



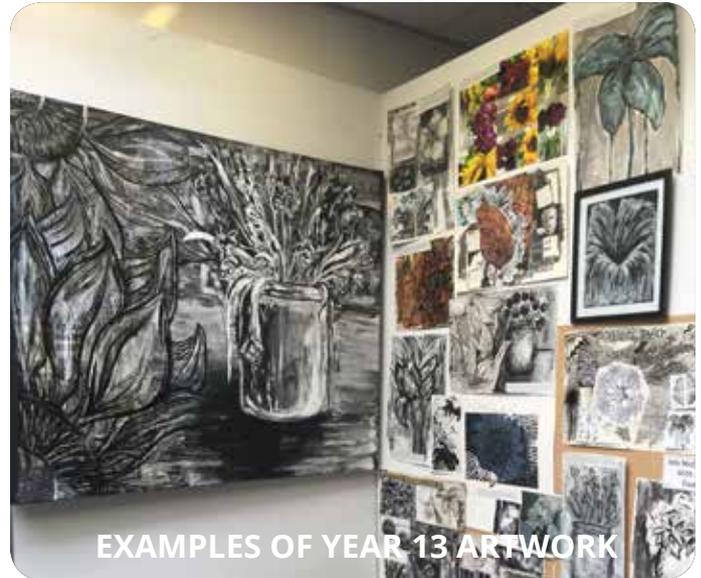
STAR TENNIS-PLAYER EARNS INTERNATIONAL MEDAL SUCCESS

The XXI World Transplant Games – involving representatives from fifty-two countries – took place between 25 June and 2 July in Málaga, Spain. I felt very proud not only to compete in the tennis tournament, but also to be Team GB's flag-bearer during the opening ceremony.

The day of my competition was hot and windy, and these conditions made it very difficult to control the ball. Nevertheless, I managed to qualify for the final against a South African boy. Our match was particularly tight with plenty of rallies for the crowd to enjoy, but my opponent proved to be too strong for me. Even so, I still cannot believe, after everything that I have endured, that I won a silver medal and helped Team GB to the top of the overall table.

In summary, I had a fantastic time making friends with some inspirational people from around the world. I now look forward to competing in next year's games in Newcastle/Gateshead.

Joseph Hunsley (Year 8)



EXAMPLES OF YEAR 13 ARTWORK



YEAR 8 RETREAT AT THE YOUTH VILLAGE



STUDENTS ON A FRENCH EXCHANGE VISIT

HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

I am delighted to introduce the Summer 2017 Newsletter which reports on a wide range of activities and events in which students have been involved over the last term. As ever, it is wonderful to see our students making the most of their God-given gifts and talents in so many different ways. My thanks go to all staff and volunteers who have worked so well with our students to provide them with these excellent opportunities.

I am delighted to share with you the news that St Mary's has just been designated as a National Teaching School by the Government. This recognises the excellent standards and achievements of the school in recent years. Teaching Schools are excellent schools that lead the training of new teachers for the teaching profession, lead school improvement across the country and develop future leaders for schools. We will give you more information about our work as a Teaching School in the Autumn Term.

I wish everyone a wonderful summer break. To all parents, carers and friends of St Mary's, thank you very much for your continued support which is greatly appreciated by staff and governors.

J Foster
Headteacher

National Teaching School
designated by



National College for
Teaching & Leadership

HPE CodeWars 2017

For the second year running, St Mary's has won the prestigious HPE CodeWars competition. The contest was held at the Silverlink headquarters of Hewlett Packard Enterprise. It involved thirty teams from local schools who battled to be the top young computer programmers in the region.

The competition went right down to the wire with everyone given three hours to solve as many programming challenges as possible. In the end, the St Mary's team of Mark Broughton, Daniel Sorensen and David Willson narrowly pipped a strong Heaton Manor team to receive the top prize from the MP for Tynemouth, Alan Campbell.

Mr Holland



TRANSITION TO THE SIXTH FORM

The Sixth Form pastoral team welcomed our prospective Year 12 students for a day in July. We spent the time giving them a head-start by making sure that they understood what is expected of them from September and by offering them the chance to speak to teachers of their chosen subjects. The students also received some work to complete over the summer to make sure that they hit the ground running when the new academic year begins.

Mrs McEwan

A FESTIVAL OF RUGBY

More than forty students from Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 took part in the RFU Girls Rugby Festival. This was held in Tynemouth at the end of June. All five teams from St Mary's competed well and played some excellent rugby. In particular, the top teams from Years 7 and 9 were outstanding. They both won five of their six games and finished the competition undefeated. There were also some tremendous individual performances from members of all the teams and this bodes very well for next year.



Mr Hook and Mr Maughan

THE LIBRARY: OF BOOKS AND BOARDS

The Library has grown this year with the addition of several hundred titles and has continued to be a popular and busy place. Since September, the facility has attracted over 46,000 individual visitors and has processed the loan of approximately 5,000 books. Plans are already in place for the new intake of students and, before they arrive in September, the Library will add many more new books to the catalogue.

On the chess-scene, this has been another exciting and competitive year with the Library once again offering students the chance to take part in the Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge. The first, school-based stage of the competition attracted over forty competitors – all of them very keen to grab a share of the £20,000 prize fund – and ran from January to March.

