



22nd December 2023

ST MARY'S COLLEGE

Dear Families,

We have finally reached the end of term, and what a term it has been!

Our Outstanding Ofsted judgement and being awarded the "Secondary Comprehensive School of the Year 2024" by the Sunday Times have been unquestionable highlights. However, it is our distinctive Catholic identity which really embodies who we are at St Mary's College. By living out our faith every day we are truly able to hold Christ at the centre of all we do.

It has been a hugely rewarding term both spiritually and academically, not least seeing the Year 7s settle so well into secondary school life whilst the Year 11s have faced their mock exams with maturity and real focus.

In order to continue this focus, after Christmas we will be launching our "**SMC Best**" and this is a phrase you will come to know well. As we strive to be an even more outstanding school, we will have a renewed focus on standards. The SMC Best will focus on standards in the classroom including pace and uniform. As always, we make no apology for expecting excellence, it is this relentless focus that has enabled the school to achieve its most recent prestigious accolades. I know you will support us in our **SMC Best** drive.

A special mention must go to our SEND students who worked so hard once again putting on the Christmas Fayre last week. The handmade gifts were beautiful and the students took such pride selling the items on their stalls. Thank you to all family members who attended, it meant so much to your child and to us.

Please find attached our Christmas SMC Newsletter which details our fantastic achievements. I hope you enjoy it.

Finally, I wish everyone a lovely Christmas. The support from our wider parish community and its families only reinforces how special our Catholic community is.

God Bless and warm Christmas wishes,

Mrs M Stead

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THE SUNDAY TIMES
SCHOOLS GUIDE
2024

COMPREHENSIVE
SCHOOL OF THE YEAR

Ofsted Outstanding & The Sunday Times Parent Power 'Comprehensive School of the Year 2024'

I am utterly thrilled for the school to receive this national award from the Sunday Times as I truly believe that St Mary's College is an amazing, world class school. We have achieved 'Outstanding' in all areas in our October Ofsted inspection which simply reinforces this. I firmly believe that no child should be born unlucky and that everyone should have the chance to go to a great school. For me, it is a deep privilege to lead such a diverse, special and vibrant school. As someone once said to me "St Mary's is a microcosm of a perfect society" and this is represented in the 70 languages spoken, the many heritages we represent, in those who live close by and those who travel for hours each day to be part of our school community. To our core, we are a Catholic school and woven into our tapestry is our tenacious staff body, who see it as a vocation to work at our school. We place our students and your child at the heart of everything we do.



MARIA STEAD
HEAD OF SCHOOL



Celebrations in production....



We had great fun filming our special announcement video with Mr Brownlie with just 24 hours' notice to put everything together!

The students were really intrigued as to what word we were trying to spell - lots of amusing guesses, but at least they didn't have to wait long for the big reveal.

You can watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6OR7qBW144&t=134s>

Mock trial winners!

SM6 students recently won the Leeds Regional Heat on Saturday 2nd December of the National Bar Mock Trial Competition. This would be considered an amazing achieving at any stage, but given that it was the first time we had entered it is truly incredible.

We came in first place amongst a whole host of schools and colleges across Yorkshire in the 15+ age range.

A significant amount of preparation over the past months paid off, our team of students took on a variety of roles in the competition including those of barristers, witnesses, court clerk and usher. We had to prepare the defence and prosecution of two cases, delivering speeches and questioning. In a fiercely competitive environment with hostile cross-examination, we were victorious as judged by a range a senior barristers (including Kings Counsel) and judges.

We have therefore secured a place at the prestigious national final to challenge other regional winners from across the country. The final will take place at the Royal Courts of Justice (Home of the High Court and Court of Appeal) in London. We can't wait – we are so excited for next stage!



