read 3 times a week at home and parents/carers are asked to sign their diary at least once a week. Weekly Book Bingo home activities also support your child's reading. Times Table Rockstars to enhance rapid recall of multiplication tables facts. CGP Homework Books are used in Y5 and Y6 in both Maths and English. SATS past papers are also used from Spring Term in Year 6

Accelerated Reader

Our reading scheme is a programme called 'Accelerated Reader'. This is a computer program that helps staff manage and monitor children's independent reading practice. Your child picks a book at their own level and reads it at their own pace. When finished, your child takes a short quiz on the computer. (Passing the quiz is an indication that your child understood what was read.) Accelerated Reader gives children and staff feedback based on the quiz results, which the teacher then uses to help your child set goals and direct ongoing reading practice. Children using Accelerated Reader choose their own books to read, rather than having one assigned to them. This makes reading a much more enjoyable experience as they can choose books that are interesting to them. Most of the books in our library are labelled with a number so that all children can select a book that is suitable for them.

Learning outside the Classroom

Our beautiful Junior site woodland provides the ideal opportunity for outdoor learning throughout the seasons and in all weathers.

Activities are diverse and numerous, but it should be remembered that we are trying to create independent learners who are inspired to try out their own ideas and explore their own interests. Activities may include, shelter building, fire lighting, tool use, studying wildlife, team games, cooking on an open fire, rope & string work, woodland & traditional crafts, developing stories & drama and PE.

Physical Activity

Children participate in a minimum of 2 hours P.E. curriculum per week this usually includes an indoor and outdoor session. In addition to this, children participate in the Daily Mile. Throughout the year they also take part in a number of intra and inter competitions. We have strong community links with local sports clubs which allows us to have access to facilities and taster sessions.

Educational Trips & Visits

As part of our commitment to learning outside the classroom, each class will usually take part in two or three trips during the academic year. These trips may be in the local area, a zoo, a museum or theatre. All will be linked to the curriculum. If a cost is involved, you will be asked for a voluntary donation in line with School's Charging and Remission policy.

Special Assemblies

Celebration assembly is held each week and during this assembly we share and celebrate the children's successes and achievements both in and outside school as a whole school family. Throughout the year, parents are invited to come and celebrate many special occasions: their child's RE work at class Prayer and Liturgy, fundraising events, prize giving award ceremonies and many more.

Pupil Leadership

During the children's time at the Junior school there are many exciting opportunities to participate in pupil leadership. This includes our School Council, our Live Simply club, PE & Sport Ambassadors, and our Junior Safeguarding team.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

We run a programme of extra-curricular clubs throughout the academic year. Clubs are run by staff. These run either before school or after school.

Breakfast and After-school Provision

'The Foxes Out of School club' run a breakfast and after-school club on-site at the Infant School. Breakfast club is open from 7:30am and the after school is available until 6pm Monday to Friday. This is available to children from for Nursery through to Year 6. Junior children are collected and walked over to the Infant School

Please contact kathryn@littlefoxeschildcare.co.uk for any enquiries.

School Community

St Mary's Catholic Infant and Juniors Academies PTFA

The PTFA has a very active committee that organises social and fundraising events. All parents are automatically members and are eligible to serve on the committee. An annual general meeting is held every year in October to report on their work and to seek new members for the committee. We are very appreciative of all our volunteers and the fantastic work they do.

Over the years the PTFA has provided many extras for the children, including outdoor play equipment, new projectors, smartboards for the classrooms, iPads and many books and resources that benefit all the children. We hope all parents will be interested in lending their support to fundraising events and activities.



CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions that haven't been answered in this booklet, you can contact us the following ways. We look forward to hearing from you.



01744 678357



info@smi.allsaintsmat.org and info@smj.allsaintsmat.org



www.federationofstmarys.co.uk