After seven rounds of matches, twenty-six students – led for the third year in a row by Mark Broughton (Year 11) – qualified for the regional finals at the Royal Grammar School, Newcastle in May. By the end of this stage, Mark and eight other students – Daniel Gazerani-Lopez (Year 7), Timon Heidenreich (Year 8), Jonathan Jativa-Calle (Year 7), Nick Lin (Year 7), Partheev Manoj (Year 7), Abbas Mohammed (Year 8), Mrugaya Mulay (Year 10) and Dylan Shone (Year 9) – had scored enough points to make it to the Northern Gigafinal in July. Two of the qualifiers, Partheev and Nick, are pictured proudly displaying their medals in the photograph to the right.

To maintain students' interest and skills in chess, a separate knockout competition started in May. At the time of going to press, only three of the more than forty competitors remain in the tournament. Lucas Grillo (Year 10), Mrugaya Mulay and Ciaran MacDonald (Year 7) are currently playing a series of play-off matches to determine the final placings.

Dr Richardson



A FAREWELL TO YEAR 13

The time came earlier this term – admittedly, far too soon – to say goodbye to our amazing Year 13s. We marked this momentous occasion with a Leavers' Liturgy, speeches from tutors, and a buffet. It was a fantastic (albeit emotional) day. A further celebration came early in July with the traditional prom.

The students are now preparing to head off to some fantastic destinations, from apprenticeships at BT and Nestlé to a wide variety of courses at a range of universities. Among the latter, four students – a record number for this school – have received offers of places at Oxford or Cambridge: Jack Hughes (Oxford), Neil Kotre (Oxford), Jonas Keavney (Cambridge) and Max Mak (Oxford).



This year-group has been truly exceptional in all sorts of ways. They will always hold a very special place in my heart. In closing, here are some words of advice from a butterfly: "Let go of the past, and trust the future; embrace change, and come out of the cocoon; unfurl your wings, and dare to get off the ground; ride the breezes, and savour the flowers; put on your brightest colours, and let your beauty show."

Mrs McEwan

VEX ROBOTICS COMPETITION SUCCESS



Members of the school's Robotics Club recently attended a VEX competition day at The Core in Newcastle University's Science Central. The aim of the event was to test students' individual skills in a range of challenges. They also competed against other local schools using a robot that they had designed and manufactured themselves.

St Mary's representatives – Louis Clayton, Timon Heidenreich and Sam Sorensen – performed extremely well. Sam won the time trial, navigating his robot around the track in an impressive 48 seconds, and Louis won the cone-stacking competition. In the overall contest, St Mary's finished joint-second. The students should be extremely proud of their achievements, both individually and as a team, and we wish them success in the regional competition.

Mrs Harper

Transition morning for new Year 7 students

At the end of June, the SEN Department ran a transition morning for incoming Year 7 students. When the children arrived at St Mary's, they each designed a label displaying their own name so that everyone could communicate easily with each other. The children were then taken on a tour around the school. Back at the Inclusion Suite, everyone played confidence-building games and worked really well together.

The transition morning is important because it helps new students to adjust to the move to a secondary school. At the end of the visit, all the children said that they had really enjoyed the experience and felt excited about coming to St Mary's in September.

Mrs Connolly



FRENCH EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

In March and April, students from Years 9 and 10 took part in a French exchange programme with our link-school, Saint Laurent, which is based to the east of Paris. This was the first time that St Mary's students had taken part in an exchange programme and it really was a huge success.

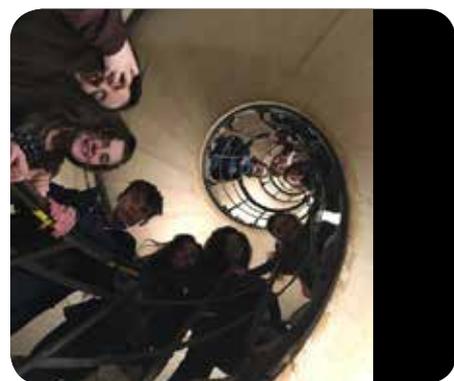
Our students were wonderful ambassadors for the school when they went over to France. They each spent eight days living as part of a French household and fully immersed themselves into the lives of their host families. Whilst in France, the students spent two days attending lessons at Saint Laurent and enjoyed a two-day school excursion. Consequently, they gained a real insight into the local life and made great leaps forward in their ability to speak French confidently.

Five weeks later, the French students visited Newcastle to stay with our students. During

their visit, our guests enjoyed day-trips to Northumberland and Edinburgh, and they spent two days at St Mary's. They even experienced a cèilidh; this special event was held in the school one evening.

It was wonderful to witness two groups of students integrating so well and establishing friendships that will last many years. Our students have already learnt so much about the French language and culture, and their learning will continue to develop in the future because of the exchange programme.

Miss Gardiner





THREE TRIPS TO THE THEATRE

We have been very busy this term in the Performing Arts Department, taking students out of school to experience live productions at the Theatre Royal in Newcastle.

Our theatre-going season began with an evening performance of *Blood Brothers*. The story of Mickey and Edward Johnstone gripped the students from Years 10, 11 and 12, and the reviews that they wrote afterwards clearly showed their enjoyment of the event.

The next trip, which marked the end of another successful year in the Key Stage 3 Drama Club, treated students to the amazing *Running Wild*. Based on the true

story of a young girl saved by an elephant when a tsunami hit Indonesia in December 2004, this production – created by the people behind *War Horse* – wowed everyone with its amazing puppetry.

The final outing allowed a group of Year 10s to see the stunning *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. Hailed as one of the cleverest visual stage-productions ever, this did not disappoint and its use of special effects opened the students' eyes to the endless possibilities of theatre. This production has certainly influenced their work back at school.

