



'Together we strive for excellence, inspired by the joy of the Gospel.'

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to inform you that the school car park will no longer be available for use at weekends, including during Mass times for those attending Stella Church. Following a recent health and safety review, we are required to keep the school gates closed outside of school hours for the foreseeable future.

This measure is necessary to ensure the security of our building and grounds, as leaving the gates open could allow unrestricted access without supervision. I am hopeful that we can come to an arrangement for the car park to be used again.

I want to stress that this decision is in no way intended to affect the strong and positive relationship between our parish and school. I am, more than anyone, committed to fostering a healthy partnership, between school and parish, where we support and help one another. Unfortunately, this is a matter beyond my control, and I appreciate your understanding.

We recognise that this may cause some inconvenience and thank you for your continued support in prioritising the safety of our school site.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mr Craig
Headteacher



Advent Week One : Hope

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week, our school community came together to joyfully celebrate the First Sunday in Advent, marking the beginning of this special season of preparation. Advent is a time of hope and anticipation as we prepare our hearts for the arrival of baby Jesus at Christmas. The children have been learning about the significance of Advent and reflecting on ways we can share kindness and love throughout this holy season.



Stella Radio - The Wednesday Word

Stella FM is up and running. We've relaunched our school radio station to celebrate this time of Advent. Thanks to Miss Hall and Mr Patterson along with our Year 6 hosts we have delivered our first reflection.

Please click on the image to take the opportunity to join us in prayer and reflection. It's the perfect opportunity to take a moment for yourself.



Christmas Jumper day

On Thursday 18th December, the children are invited to come into school wearing their favourite Christmas jumper instead of their school jumper/cardigan. Usual uniform underneath please.



A Word from our Saints

"Prepare a path for God so that he can enter your heart."

St John Baptist



Christmas Tree

Our children had a most important job this week, they helped to decorate our school Christmas Tree and they have done a grand job.



Creative Christmas Dance-a-thon: Around the World

Our whole school took part in a full-day of dance this week. Each class worked with a trained dancer on Tuesday to enjoy a dance experience which celebrated Christmas traditions and cultures from across the globe! All of our children had a wonderful day of dancing.



Please click on the image to view the Year 6 children doing their dance.



Christmas Events

Reception Nativity - Monday 8th December - 'Bethlehem Inn'. Doors will open at 2.15 p.m. for a 2.30 p.m. start. Admission by tickets only.

Keystage 1 Nativity - Tuesday & Wednesday 9th & 10th December - 'Lights, Camel, Action 2'. Doors will open at 1.45 p.m. for a 2.00 p.m. start. Admission by tickets only.

Nursery Nativity - Wednesday 10th December - 'A little Nativity' - Doors will open at 8.30 a.m. for a 9.15 a.m. start. This is also admission by ticket only. *Part time nursery children are welcome to attend for the full day.*

Keystage 2 Carols - Friday 12th December - Christmas Carols on the Keystage 2 yard. Gates will open at 2.15 p.m. for a 2.30 p.m. start.

Safeguarding Reminder

Safeguarding the children in our care is one of the school's main responsibilities, one that St Mary and St Thomas Aquinas take very seriously.

As you are already aware from previous updates, our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Craig. You can speak to him by phone, make an appointment via the school office, or catch him when he's outside greeting/saying goodbye to children, if you ever have a concern. We also have our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in school, Mrs Bennison (Assistant Headteacher/ Year 2 class teacher and senior leader), Mrs McDonald (Year 4 teacher) and Miss Foster (School Business Manager).

If you are unable to speak to Mr Craig, you can speak to Mrs Bennison or any other member of staff about your concern (s).

The school has an updated Safeguarding policy, that can be found on the school website, or paper copies can be requested from the school office.

All staff receive annual safeguarding refresher training, as well as other training throughout the year on key areas, including record keeping and reporting. Our school also has a termly visit from our Safeguarding Consultant, who completes an audit of the school's safeguarding and identifies any future improvements or training needs.

Why do parents need to know this information?

- To reassure you that we take keeping our children safe in school very seriously at St. Mary and St. Thomas Aquinas.
- It's good to remind parents/carers of the key members of staff, in case new parents did not know who they were.
- To highlight the continual work that the school puts into keeping our children safe in school.

Attendance

During celebration assembly on Friday, we have been celebrating whole class attendance and each week the class with the highest attendance will receive our Attendance Trophy, well done to **Year 2** who won the trophy this week.

