13 October 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

This is week 28 in Ordinary Time

A river does not drink its own water. Trees do not eat their own fruit. The sun does not shine for itself. And flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help one another. And perhaps the most beautiful thought is this: Life is good when you are happy – but life is so much better when others are happy because of you.
Pope Francis.

Celebrating 20 Years of the Bambisanani Partnership

On Thursday 8 October 2026, a group of our Year 13 Bambisanani students were invited by the Lord Mayor to attend a Civic Reception at the Civic Hall as part of the Bambisanani Partnership's 20th Anniversary celebrations. I had the privilege of attending this special event, alongside Miss Wood, Miss Marsh and our students, Bethany Jackson, Esther Dooling, Matthew Chamberlain, Ursula Burrows and Libby Connor. It was a wonderful morning, and a great opportunity to celebrate and share the incredible work of the Bambisanani Partnership.

Following the reception, the Lord Mayor invited us on a tour of the Council Chambers, providing a valuable insight into the responsibilities of the role and the work of the city council. We are incredibly proud of our students and the contribution they continue to make to this remarkable partnership as it marks 20 years of friendship, collaboration and making a difference.

Recognition of the Bambisanani Partnership's extraordinary work continued this week. On Monday 12 October 2026, Mr Geldart received a letter from Bishop Marcus and acknowledgment from the Archbishop of Westminster, both praising the Partnership's achievements over the past 20 years. Mr Geldart was also delighted to receive a letter from the High Commissioner of the Republic of South Africa to the United Kingdom, acknowledging the lasting impact of the Partnership and offering his congratulations on this important milestone.

To round off the celebrations, on Friday 9 October 2026, Katie White MP visited St Mary's in recognition of the outstanding work of the Bambisanani Partnership and the positive impact it has had on young people in both South Africa and the UK. It was a fitting conclusion to a remarkable week, providing an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate the charity's many achievements over the past two decades.

A special thank you goes to Miss Wood, Mrs Chattoe, Miss Marsh, our wonderful Sixth Form students, Mr Geldart, and all staff involved in the planning and organisation of these prestigious events.

News of the 20th Anniversary Civic Reception was also featured by Global Leeds and can be read online, alongside further coverage on the Bambisanani Partnership website. If you would like to keep up to date with the Bambisanani Partnership and the wonderful work it continues to do, you can sign up to receive its monthly newsletter by clicking here.

The Bishop Wheeler Catholic Academy Trust is a charity and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales.
Company Number: 8399801. Registered Office: St. Mary's Menston, A Catholic Voluntary Academy, Bradford Road, Menston, LS29 6AE

Sixth Form Open Evening – Wednesday 21 October 2026, 6:00pm-7:30pm
We are very much looking forward to welcoming our Year 11 students, their families and external visitors to our Sixth Form Open Evening on Wednesday 21 October 2026. For more information about our sixth form provision please click here.

We would also like to extend an invitation to prospective parents/carers and pupils considering joining St Mary's in September 2027 who may have been unable to attend our Whole School Open Day last month. If you, or someone you know, would be interested in visiting the school, please contact admissions@stmarysmenston.org and we will be happy to make arrangements to welcome you.

The National Mass for Altar Servers – Saturday 3 October 2026
Roberta Campbell, Year 9, Daniel Harris, Year 9 and Joshua Lowry, Year 7 pictured here with Archbishop Richard Moth on the steps of Westminster Cathedral following the National Mass for Altar Servers. Our students joined with 500 other altar servers from 15 dioceses across England and Wales. Congratulations and very well done. We are so very proud of your commitment and dedicated service to the Church.

Year 8 Smashed Live Event
On Wednesday 7 October 2026, we were delighted to welcome the Smashed Live educational theatre programme to St Mary's for our Year 8 students. This award-winning initiative uses an engaging live drama performance, followed by an interactive workshop, to explore the risks, legal implications and social pressures associated with underage drinking. The programme encourages young people to develop the confidence and decision-making skills needed to resist peer pressure and make safe, informed choices. Parents and carers can find out more about the programme and access a range of free resources at www.smashedproject.org.

Hello Yellow Day – Friday 9 October 2026
On Friday 9 October, staff and students took part in Hello Yellow Day, wearing yellow to support the annual campaign raising awareness and funds for young people's mental health. A huge well done to everyone who got involved, with a special mention to our Sixth Form Team, who have been fantastic ambassadors throughout the week, leading assemblies and highlighting the importance of looking after our mental health and supporting one another. Thank you to everyone who helped raise awareness and promote such an important message across our school community.

Wear It Pink Day – Friday 16 October 2026
St. Mary's will be supporting the national **Wear It Pink Day on Friday 16 October 2026** in association with Breast Cancer Awareness Month. This helps raise vital funds and awareness for breast cancer research, early detection and patient support. Students are invited to wear **one** item of pink along with their **normal uniform** and to make a donation on Parent Pay. This is a charity very close to our hearts at St. Mary's, and we look forward to our school community supporting this by wearing pink and donating on parent pay. Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity.