Miss Stearman

THE DIANA AWARD

The school is delighted to announce that Emma Young has been chosen to receive a Diana Award – named after Diana, Princess of Wales – which is awarded to courageous, caring and compassionate young people who transform the lives of others. Emma will feature in a national press release and will receive her award soon in an official ceremony.

Mrs McEwan

STUDENTS SHOWCASE THEIR TALENTS

At the end of June, a number of students took part in *The Path Not Taken*. This showcase offered a vibrant mix of dance performances in a range of styles. Everyone involved in the event worked incredibly hard to choreograph movements, learn professional repertoires, and perform in solo, duet and group performances.

The talent that we have at St Mary's is always impressive, and all the students brought enormous creativity and positive energy to every rehearsal for this show. Blessing Mpofo of Year 10 deserves a particular word of thanks. During his own time, he created powerful and engaging visual effects, and seamlessly united the different acts in a slick and original way.

As always, all the students did themselves proud and I thought that their performances were fantastic.

Miss Plass

ST MARY'S AND THE NEWCASTLE YOUTH COUNCIL

Earlier this term, Abigail Charlton, Pawan Martin and I travelled to Kent to take part – as members of the Newcastle Youth Council – in a national convention. Over the course of a weekend, we had the responsibility of running a fictional town, Forgeford. This involved planning how to cope with budget-cuts and the closure of public services. The event also allowed us to speak to other councillors from across the UK and gain some useful information to inform our work in Newcastle.

On a separate note, all three of us also took part in the recent general election count. Pawan and I even carried the last ballot box and helped Newcastle to be the first city to declare a result. We met all the candidates including Chi Onwurah, the successful Labour candidate for Newcastle Central.

John Carr (Year 9)



SOLAR-POWERED TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGE

Earlier this year, St Mary's welcomed representatives from the Smallpiece Trust which aims to inspire young students to consider STEM-based careers. The event involved sixty Year 9s who, after learning more about energy transfers, were set the challenge of creating solar-powered vehicles. They then had to test their carts in a series of distance-related tasks. Finally, everyone took part in an all-out drag race with the winner being the first to reach the finishing-line. This combination of engineering and fun proved to be popular and more than one student reported that they were considering a career in science and technology.

Mr Elliott

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

In April, six high-flying Year 9 students took part in the Leading Edge Scientific Debate Workshop at Newcastle University. John Carr, James Keller, Gabriella Nagy, Jessica Stephenson, Jodie Summersby and Georgia Wiseman represented St Mary's at an event that saw students from many schools in Newcastle meeting to discuss controversial topics in science.

The debates ranged from the development of genetically modified crops to the use of animals for cosmetic and medical testing. Over the afternoon, the students grew in confidence and conveyed their ideas eloquently. They were also very keen to continue the discussions back at school.

Miss Winckle

A WEEK ON A WELSH FARM



Once again, a group of Year 7 students – thirty-seven this time – have enjoyed a visit to the picturesque Pembrokeshire coast in Wales.

As part of the 'Farms for City Children' initiative, the students swapped their usual classroom routines to spend a week living and working on Treginnis Farm, which is the western-most farm in Great Britain. This was an opportunity for everyone to learn how a commercial farm operates and to experience life in the countryside.

Each morning started with an early wake-up call and the Year 7s had to be ready for work by 7.30 prompt. Morning feeding took place first, with the students having to feed and water the various animals before they could enjoy their

own breakfast. Daily life on the farm also included mucking-out a range of livestock and milking the goats as well as tending to the garden and planting vegetables for future school trips. The other chores ranged from chopping wood and cleaning-out stables to preparing the food for all the meals.

Although the visit took place after lambing season, the students were fortunate enough to meet and bottle-feed some new baby goats. They also welcomed two calves into the world and were the first people to take care of them.



However, the visit was not all about work and the Year 7s had plenty of time for sight-seeing. During their stay, they visited St David's twelfth-century cathedral, walked around parts of the Pembrokeshire coastline, and saw the many beaches and bays that are dotted around the area. The students were also able to take a boat-trip to Ramsey Island where they explored the caves and even caught sight of a porpoise.

Miss Jackson

STUDENTS HELP OUT AT THE HOPPINGS SCHOOL

A group of Year 12 students recently volunteered to support children attending the Hoppings School. This ran for two weeks in June when the travelling fair came to Newcastle. The sixth-formers helped to ensure that the youngsters continued their studies by offering a selection of activities linked to art, sport and dance.

This experience gave the Year 12s an insight into the life of travelling families whilst allowing them to develop a wide range of valuable skills. Every year, many of our students apply for university courses in teaching, nursing and child development; supporting the Hoppings School is great preparation for their applications.

Ms Mullan



SPANISH RESTAURANT VISIT

As part of the Year 8 scheme of work for Spanish, students study a module in which they learn about different foods and drinks from Spain. In order for them to experience these dishes first-hand, we organise an annual trip to El Coto, a local Spanish restaurant.

Almost the entire year-group enjoyed this enriching cultural experience over the course of two afternoons earlier this year. Students sampled traditional Spanish cuisine including the very popular paella, chorizo and calamares. They also used their language skills to speak in Spanish to the waiters whilst enjoying the flamenco rhythms.

Judging by the feedback that staff and students gave, the visits were a huge success.

Mrs Connolly



OUTSTANDING YOUNG PHYSICISTS WIN AWARDS

Northumbria University and The Ogden Trust recently recognised two outstanding young physicists from St Mary's at an official ceremony in Newcastle. For their academic performance, effort and attitude in Physics, Lucy Hobbs (Year 10) and Shafiat Dewan (Year 12) each received certificates and book tokens. They are also both now eligible for support from the university's Alumni Association.

