

## Advent

This Sunday is the third Sunday of Advent and is called **Gaudete Sunday**, a name derived from the Latin word for "rejoice". It is a time of joy and celebration within the season of Advent, marking the midpoint as the celebration of Christmas approaches. This day is often symbolized by the lighting of the pink or rose-coloured candle on the Advent wreath, which represents joy and the anticipation of Christ's coming.

## Selection Box Raffle

On Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December we will be holding our selection box raffle. Thank you to all the parents who have already sent in selection boxes. For the raffle to be successful we require plenty of selection boxes. If you are able to donate a selection box, these can be left at the school office or handed to staff in the mornings.

## Birthdays

A very happy birthday to Emily, Lexi and Leonie who have all celebrated birthdays this week, or over the weekend. I hope you all had/have a wonderful day.

## Stars of the Week

Congratulations to each of our stars of the week: Kamsi I, Cora, Niall, Marcus, Tiannah, Grayson, Mason, and Josh M who have received a star of the week award for learning.

Congratulations to each of our stars of the week Elijah, Daniel C, Taya, Harry W, Roman, Aria and Rory who have been award star of the week for behaviour.

## Sports News

Ours sports teams have had a very successful week this week.

**Football** – The Year 5/6 boys were crowned Tameside small schools champions this week and will go on to represent Tameside at the Greater Manchester championships.

**Dodgeball** – We had two teams compete in a dodgeball competition on Wednesday. Both teams played excellently with one of our teams managing to win the tournament in a thrilling final against St Annes.

Congratulations to all our children who took part this week.

## Christmas Finishing Times

An early reminder, that at Christmas, school will be closing for the holidays at **1:30pm**. This is a change to past years but may have an impact on working parents who may need to arrange childcare.

<b>17<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	Creative homework display
<b>17<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	Christmas Carols (Hall) 2pm
<b>18<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	Christmas Carols (Hall) 2pm
<b>18<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	Selection box raffle
<b>18<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	Boy's Football v St Annes
<b>19<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	School closes for Christmas at <b>1.30 pm</b>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	School opens for Spring 1
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	RNCM to work with Y5
<b>19<sup>th</sup> Dec</b>	Close for Christmas 1:30pm
<b>6<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	School opens for Spring 1
<b>9<sup>th</sup> Jan</b>	RNCM to work with Y5



## Parish News

The parish newsletter can be viewed by clicking the link [here: Newsletters](#)

## Safeguarding

Our safeguarding team at St. Mary's consists of Miss Johnson, Mr Knapper and myself. If you wish to discuss any concerns with us, please ask and at least one of us will be available. All of our staff are safeguard trained, and we are here to keep your children safe and happy at all times.

## Attendance.

	<b>F2</b>	<b>94%</b>	
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>96.5%</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>94.5%</b>
<b>Year 3</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Year 5</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>93%</b>

**Congratulations to Year 1 who have the highest attendance this week with 96.5% Well done!**

## Punctuality

We have a number of children who are arriving at school late each morning. The school gates are open at 8:40am and registers are taken at 8:50am. We expect all children to be sat in class ready to start lessons at 8:50am. Please allow your children time to come into school, take of bags and coats and make their way into class. Even if the school gate is still open, your child will still get a late mark if they are not in class by 8:50am. If the gate is closed, children need to enter school via the main entrance.

## Christmas Dinner

The children enjoyed a lovely Christmas Dinner on Thursday and all looked very festive in their Christmas jumpers. Thank you to all who donated to Save the Children, we will let you know the amount we raised in next week's newsletter.

## Christmas Party Lunch

On December 19<sup>th</sup> the school kitchen will be cooking a party lunch instead of the usual meal selection. Lunch will consist of a selection of sandwiches, carrot and cucumber sticks, nachos, shortbread biscuits and fresh fruit. Lunch can be ordered via the school grid app or website in the usual way.

## New Menu

In January, our new school menu will be available. A copy of is attached and parents will be able to order through SchoolGrid. We will notify parents once you are able to start ordering.

We will also be having some lovely themed lunches in the new year, including Chinese New Year.

## Our First Nativity

Congratulations to all of the Nursery and Reception pupils for entertaining all of the parents this week with their own version of the nativity story – Our First Nativity! Thank you to all those who brought in donations for the foodbank.

## Carol Concerts

Next week we have our Carol Concerts on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December at 2.00 pm in the school hall, where our children reception to Year 6 will entertain parents with a selection of Christmas songs. To accommodate as many parents as possible, we ask that you select one performance to attend. There is no charge to attend the concerts, but we will once again be collecting food and sweet treats for the Foodbank. Refreshments will also be available for parents.

## Holiday List

The holiday list for 2026-27 has now been ratified by the governing body. We have tried to align as closely as we can with St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher to ensure that families with siblings at both schools are able to have the opportunity for family holidays together throughout the year. As is always the case, holidays in term time will not be authorised so it is wise to plan early and make bookings in advance where possible.