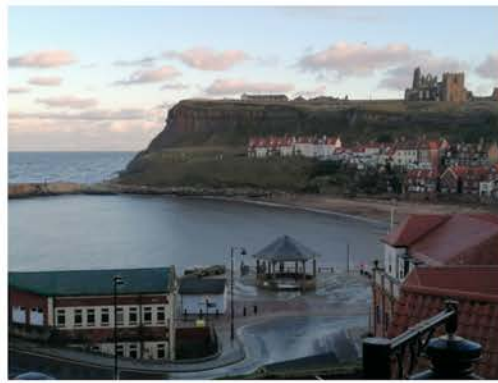
A close encounter with the snake !

Early in December, the Year 8 Core Group were learning about different animal adaptations in Science.

They worked hard to produce an information leaflet to the upcoming Year 6 to inform the new students how to treat the Science pet snake Medusa. The students really enjoyed meeting Medusa!



Beautiful wintery images from a recent SM6 Art & Design trip to Whitby



Detective Club

Detective Club invites students from Year 7-9 to explore key parts of the Criminal Justice System, developing their interest in Law and Criminology from a young age.

We have spent the first month looking at the importance of DNA within investigations as well as police questioning techniques, in recent months we've also had some incredible guest speakers. These included: a trainee detective from Humberside Police, teaching students how to question those suspected of a crime (they practised this on Sixth Formers the following week), as well as a CSI officer who spoke about his day-to-day role and why his job is so important. Students were then able to try on some of his PPE equipment!



The St Mary's College Eco-Council is thrilled to announce that the school will retain its Green Flag status as an eco-school this year.

So much hard work and effort went in to developing a more environmentally conscious school last year and this will continue into this academic year too.

This is part of our commitment to Laudato Si, the Pope's encyclical regarding caring for our world, our common home.



SM6 Agape ambassadors

The SM6 Agape Ambassadors co-ordinated a collection to provide Christmas gift bags to young asylum seekers in Hull, with a phenomenal response from staff and students across St Mary's College.

Here some of the ambassadors presented the gift bags to Chris Cuthill on behalf of Welcome House along with Micki Coyle from the Trust Chaplaincy Team.



Most enterprising school in the city !

Enterprise skills are important for all our young people to prepare them for success in school and beyond.

These skills are embedded into our curriculum, extra-curricular provision and PSHE programme.

To enhance this each year, we take part in Global Enterprise Week, where Year 10 and Year 12 Business students take part in team building and creative activities to design bridges, hear others' entrepreneurial journeys and create a mock event that could be held at Craven Park.



To top off the Entrepreneurial celebrations, this year St Mary's College was recognised as the Most Enterprising School in city by Hull City Council.

Even more outstanding news!

Year 10 student Dominika Gruszkowska has been awarded a place in the Royal Shakespeare Company's Next Generation Acting Company following their nationwide auditions at Lead Associate Schools.

This means that Dominika will be working with RSC professionals and mentors for the next 3 years as part of their young people's Acting Company, which will include opportunities to attend intensive residential sessions. Her work in Performing Arts is amazing and this is a well-deserved reward.

It was lovely to see St Mary's College work with the Royal Shakespeare Company get a mention in the Ofsted report after an inspector visited one of the school's RSC ambassador enrichment sessions.



Request: Work Experience Placements

Could your company offer a Work Experience placement to a Year 10 student for the week from July 8th -12th 2024?

If you can help, please contact:

- Kerry Kirby kkirby@smchull.org
- Mary Keogh mkeogh@smchull.org



We would be most grateful for any help you/your company can offer.

A Prayer of Thanks

Lord God, we give thanks for your provision for the thousands of children and young people we work alongside at St Mary's College.

Thank you for giving them access to education. Thank you for their passion and dedication to learning. We pray for those in our community who have exams in the year ahead. Help them to focus and study hard, yet also grant them Your peace and the knowledge that You have good plans for them.

Be with our students who are learning those essential and fruitful skills for life.

We pray that everything we do together will equip them well for the future.



We ask this in Your son's name.

Amen



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Please note-we are unable to reply to questions and comments on our social media accounts. Please do not reply to text messages sent by the school and instead use the email address here to contact us.

www.smchull.org