Dr Wood

MARY'S MERCY

DIOCESAN SUMMER FESTIVAL

The recent annual Diocesan Summer Festival – also known as God Camp – took 'Violence of Love' as its theme. This was inspired by the words of the Archbishop of San Salvador, Óscar Romero, who was assassinated in 1980: "The violence we preach is not the violence of the sword, the violence of hatred. It is the violence of love, of brotherhood – the violence that wills to beat weapons into sickles for work."

On arriving at the Emmaus Village, the students pitched their tents before they spent the first night learning some new songs. The next day involved listening to some inspirational speakers. One of these was Guvna B, an urban contemporary gospel rap artist and composer. In the evening, Bishop Seamus Cunningham led a very moving mass for everyone. The final main event, a 'dance off' between the various schools, took place on the second evening and proved to be an excellent way of bringing the festival to a close.

Although the weather was inclement and forced everyone to abandon their tents on the second night, spirits were not dampened. Indeed, everyone had a great time and we look forward to attending the event next year.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD MASS

In May, Bishop Seamus Cunningham led the annual Good Shepherd Mass at St Mary's Cathedral in Newcastle. This event celebrated all the tremendous fundraising for St Cuthbert's Care that has taken place in local primary and secondary schools this year. The service – which was also attended by four Year 7 students from this school – brought everyone together under the common purpose of putting faith into action.

THE END-OF-YEAR MASS

The theme for the final mass of the year was 'Ask, Seek and Knock'. During the service, we reflected on how to ask God for help, how to seek and find Him in our lives, and how to take that initial step to knock on His door without fear. The mass involved testimonies from students on how they have found God and how they have been supported by their faith.

In preparation for this event, each student took part in three workshops. The first workshop was spent in quiet reflection; the second allowed students to make keyrings that reflected the skills and qualities that they have developed this year; and the final session was devoted to making bunting for the end-of-year mass.

FLAME 2017

Earlier this year, twenty students from Years 10 and 12 travelled to Wembley Arena for Flame 2017. The theme of this year's event – taken from a Matt Redman song of the same name – was '10,000 Reasons' and reflected the organisers' aim to attract that number of attendees.

The meeting began with some reflection on the story of a boat that had brought refugees across treacherous waters to what they hoped would be a better life. There then followed talks by a number of guest-speakers. Cardinal Vincent Nichols unpacked the meaning of the event's theme; Cardinal Charles Bo spoke of his experiences in Myanmar and recited a poem called 'It Depends Whose Hands It's In'; and Father Augusto Zampini Davies talked about his life as a lawyer and his subsequent calling to the priesthood.

Following the talks, Rise Theatre performed a play that related the stories of refugees who had fled from terror and Matt Redman then led everyone in worship by singing '10,000 Reasons'. Finally, the whole of Wembley Arena fell into silent prayer as Flame 2017 ended with Eucharistic adoration.

CELEBRATING LENT IN SCHOOL

The start of Lent was marked with an Ash Wednesday service for the whole school. Students received ashes as a symbol of their personal Lenten commitment. They were also asked to think about how they could spend Lent helping others to deepen their personal relationship with God. The Young CAFOD Leaders from Year 10 led the service. They also distributed the ashes in an act that was a wonderful witness of faith on their part.

Lenten liturgies were held in the last week before the Easter break. These services provided an opportunity for everyone to explore the wounds of Christ and his suffering. A crown of thorns, three nails and a white garment were used to dress a large wooden cross. We then focused in turn on Jesus' heart, hands, head and feet through drama and other activities. For example, the students used their own hands to tie simple ribbon-bows and place these in a basket at the foot of the cross. All the ribbons were later used to create an altar-cloth for our Holy Thursday service. At the end of every liturgy, each student received a small plastic egg containing a chocolate treat and a piece of scripture.

The term ended on Holy Thursday with a service that explored the symbolism of the final meal that Jesus shared with his friends. The choir also sang a beautiful song called 'Bread of Life' and twenty Year 7 students accompanied the singers using sign language.



ST MARY'S LIFE GROUP

Life Group brings students together once a fortnight during term-time – at 12.30 on Tuesday in Week 'A' – to talk about things that are going on in their lives. We play games suggested by members and then two or three people conduct an assembly. There then follows some discussion of an issue that is raised before we finish by eating some biscuits.

In Life Group, we have done many things outside the Chapel or G21. For instance, we organised an assembly and helped raise some money for charity at Easter. In doing these things, we have touched other people's lives.

I think that Life Group is great. Someone who came said that it is a good place to make friends. Another person commented that it is a place to relax and escape any pressures. For me, Life Group is enjoyable and I like helping others through our charity work.

Jacob Nelson (Year 7)

Wherever you are in life, you matter and you have a purpose. We come together in Life Group to help each other become the people that God has created us to be. Our journey has a next step and we will help one another to find it. It could start with serving, finding God's vision for your life, giving, or joining us regularly. You do not have to take the next step alone. With a strong community of friends, you can laugh, grow, and serve with people who genuinely care about you.

Life Group is a place where you can love and grow with others. It shows us that many other people go through the same struggles as we do, and we do not have to go through trials alone. You can be real with them and share some of the struggles that you are going through while being there for other people.

We are passionate about serving people in and outside our community and demonstrating God's love. We explore and share new ideas. Life group is definitely the place to be.