The holiday list can be seen below.

## Don't Miss Out...

**For children in Nursery** – The window for applications to primary school is now open and closes on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026. This year we had close to 70 applications for our 30 places. **If your child attends St. Mary's Nursery – this does not automatically entitle you to a place in our Reception class. You must still apply via Tameside.**

# **St Mary's RC Primary and Nursery School**

## **Holiday Pattern 2026/27**

### **Autumn Term**

Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September 2026 – Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2026	37 days
Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2026 – Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> December 2026	34 days

### **Spring Term**

Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2027 – Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2027	28 days
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2027 – Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2027	24 days

### **Summer Term**

Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> April 2027 – Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May 2027	39 days
Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> June 2027 – Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2027	<u>28 days</u>

190 days

School will be closed on the following dates:

Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2026	INSET Day
Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2026	INSET Day
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2027	INSET Day
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2027	Bank Holiday

On 17<sup>th</sup> December 2026 and 21<sup>st</sup> July 2027, the last days of Christmas and Summer Term, the school will close early to pupils at 1.30 pm

# SPRING TRADITIONAL

BREAD AND SALAD BAR  
AVAILABLE DAILY

## WEEK 1

WC: 5th Jan, 26th Jan  
16th Feb, 9th Mar, 30th Mar

MONDAY

Margherita Pizza & Potato Salad (V) (VG)  
Spinach & Potato Curry with Steamed Rice (VG) (GF)  
Cheesy Pasta (V)  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Mixed Salad, Sweetcorn  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Ice Cream & Fruit (V)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

TUESDAY

Oven Baked Sausages  
Plant-based Sausages (VG)  
Fisherman's Pie (GF)  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Mashed Potatoes, Savoy Cabbage, Carrots, Gravy  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
★ Peach & Forest Fruit Cobbler with Custard (V) ★  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

WEDNESDAY

Roast Chicken (GF)  
★ Fish Finger or Quorn Dipper (VG) Wrap ★  
Lancashire Hot Pot  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Roast Potatoes, Carrots, Peas, Gravy  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Chocolate & Orange Cookie (VG)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

THURSDAY

Mild Chicken Korma (GF)  
Tomato & Herb Pasta Bake (V) (VG)  
Pepperoni Melt  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Steamed Rice, Broccoli, Sweetcorn  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
★ Jam Roly Poly & Custard (V) ★  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

FRIDAY

Breaded Fish Fingers  
Fishless Fingers (VG)  
★ Cheddar & Broccoli Quiche (V) ★  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Chips, Peas, Baked Beans, Ketchup  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Banana Cake (V)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

## WEEK 2

WC: 12th Jan, 2nd Feb  
23rd Feb, 16th Mar

Margherita or Pepper Pizza (V) (VG)  
Cheesy Bean Wrap (V)  
Singapore Noodles (VG)  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Baked Potato Wedges, Mixed Salad, Peas  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Chocolate Mousse (V)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

Spaghetti Bolognese  
Seasonal Vegetable Hot Pot (VG)  
★ Spaghetti & Meatballs ★  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Broccoli, Sweetcorn  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Fruit Crunch & Custard (V)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

All Day Breakfast  
English Veggie Breakfast (V) (VG)  
Cheese & Tomato Panini Melt (V)  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Hash Brown, Baked Beans, Peas  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Fresh Fruit Salad (VG)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

Roast Chicken (GF)  
Butternut Squash Wellington (V) (VG)  
Savoury Cheddar Turnover  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Mashed Potatoes, Cabbage, Peas, Gravy  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Jelly & Fruit (V) (VG)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

Cheese Topped Cumberland Pie  
Shepherdess Pie (VG)  
BBQ Chicken Melt  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Green Beans, Carrots  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
★ Yorkshire Parkin & Custard (V) ★  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

Chilli con Carne & Steamed Rice (GF)  
★ Pasta Bar with a Choice of Toppings ★  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Sweetcorn, Carrots  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Dorset Apple Cake & Custard (V)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

Breaded Fish Fingers  
Crispy Crumb Vegetable Grill (VG)  
Baked Sweet Potato Omelette (V) (GF)  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Chips, Peas, Baked Beans, Ketchup  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Lemon Cookie (VG)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

Breaded Fish Fingers  
Crispy Golden Dippers (VG)  
Cheddar Cheese Pie (V)  
Jacket Potato & Fillings (V) (VG) (GF)  
  
Chips, Peas, Baked Beans, Ketchup  
Fresh Daily Salad Selection, Homemade Bread  
  
Lancashire Cookie (VG)  
Dolce Homebake, Seasonal Fruit, Fruit Yoghurt

## NEW DISHES FOR 2025/26

V = Vegetarian | VG = Vegan | \*GF = Gluten Free

For full allergen information please refer to your School Grid Account. \*Gluten free products are prepared in a kitchen that handle products containing gluten. Any Halal menu variations will be displayed on SchoolGrid. Menus subject to change.