



# St Mary's

Catholic Voluntary Academy



# Headteacher's Welcome



St Mary's is a loving, caring and friendly school. From the time children join us until the time they leave, the whole team at St Mary's endeavour to do the very best for them and help them to be the best they can be.

We pride ourselves on having high expectations. Behaviour at the school is exemplary; we encourage our children to be responsible for their own actions, and a culture of independence and respect is promoted through our core values.

The curriculum of the school, underpinned and inspired by the teachings of the Catholic Church, recognises that each child is a unique and valued individual. The curriculum promotes respect for the views of each child, as well as for people of all cultures.

We work very closely with parents to ensure that all children have the very best start to their school life. We love to celebrate successes and consider this to be the highlight of any week. We know that life is precious and that every second counts in a child's development. This is central to our mission and is always at the centre of what we do.

All of our children and their families are a vital part of the school community, together with staff, governors and parishioners from St Mary's Church; I am delighted to be a part of this community and I see it as a great privilege to be the headteacher.

**Mrs Luisa Maylard-Mason**  
Headteacher



# Our primary Mission

**We believe, succeed and soar with God's love**

**Our vision:** Christ is at the centre of St Mary's as we strive to nurture and care for all in our school community by encouraging them to believe, succeed and soar within God's love.

The school aims to create a happy and secure environment where our children can reach their full potential – spiritually, morally, culturally, physically and academically.

We nurture the whole child and have a strong vision to support all of our children. We encourage children to be:

- Disciples who put their faith into action.
- Role models who encourage others to shine and be the best version of themselves that they can be.
- Investigators who ask questions about the past, the present and the future.
- Artists who show our creativity and talents with flair and imagination.
- Storytellers who have a passion for reading and are able to communicate in many ways.
- Problem solvers who tackle tasks with an open mind and a positive approach.
- Team players who work together to achieve our goals.
- Explorers who learn new skills, embrace other cultures and value our locality and the wider world.



Our children have the opportunity to explore a captivating curriculum that promotes good attitudes to learning, high standards and high achievements.

St Mary's is set in beautiful grounds overlooking Wyndham Park. We have a large field and playground for the whole school to enjoy, as well as a wonderful outdoor learning space for Year 1 and Reception. Children also enjoy the use of our trim trail and play areas which are very well equipped.

We are fortunate to have our own 'Woodland of Wonder' area where all children take part in forest school sessions. This is definitely a WoW area!

Our classroom learning environments are designed to ensure all children are included. Classrooms are designed to encourage the engagement of children and questions are used to inspire and promote curiosity.

Our reception children enjoy a well-equipped foundation unit. Indoor and outdoor areas enrich the children's learning and development, as well as promote exploration, creativity and enquiry.

***'We are very happy with the school and my child is always happy to come and talks about what he has learned during the day'***

Parent quote 2023



Our learning  
**enviro**

***'I have learnt that I can trust God when  
I am facing hard times. I don't have to  
do it alone.'***

Pupil quote 2023



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# Our curriculum

The curriculum at St Mary's is planned based on National Curriculum and sets out the key knowledge children will learn in each subject area by the end of each year group and key stage. The curriculum is carefully sequenced and builds on prior knowledge.

The curriculum is taught on an individual subject basis, children will know exactly which subject they are working on (for example, History, Geography and Science).

An important feature of our curriculum is the way we make links between subjects, so the study of a particular book in English may link to, for example, the History unit for that term. This allows children to recall and revisit learning material in order to strengthen learning. Curriculum links and planned repetition ensure key knowledge is committed to memory.

## Teaching and learning

Teachers and subject leaders have deep subject knowledge of subjects they teach. High-quality professional development is provided to develop teacher subject knowledge.

We ensure the content of the curriculum is taught and practiced in logical sequences and steps to learning so that it becomes long-lasting knowledge with which children can think critically. Frequent revisits of previous learning are included with regular retrieval practice so that memory of previously taught content is strengthened.

We use a range of questions which generate thinking, keep children on track, check for understanding and address misconceptions. We use the cold call (no hands up) technique and we ensure there is a clear focus on improving, developing and using vocabulary by using challenging, varied texts.

Ongoing formative assessment is used by teachers to identify what stage a child is at in their learning and what their next steps are. Feedback is given to children in the form of verbal, written and peer assessment with summative assessment (where teachers measure a students' understanding against standardised criteria) at the end of topics and term.



# Catholic social teaching and British values

***'The church is just like school, it is part of the school'***

Pupil quote 2023

Catholic Social teaching and British values are integrated into teaching and learning.

They are embedded through the teachings of the Gospels which are woven through all aspects of the curriculum and school life.