Mrs Ifeajuna

LEGO CLUB OUTING

In May, St Mary's Lego Club enjoyed a visit to the Lego Exhibition at Woodhorn Colliery. The key attraction was a display of dinosaurs that allowed the students to learn about the Mesozoic Era. After the guided visit, they then had the opportunity to build their own dinosaur theme park using only Lego bricks.

Once the team had decided on the main features of their design, they set to the task with enthusiasm. Callum Histed created a monorail and electric fence; Logan Richardson produced a surveillance tower and security system; Marco Sardone created a heliport and helicopter; and Alex Hawes assembled a modern light aircraft. Thomas Nicholson was responsible for making a magnificent entrance to the park, Jennifer Freeman designed a bespoke souvenir shop, and Ethan Wadsworth and Freddie Marshall built the dangerous dinosaurs.

After successfully completing the project, everyone enjoyed a picnic before ending an interesting day out with a visit to the Woodhorn Colliery Museum.

Mrs Ribera-Fumaz

ART AT ST MARY'S

The work produced by GCSE and A-Level Art, DT and Photography candidates is currently on display in an end-of-year exhibition at St Mary's. This show opened in mid-June and is a testament to the skill, creativity and dedication of the students. Please come and see the exhibition if you are passing. It is on until September.

Well done to the members of St Mary's Art Club who recently ran an art stall at the Heaton Festival. A wide variety of artwork, prints and cards were sold. Interest in the Art Club was very high and the students were proud that members of the public bought their work.

Year 12 students have made an excellent start to the next stage of their photography course by beginning a project on structures with a trip to the Hoppings Fair. They focused on line, form, depth of field and shutter-speed to create a series of works that capture the atmosphere of this annual event.

Finally, at the end of June, the young members of St Stephen's Art Club visited St Mary's to see the end-of-year exhibition and to explore art at an advanced level. They were enthusiastic, engaged and inspired by their time here. We look forward to collaborating with them further in the future.

Mrs McGrath





SPORTS EVENT HELD FOR LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The current group of Year 10 sports leaders organised an event for seven local feeder primary schools – St Alban’s, St Catherine’s, St Lawrence’s, St Mary’s, St Oswald’s, St Vincent’s and St Teresa’s – earlier this half-term. All twenty-six leaders were a credit to the school and managed their activities exceptionally well. The success of the event was measured by the extremely positive feedback that we received from the primary schools.

Here is a full list of the sports leaders: Deimante Baguckaite; Rachel Bell; Rory Bell; Courtney Cartwright; Hayley Chan; Alexandra Coxon; Mary Delariarte; Gurneet Dhillon; Thomas Gray; Beatriz Guerra-Velastegui; Alina Heidenreich; Lucy Hobbs; Anna Hodgson; Jordan Light; Aiza Masood; Daniel Meyer; Abbie Rai; Erin Ruscoe; Roisin Samuel; Kate Scott; Rebecca Scott; Stacey Simpson; Neelam Singh; Alana Smith; Natasha Walker; and Martha Wylie.

Miss Knott

STUDENTS RAISE MONEY FOR A GOOD CAUSE



Fundraising is always a strong feature of this school and we are delighted to recognise the initiative shown by three Year 7 students. Earlier this term, Laura Nicholson, Sophia Spoor and Sophia Tickner arranged and held a sponsored silence to raise money for the People’s Kitchen in Newcastle. Their efforts brought in a total of £165 for a very good cause.

In a letter of thanks to the students, the People’s Kitchen described how the money will be used: “Because the People’s Kitchen is run entirely by volunteers, with no paid staff, we can claim truthfully that every penny that is donated to us goes directly to the welfare of those who use our facility. This will include the purchase of food, sleeping bags and toiletries. Your donation will significantly assist us in ensuring we continue to offer this kind of support to our friends.”

Well done Laura, Sophia and Sophia.

Mrs Blackburn

YEAR 7 FOOTBALL TEAM WINS THE ESFA SHIELD

After winning the city, county and regional heats, the Year 7 girls' football team travelled to Birmingham for the national finals of the ESFA 5-a-side competition. In their first game, against Thomas Telford School, St Mary's quickly conceded three goals and only pulled one back just before half-time. After the break, the girls piled on the pressure and were rewarded with two more goals. However, with under a minute remaining, they were hit on the counter-attack and therefore began the campaign with a 4-3 defeat.



In the second game, against Gordano School, St Mary's secured a 1-1 draw. This meant that, if they had any hope of progressing beyond the group-stage, the girls needed to beat Queen's School. Although our team secured a 2-1 win, results elsewhere meant that St Mary's finished third in the group and only qualified for the ESFA Shield competition. Nevertheless, they still had the chance to end the day with some silverware.

St Mary's next faced Duston School and secured a place in the final against Cheney School with a 3-1 win. The girls dominated Cheney from the get-go and quickly established a 3-0 lead thanks to goals from Rebecca Ferguson, Lauren Richardson and Stephanie Riley. Although Cheney replied after the break with two goals, this only forced St Mary's to step up a gear and they responded brilliantly to win both the game and the ESFA Shield with a 6-2 victory.

The girls – Rebecca Ferguson, Vianne Hawkins, Romalli McKellow, Katie Motion, Lauren Richardson, Stephanie Riley, Phoebe Sanderson and Emily Smith – performed outstandingly well throughout the day and were unfortunate not to finish in the top two in their group. Their attitude and commitment was exceptional and they thoroughly deserved to win the ESFA Shield and to finish fifth in a national competition that had originally started with six hundred entrants.