Cyber Switch Up 2026 Live Finals Event
We are delighted to announce that Theo Burnett, one of our Year 13 Computer Science students, has been selected to attend the Cyber Switch Up 2026 Live Finals Event, taking place on 24th November 2026 at Leeds Trinity University. As well as participating in the live final competition, Theo will have the opportunity to meet representatives from well-known organisations such as Amazon Web Services, IBM, Civil Aviation Authority, The British Army, BAE Systems, British Esports and Royal Air Force. A huge congratulations and well done to Theo, this is such a fantastic achievement, on behalf of everyone at St Mary's we wish you the very best of luck!

TechFirst Girls Competition
The Computer Science Department is inviting Year 8 girls to take part in the upcoming **TechFirst Girls Competition**, which aims to inspire young people with an interest in technology to explore future careers in Computing and Cyber Security. Mr Ashraf, Subject Leader for Computer Science, wrote to Year 8 parent/carers on Tuesday 13 October 2026 with further details about this exciting opportunity.

Extra-Curricular Timetable
Please find below our updated Extra-Curricular Timetable, featuring football, netball, book club and a wide range of other after-school activities available to students this term.

JOY-A-THON: Supporting a Local Family
Join the first-ever **JOY-A-THON**, a free 24-hour music event on **23-24 October 2026 at Pudsey Leisure Centre**, raising funds for local family. With fantastic live entertainment, family activities and community spirit, it's a great opportunity to support an important cause. Tickets are **free** – please visit: https://joyjustoneyou.com/ Thank you for helping to support this wonderful community initiative

The Lourdes Roadshow and Quiz Night
Please find attached to this week's letter information about the Lourdes Roadshow and Quiz Night, including dates, venues and how to get involved.

Leeds Athletic Netball Club
Please see attached poster from the Leeds Athletic Netball Club looking for primary and secondary players to join their netball family. Please contact leedsathleticnetballclub@gmail.com for further information.

Annual Lockdown Drill
As part of our annual cycle of health and safety procedures, we will carry out a Lockdown Drill on Wednesday 21 October 2026. Prior to the drill, students will receive information and guidance during Form Time so that they understand the procedure and know what to expect. As with our regular fire drills, these exercises play an important role in helping us maintain a safe and secure environment for all members of our school community. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Year 11 PPE (Pre-Public Examinations)
Our Year 11 students received the PPE timetables on Tuesday 13 October 2026. Please can parent/carers check their son/daughter has received the email from Mrs Jennings, Examinations Officer. Please contact school directly if your child has not received the email. Thank you.

October Half Term 2026
St Mary's will close to all students on Thursday 22 October 2026 for October half term. Further information about our school term dates and other school closure dates can be found here.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

M. Hattersley.

Miss M Hattersley
Headteacher

St Mary's Menston Extra-Curricular Clubs Timetable Autumn 2026

	Activity or Club	Year Group	Time/Location	Member of staff
Monday	Active Monday	All welcome	Lunch, Middle Yard	Mr Dempsey & Mrs Bird
	Football	Year 7-11 Girls	2.40-3.40pm, Grass	Mrs Thornton
Tuesday	Football	Year 7 Boys	2.40-3.40pm, Grass	Mr Thornton & Mr Shields
	Netball	Year 7 Girls	2.40-3.40pm, Yards/Sports Hall	Mrs Thornton
	Book Club	Year 7	Lunch Time, Library	Ms Hall
	School Drama Production	Years 8-13	2.40pm-4.30pm, H7	Miss Andrews
	A Choired Taste	Years 7-9	2.40-3.30pm, H3	Mr Scholey
Wednesday	Wellbeing Wednesday	All welcome	Lunchtimes, back of H22	Mrs Findlay & Mrs Harrison
	Volleyball	Sixth Form	2.40-3.40pm, Sports Hall	Mr Thornton
	Football	Years 8-11	2.40-3.40pm, Grass	Mr Pringle & Mr Clancy
	Running Club	All Welcome	2:40-3:40, Yards	Mrs Harrison
	Idea Award – Computing Enterprise Challenge	Years 7-9	Week B, 2.40-3.40, H17	Ms Nightingale
	School Drama Production	Years 8-13	2.40pm-4.30pm, H7	Miss Andrews
	Jazz Band	All years, Grade 2+	2.40-3.30pm, H3	Mr Scholey
Thursday	Netball	Years 8, 9, 10, 11	2.40-3.40pm, Top Yard	Miss Marsh
	Games Club (chess, cards, board games)	All years	2.40-3.40pm, H26	Mrs Miller
	School Drama Production	Years 8-13	2.40pm-4.30pm, H7	Miss Andrews
	Vocalise	Years 10-13	2.40-3.30pm, H3	Mr Scholey
Friday	Come and Play Drums, guitars, keyboards, tech	All years	2.40-3.30pm, H3	Mr Scholey
	Flourishing Friday Homework Club	All years	Lunchtime, Library	Mrs Nunn