Children at St Mary's are encouraged to have a voice. Opportunities to vote for school and class representatives are available to the children and the opinions of all are valued and welcomed. The children are encouraged to understand the civic duty and responsibility associated with casting a vote.

Respect for law and order begins as the children enter the school and respect themselves, each other, the property of the school, their place in it and that of the wider community.





# Beyond the curriculum

At St Mary's, we value the uniqueness of all our pupils and establish an ethos that develops the 'whole child'.

Our pupils are encouraged to take risks and build resilience. They are encouraged to be inquisitive lifelong learners who question and explore the world around them.

Our nurturing staff recognise and support a diversity of needs relating to learning, health, mental wellbeing, behaviour as well as emotional and physical requirements ensuring that all our pupils feel safe, secure and are able to aspire to be the very best they can be.



## Developing the whole child



### Forest Schools

At St Mary's, we are fortunate to have our very own Woodland Area where we are able to provide a Forest Schools learning approach for all children. Forest schools is a way of learning that allows children to develop new skills and take risks, alongside a love of the outdoors and a connection with the natural world. Research has shown that spending time outdoors is beneficial for both physical and mental health.

Through taking part in these Forest school sessions with our trained practitioner, children develop their social skills through working and playing with their peers. They learn to look after themselves as they are given the opportunity to take risks in safe contexts, which are introduced gradually with support and opportunities for discussion. Children will also learn new practical skills such as tool use, fire lighting and climbing when they are ready to do so.

There are opportunities for games, crafts, art, design and technology, adventurous play and imaginative play. Forest school sessions are child-led and built around children's interests and the choices the children make.

### Enrichment activities

Our children have opportunities to be involved in a wide range of lunch-time and after-school activities, appropriate to their age. From multi-sports, cheerleading and dance to art, chess and Eco clubs. We also make good use of resources within the wider community to enhance and extend the curriculum for all pupils.

***'The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding. The mission statement is lived out in every aspect of school life. All pupils, regardless of their faith background, value and feel part of the strong Catholic ethos which permeates the school.'***

Diocesan Report 2017





## Achieving full potential

The curriculum extends beyond academic to develop the broader development of children. Children are supported by our strong Lead Chaplain staff member to be missionary disciples which means acting in responsible, loving and caring ways to others. Two car loads full of clothes and toy donations were recently collected to support refugee communities in our local area of Grantham.

***'Our children have come on leaps and bounds this year.'***

Parent quote 2023

## Opportunities for personal development

Children have the opportunity to take on leadership roles and develop their independence through provision of a wide range of responsibilities across the school including:

- Chaplaincy teams
- House captains
- Bronze Young Ambassadors (sport Leaders)
- Lunchtime Leaders
- Playtime Leaders (currently in training)
- Minnie Vinnies
- School counsellors.

Children at St Mary's take the lead, for example they have recently responded to the national emergency in Ukraine by initiating and leading a fundraising cake sale.

Visits and workshops are planned in for every year group in order to enrich curriculum learning. For example, trips to the Yorkshire Wildlife Park, residentials in London, sound workshops from the School of Noise and Roots to Food workshops for the whole school.





## **Our community**

At St Mary's, we aim to develop strong partnerships with parents and carers. Parents are invited into school regularly to share learning experiences, be a part of celebrating their child's successes and also have access to guidance as to how to support their child further at home through for example the phonics and reading workshops provided.

St Mary's school values it's local community. The school is part of St Mary's Catholic Parish Church; the school has strong links with our parish. Masses are celebrated in school where parishioners are very welcome to attend. We support Parish events and fundraising.

We also have a thriving Parent Teacher Family Association (PTFA) who support the school in a range of ways through raising funds by holding events such as Christmas fayres, school discos and chocolate bingo. This funding is essential to allow the school to enrich the children's learning experience even further.

## **Joining St Mary's**

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Multi-Academy Trust is the admission authority for all the schools within the Trust and is responsible for determining the admissions policy.

On behalf of the Trust, the admissions are coordinated by the relevant Local Authority. All decisions relating to admission applications will be taken by the school's Local Governing Body.

Applications must be made on the Common Application Form provided by the Local Authority, Lincolnshire County Council. These dates will be published on the website, any late applications must be made over the phone direct with the County Council.

If you would like to arrange a visit to the school, please contact the school office. We will hold open days during the Advent term where parents/carers and children can visit the school.

***'The school is a caring and happy environment. Pupils are welcomed each morning with a smile and a cheerful greeting from staff. Pupils know that the adults in school look after them well. They feel safe.'***

***'Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have developed a clear vision for the school. The school's motto, 'We believe, we succeed, we soar' is at the heart of the important changes they have made to improve the school.'***

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