Mr Bone and Mr Hook

ANOTHER EXAM SEASON ENDS

We have just had another busy and successful exam season at St Mary's. With the government increasing the rigour and difficulty of exams, it has been a pleasure to see our students – through resilience and hard work – rise to the challenge. In the run-up to the exam period, staff also very generously offered a significant amount of their time to deliver revision sessions and warm-up classes.

After an intense and important period, we hope that all the students in Years 11 and 13 enjoy a long and restful summer and we wish them well in their next endeavours. We also wait with a mixture of nerves and excitement for the publication of results. For A-Level and AS-Level students, these will be released on 17 August; GCSE students have to wait until 24 August to find out how well they have done.

Finally, we want to thank both parents and staff for all the work and support that they have given to students throughout this period.

Mr McKeating

PREPARING FOR UNIVERSITY

Many of our Year 12 students have made an excellent start researching which courses and universities to select for their UCAS applications. This process began in earnest in March when eleven sixth-formers attended a conference at St Robert of Newminster School in Washington. This covered the process of applying to study at Durham University.

Soon after, fourteen students took part in a separate event in Newcastle that was organised by Oxford and Cambridge. This provided a fascinating general insight into life as an undergraduate at our two most prestigious universities; the Year 12s also attended workshops on mathematics, engineering, English literature and philosophy.

More recently, everyone in the year-group has attended open days organised by Newcastle and Northumbria as well as a UCAS exhibition at the Metro Arena. Two groups of students have also enjoyed residential visits to Oxford and Cambridge to explore the colleges, visit the various faculties, and talk to admissions tutors and current undergraduates.

This is an important and exciting time for our Year 12s as they think about the next phase in their education and training. It is reassuring to see that they are gathering the right information to make the best decisions on what to do next.

Mr McDonald

STUDENTS GET READY FOR AN EXPEDITION TO ZAMBIA

It is with great excitement that a group of Year 12s are currently preparing for an expedition to Zambia. The students will travel to Africa in October to take part in a project in Mkushi that will involve teaching classes and running extra-curricular activities in local schools. Accommodated in traditional roundhouse mud-huts, they will also have the time to immerse themselves in the local culture and to visit Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, home to the famous Victoria Falls.

In preparation for their adventure, the Year 12s are currently fundraising and taking part in specialist training. We are sure that this will be a life-changing experience for all the students and we look forward to sharing their experiences in the next newsletter.

Mrs McEwan

YEAR 10 ANNUAL ROUND-UP

The Year 10s have again shown what a brilliant year-group they are through the work and effort that they have demonstrated during this term. Students have worked exceptionally hard since September when they began studying a range of very challenging GCSE and vocational subjects. It has been a pleasure to see the exceptional progress that they have made.

In the first two weeks of July, the Year 10s experienced their first formal examination process when they successfully completed their mock examinations. These were very successful in preparing students for next year. I am very pleased with the academic progress that they have achieved.

While maintaining an excellent work ethic, students have also taken part in a huge range of exciting extra-curricular activities. Our sports teams have enjoyed great successes and have competed very well against other schools. Moreover, many of our musically gifted students have made excellent progress over the last ten weeks and have increased the grades at which they perform in their chosen instruments. This is a fantastic effort and many Year 10s performed in our annual summer music concert. Finally, many students in the year-group have continued to hone their fantastic skills in both art and drama. This was evident in the brilliant performances in the recent dance showcase.

As we approached the end of the summer term, the students focused on the end-of-year mass. After a hugely successful Advent and Lent earlier in the year, they also continued to raise huge amounts of money for many different charitable causes.

Finally, I would like to thank you as always for the support and care that you show towards our students and our school. I hope that everyone in Year 10 enjoys a well-earned rest during the summer holidays. I would also like to congratulate the students for the amazing effort and work that they have produced throughout this year.

Mr McDonald

FAREWELL TO YEAR 11



Year 11 students have worked incredibly hard for their GCSE exams and are now eagerly waiting to receive their results in August. We are delighted that the majority will be returning to St Mary's in September as members of our Sixth Form.

The year-group has made a significant and lasting impression on the school and we are incredibly proud of what they have achieved. Their dedication, fantastic attitude and determination to make the most of their God-given talents has never failed to impress. They have made an excellent contribution to the spiritual life of the school and have achieved great things over the last five years. From sporting triumphs to musical productions, they have created some amazing memories.

We would like to thank the whole of Year 11 and their families for everything that they have given. We also hope that everyone has a brilliant summer and wish all the students the very best for the future.

Mr Tait

GIRLS END SEASON AS CHAMPIONS

This has been a fantastic year for football at St Mary's and the season ended with more success for the Year 7 girls at a tournament in Gosforth. Despite getting off to a shaky start after losing the first game and drawing the second, St Mary's finished runners-up in the group after they won their third match. This guaranteed a place in the semi-finals and the girls took their tie 3-1. They then continued the winning-streak to claim the title after beating their opponents 1-0 with a late goal.

Miss Duggan

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC

Earlier this year, forty students from Years 9 to 12 visited the Theatre Royal in Newcastle to see a live production of Engelbert Humperdinck's opera *Hansel and Gretel*. This was a very valuable outing for our students, many of whom experienced something completely new.

Six students from Years 9 and 10 – Matthew Brown (drums), Julian Gibson (rhythm guitar), Lucas Grillot (lead guitar), Tim Jones (vocals), Charlie Kain (electric bass) and Isaac Kain (piano and saxophone) – recently took part in a local 'Battle of the Bands' event at the Royal Grammar School. Known collectively as The Distance, the boys delivered mature and nuanced performances of 'The House of the Rising Sun' and 'Sultans of Swing'. Although the group did not win the contest, they nevertheless did very well and performed with confidence.