Week beginning: Monday 1st December 2025	
Year group	Attendance percentage
Reception	95.19
Year 1	89.29
Year 2	98.08
Year 3	92.26
Year 4	92.11
Year 5	95.49
Year 6	92.46

Children's Party Day

On party days, children are invited to wear their own party clothes to school. Lunchtime remains unchanged and children on packed lunch will still need to bring one on that day.

Year 1 & Year 2 Monday 15th December

Year 3 & Year 4 Tuesday 16th December in the morning

Year 5 & Year 6 Tuesday 16th December in the afternoon

Nursery & Reception Wednesday 17th - *Part time nursery children are welcome to attend for the full day.*

Church News

Christmas Mass Times at St Mary and St Thomas Aquinas

The two early Vigil Masses will be the children's and family Masses, with the children doing the readings, Bidding Prayers and Offertory Procession. If you would like to take part with any of these, sign the sheet on the table at the back of church this weekend. These Masses are an annual family favourite - will it be a 'Onsie' Christmas this year or a jazzy Christmas gansy year?!

Vigil Masses on Christmas Eve :- 4.00 p.m. & 5.30 p.m.

Christmas Day :- 10.00 a.m.



Spotlight Celebration



Huge well done to Owen Wylie, Year 2 for achieving his blue belt in Karate and Player of the Week at RACA football training.



Penny and Martha in Year 5 had a busy presentation night at brownies this week, earning 12 badges and a bronze and silver award! Well done, girls!

What has the Naughty Elf been up to.....



Look at what he did in Oliver's house, he's made a bit of a mess making breakfast.

We would love to see more achievements, works of art or an event that you are proud of. Please send them to hgreen@smtb.bwcet.com

Dates for Your Diary

Monday 8th Dec	Reception Nativity (p.m.)
Tuesday 9th Dec	Keystage 1 Nativity (p.m.)
Wednesday 10th Dec	Nursery Nativity (a.m.)
Wednesday 10th Dec	Keystage 1 Nativity (p.m.)
Thursday 11th Dec	Keystage 2 Performance (p.m.) - Cancelled
Friday 12th Dec	Keystage 2 Performance (p.m.)

School Holiday Monday 22nd December 2025 to Friday 2nd January 2026

Spring Term

Thursday 8 th January	Whole School Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Tuesday 13 th January	Year 5 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 15 th January	Year 6 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 22 nd January	Year 4 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Friday 23 rd January	Reception Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 27 th January	Yea 4 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 29 th January	Year 2 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 5 th February	Year 5 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Friday 6 th February	Year 2 Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 10 th February	Year 6 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 12 th February	Year 3 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Wednesday 18 th February	Ash Wednesday Service 9.05 a.m. in Church

Half Term Monday 23rd February to Friday 27th February 2026

Friday 13 th March	Year 1 Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 17 th March	Year 3 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 26 th March	School Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Friday 27 th March	Year 5 Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 31 st March	Reception Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 2 nd April	School Mass (Easter) 9.05 a.m. in Church

Easter Holidays Friday 3rd April until Friday 17th April 2026

Summer Term

Thursday 23 rd April	School Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 30 th April	Year 5 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 7 th May	Polling Day - Inset Day
Friday 8 th May	Year 4 Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 19 th May	Year 1 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 21 nd May	School Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Friday 22 nd May	Pentecost Parade

Half Term Monday 25th May to Friday 30th May 2026

Dates for Your Diary

Monday 1st June	Inset Day
Thursday 4 th June	Year 6 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 11 th June	Year 4 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Friday 12 th June	Year 3 Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 16 th June	Year 2 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 2 nd July	Year 1 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 9 th July	Year 2 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Friday 10 th July	Year 6 and Reception Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Thursday 16 th July	School Mass (Leavers) 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 16 th July	Year 6 Leavers Production

Summer holiday Monday 20th July until Friday 28th August 2026

Tuesday 1st September 2026 - Staff Inset

Wednesday 2nd September 2026 - Staff Inset

Please note that if any of these dates change we highlight the new date in **Red**.



Side by Side Arts

Please see the information below if you wish for your child to partake in private music tuition at St Mary and St Thomas School.

Side By Side Arts Music Tuition



**New Starters and
Existing Student
registration QR**



Side By Side Arts will be offering high-quality music tuition at **St Mary & St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School** throughout the **2025/26 academic year!**

If your child is eager to learn a musical instrument and explore their creativity through music, simply scan the QR code to sign up and get started in September.

**Email
Info@SideBySideArts.org
For more information**

WWW.SIDEBYSIDEARTS.ORG