- In addition, the Music practice rooms will be open for bookings by individuals and groups for practice/rehearsal every day from 2.40-4pm. Please see Mr Scholey to organise.
- Lessons are now open for booking on the following instruments - Guitar, Bass, Drums, Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Violin, Viola, Piano. Lessons take place on a rotated timetable during the school day, payments are made directly to the private tutors. To apply, please email p.scholey@stmarysmenston.org.
- Bambisanani Award for years 7 & 8 – see Miss Wood to get involved.
- Duke of Edinburgh Award – see Mr. Dootson or Miss Mason to get involved.
- All students are welcome at extra-curricular sports clubs regardless of if they are in the selected teams or not.
- Students usually meet in the top changing rooms straight after school at 2:40pm unless directed otherwise by their club teacher.
- Students simply use their PE kit for the extra-curricular session unless told otherwise by their club teacher.
- After school sessions finish at 3:40pm unless stated otherwise, and students are responsible for making their own way home after this time.
- If a club is to be cancelled for any reason, teachers will let students know as far in advance as possible. If it has to be on the same day, then a pop-up message will appear to all students during their lessons. They can go to pupil services or M5 at break or lunch if they then need to contact home.

WELLBEING / SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION

Contact Telephone Number for Parents
The school office will be open during normal school hours: 01943 883000.

If you are outside of school hours or it is a holiday and you have a concern you can ring the local authority social worker team directly.

- Leeds Children's Social Work Services Emergency Duty Team on 0113 535 0600. Further information can be found on the Leeds local authority website.
- Bradford Children's Social Work Services Emergency Duty Team on 01274 431 010. Further information can found on the Bradford local authority website.

NSPCC Helpline
You can contact the NSPCC Helpline by calling 0808 800 5000 or emailing help@NSPCC.org.uk
The NSPCC Helpline is currently available 10am–4pm Monday to Friday, however callers may experience voice distortion due to technical difficulties. You can email help@NSPCC.org.uk at any time for free. You don't have to say who you are. If the NSPCC haven't responded to you and your concerns for the safety of a child increase, please contact the police or local Children's Services directly (as noted above). Please be assured that the NSPCC action all contact received via their Helpline.

NHS ChatHealth (chathealth.nhs.uk)
ChatHealth enables young people to access support and advice regarding various emotional health and wellbeing concerns. To find out more information about ChatHealth and how to access the support please use the above link. ChatHealth also offer a Text Service 07520 619750 (8.30am – 4.30pm Monday to Friday) 11-19 year olds. Mental Health/General Health enquiries.

Young Minds Crisis Messenger - Provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis. If you need urgent help, texts are free to YM to 85258. All texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors.

Wellbeing and Emotional Support
The following resources are available to support students:

- Time for Young People - Time For Young People is a free emotional wellbeing service for young people aged 11 to 18 in Leeds.
- **Kooth:** Young people aged 10-18 are fortunate to have the Kooth service available to them. Kooth is an **online** mental health community where you can access **free, safe and anonymous support**, commissioned by Leeds NHS Clinical Commissioning Group. Further information on Kooth can also be found on our website under the Personal Development section of each Year Group Shell.
- **MindMate:** Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health. Online (https://www.mindmate.org.uk/) and via telephone 0300 555 0324.
- **Teen Connect:** Emotional support over the phone, through text messages, or online to young people in Leeds aged 11-18. They are open from 3.30pm -2am Monday - Friday, and 6pm - 2am on a Saturday and Sunday.
  By phone: 0808 800 1212
  By text: 0771 566 1559
  Online: www.teenconnect.org.uk
  Instagram: @lslcs_teenconnect or visit https://www.instagram.com/lslcs_teenconnect/
  Facebook: @TeenConnectLeeds https://www.facebook.com/TeenConnectLeeds/

Teen Mental Health – A Guide for Parents
https://www.mytutor.co.uk/blog/parents/teen-mental-health-a-guide-for-parents/

Safer Leeds - Domestic violence and abuse (leeds.gov.uk)

Safeguarding Resources/Information
The following resources, highlighted by the Leeds Safeguarding Team, are also available for parents:

- NSPCC Keeping Children Safe Online provides a useful guide to social networks, apps and guide.
- National Online Safety have produced a series of top tips guides to support remote learning for Parents, Children and Teachers
- Thinkuknow is the education programme from NCA-CEOP, a UK organisation which protects children both online and offline for different age groups and parents.
- Childnet has produced a Parent and Carer Toolkit which is a collection of three resources designed to help you talk to your child about their online life, manage boundaries around family internet use and point you in the direction of where to get further help and support.