At the end of this term, the Music Department held its annual summer showcase. This featured the school orchestra's rousing renditions of the themes from *The Game of Thrones*, *The Pirates of the Caribbean* and *The Pink Panther*. The jazz orchestra performed 'The Girl from Ipanema' and the Key Stage 3 ensemble delivered an assured version of 'Autumn' from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. The school choir sang four numbers and the concert included solo turns from Anthony Adams, Lucas Colley and Logan Kim. As always, a huge thank you goes out to all the students and members of staff who helped to make this event possible.

Mr Richardson

YEAR 9 GIRLS COMPETE IN CRICKET TOURNAMENT

In mid-June, cricketers from Year 9 took part in the Girls Chance to Compete Festival at Benwell Hill Cricket Club in Newcastle. Their first game was against Churchill Community College and they chose to field first. St Mary's bowled brilliantly and limited the opposition to 51 runs which proved to be an easy score to beat. Likewise, in the second game against St Thomas More, the girls proved to be tough opposition. They easily established a total of 95 runs which their opponents from North Shields failed to reach.

Unfortunately, the third and fourth matches – against John Spence and Ashington – proved to be more difficult and St Mary's lost both encounters. This meant that the girls were eliminated from the competition. Nevertheless, the whole team deserves a commendation for showing great effort throughout the day. A particular mention is also owed to Helen Dooner, who was St Mary's leading run-scorer, and our two most effective bowlers, Rebecca Leitch and Megan Lucas.

Mr Hook



A DOUBLE CELEBRATION FOR YEAR 7 FOOTBALLERS



The Year 7 football team deserves huge congratulations for the incredible achievement of winning the league and cup double this year. The boys made an excellent start to the season, with a convincing win away to Gosforth in their opening fixture. They then went from strength-to-strength with some excellent performances in the League, ESFA Cup and City Cup.

Halfway through the season, the team played Valley Gardens in the first round of the County Cup. St Mary's fought hard and showed great resilience to win 4-2. Unfortunately, the boys lost on penalties to Wellfield in the next round, but this setback did not affect the boys' morale and they maintained their winning league record for the rest of the season.

In the City Cup, St Mary's beat Walker 7-2 and secured a mouth-watering final tie against St Cuthbert's. The boys won this game 4-3 just hours after learning that – after winning all their matches against Benfield, Excelsior, Gosforth Junior Academy, Heaton Manor, the Newcastle School for Boys and Walker – they had secured the league title.

It is always an incredible achievement when any team wins a league and cup double, and this squad of players did so with tremendous spirit and style. All the boys – Jay Adams, Jessan Aghmor, Ethan Chappell, Lawson Da Costa, George Darwood, Jack Delaney, Charlie Dixon, Ben Gallon, Daniel Gazerani-Lopez, Tyrell Johnson, Chris-Aurel Kouadio, Joe Marron, Kalay Mayan and Nathan Nkunku – showed a superb attitude and were exemplary ambassadors for St Mary's.

There was further cause for celebration after George Darwood was named the 'Under-12 Player's Player of the Year' for Newcastle Schools. George has had an incredibly successful season and scored a very impressive sixty goals. Jack Delaney and Ben Gallon also deserve a special mention after they too were chosen to play for Newcastle Schools.

Mr Bone

GCSE FIRST WORLD WAR TRIP TO THE BATTLEFIELDS

In February, forty GCSE students and four members of staff visited the First World War battlefields of Belgium and France. During this visit they explored two spheres of fighting from the Great War: the Ypres Salient in Belgium and the Somme area of France. The students visited a number of historical sites which included the In Flanders Fields Museum. Built into the historic Cloth Hall in the centre of Ypres, this interactive museum allowed the students to learn more about how the conflict affected particular individuals.



Led by our tour-guide, we visited Ypres on the first day of the trip. The town was destroyed during the First World War but has been completely rebuilt to its original state. Here, we visited Talbot House – a British soldiers' club that was situated behind the front-line – and the preserved trenches of Sanctuary Wood.

On the second day, we visited Essex Farm Cemetery and Dressing Station where John McCrae, stationed there as a military doctor, wrote the poem 'In Flanders Fields'. Next on the itinerary were Tyne Cot Cemetery, the final resting-place of nearly 12,000 British soldiers, and the Langemark German Cemetery. Students had the opportunity to reflect on the magnitude of both places and everyone was moved by the sheer scale of loss suffered on both sides of the conflict. That same evening, we observed the 'Last Post' ceremony. This takes place every day at 8.00 p.m. under the Menin Gate. Matthew Brown, Abigail Charlton and Sarah Mulgrew laid a wreath as a token of remembrance from St Mary's during this event.

On the third day, we travelled from Belgium to France to explore the Somme battlefields. This included trips to Lochnagar Crater, Delville Wood, Newfoundland Wood, and the vast Thiepval Memorial which contains the names of nearly 75,000 men who died in the Somme area. A visit to Vimy Ridge brought to an end an unforgettable and moving experience.

Miss Clark

YEAR 9 ANNUAL REVIEW

What a busy and successful year it has been with Year 9 students starting their GCSEs in the core subjects and finalising their options for September. The students really are a credit to the school, their parents and themselves, and I am very proud of all their achievements. They always show a positive attitude to every aspect of life at St Mary's and willingly volunteer for the full range of activities and opportunities that are made available to them.

The students have made sustained academic and pastoral progress throughout the year, and it is evident that they enjoy school. Over the next two years, they need to remain focused and work hard to continue their excellent development.

Mr Gray

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE VISITS

A group of Year 12 health and social care students recently visited Northumbria University for an interactive event that offered a real insight into learning disability and mental health nursing. The students took part in some group exercises, enjoyed a tour of the Clinical Skills Centre, and talked to current undergraduates.

The department also arranged a visit to St Mary's by Dr Julie Derbyshire, a senior lecturer and admissions tutor at Northumbria, who spoke with the same group of students about health-related undergraduate programmes at the university. Several of the Year 12s have now expressed an interest in nursing as a career.

Another visitor to the school – this time for the benefit of students in Year 10 – was Mrs Morris, a care specialist with Four Seasons Health Care. She explained how staff look after residents and further discussed the various roles and responsibilities that staff assume in a residential home.

Mrs Rutherford

A YEAR OF NETBALL SUCCESSES

Our Year 7 netball teams have had a very successful year in the Newcastle City Netball League. The 'A' team performed particularly well, finishing third in the table and reaching the semi-finals of the Under-12 City Netball Tournament. Ella Shanahan, as captain, led the team brilliantly. Chloe Robinson and Georgia Simpson were also excellent and secured a number of victories with their many goals.

The Year 8 netball team finished second in the Newcastle City Netball League and third in the Tri-Area and City tournaments. The captain, Megan Darwood, performed exceptionally well in every game and Laura Kouadio, who only joined the team halfway through the year, was a major asset.

Our Year 9 netball team continued its successful journey at St Mary's by winning – for the first time ever – the city's Plate Trophy. This is an exceptional achievement and we are all very proud of the team. All the girls played brilliantly, but a particular mention must go to Grace Taylor as the captain, Manyong Mayan for her defending, and Hannah Crowdy for scoring some excellent goals.

Miss Gleadow and Miss Knott

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SEASON ENDS

The Year 8 football team has had another fantastic year in all competitions. In the City Cup, the boys beat Walker Technology College 3-0 and Kenton 9-1. Unfortunately, they narrowly lost an entertaining semi-final tie with Gosforth Junior Academy 3-2.

St Mary's also had a fantastic run in the County Cup. After receiving a bye in the first round, the team beat Wellfield Middle 6-1 and Blyth Community College 7-0 to set up a semi-final clash with St Cuthbert's. Deadlocked at 1-1, the match went to extra time and, with penalties looming, St Mary's conceded a very late goal which cost them a place in the final.

In the Newcastle East City League, the team got off to a poor start by losing 6-3 to Heaton Manor. Thankfully, this performance was not repeated and St Mary's produced some brilliant displays during the remainder of the season. The boys were particularly good against Gosforth East Middle and Benfield, respectively winning these games 2-0 and 3-2. Liam Gardner, a newcomer to the team and arguably our player of the season, scored all three goals against Benfield.

St Mary's eventually won the league in convincing fashion by beating Gosforth Central Middle 5-1 and Newcastle School for Boys 5-0. Every member of the squad – Jarno Ambelez, Dylan Barclay, Kristan Beech, Kudus Berhanu, Niall Boothroyd, Lucas Coley, Billy Cummings, Joe Ferguson, Taylor Gallagher, Liam Gardner, Jay Good, Exodus Guangul, Archie McConnell, Sam MacDonald, Luis May, Vitalis Nyekila and Darragh O'Hare – deserves to be congratulated for their achievements this season.

A further cause for celebration came with the news that Joe Ferguson, Nathan Nkunku and Vitalis Nyekila helped Newcastle City Boys to victory in the National Cup by beating North Kent 2-1 at Birmingham City's St Andrew's stadium. After successful trials, Vitalis has also been selected to join Newcastle Academy next season.

Mr Maughan

SUCCESS4ALL

Success4All is a great charity that provides peer-tutoring and support to children in areas that are marked by low academic achievement. Every Saturday since last October, I have worked with this organisation to help a number of youngsters with a range of subjects up to GCSE. The most rewarding aspect of my work has been the opportunity to pass on my knowledge as well as to build a rapport with my tutees.

My work with Success4All has allowed me to acquire valuable interpersonal and teaching skills. I would definitely recommend that anyone wanting to gain AQA accreditation and a Duke of Edinburgh Award while supporting young people applies to work as a tutor with this charity.

Shafiat Dewan (Year 12)

STUDENTS BOOK A DATE WITH THEIR FUTURES



In May, St Mary's held a careers fair to allow students to meet a wide range of professionals and employers from the private and public sectors. They also had the chance to meet representatives from local further education colleges and universities. Everyone who gave up their time to contribute to a successful event praised the students for their maturity and enthusiasm, and they expressed their gratitude for the warm welcome that they had received at the school.

Mr Tait

PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

Following a highly focused exam period, Year 12s spent the final weeks of this term planning their next steps. This process began early in June when the students learned about the online Universities and Colleges Admissions System. A UCAS Information Evening for parents was then held in July to ensure that everyone provides the students with effective and consistent support throughout the application process.

We have also launched an Employability Group. This runs alongside the support mentioned above to make sure that those students who are not planning to go to university receive effective advice and guidance.

PSHE sessions this term have provided Year 12s with talks on such subjects as working in the NHS, securing apprenticeships, preparing for interviews, and learning to drive. Students have also had the opportunity to volunteer at the Hoppings School, providing an education to the children of travelling families.

Throughout the year, all the students have received a fortnightly bulletin – which is also published on the school's website – that contains notices of a wide range of available extra-curricular opportunities. It is impressive to see how well the Year 12s have embraced the chances given to them as they all work hard to prepare their applications for university or work.

Mrs McEwan



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