

St Mary's Catholic Primary School and
Nursery, a Voluntary Academy

School Prospectus



2023-2024

St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, A Voluntary Academy

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Dear Parents and Families,

Thank you for expressing an interest in our school. St Mary's is the only Catholic Primary School in the Bacup area and is proud to belong to the ROMERO Catholic Academy Trust. We feel that our Christian ethos, coupled with strong links with the community, will offer your child and your family a friendly environment in which they will receive a first rate education whilst being given the freedom to develop their own interests and personality which in turn will shape their learning journey through our school.

We hope that this prospectus will give you an idea of what is special about our school, help you to feel part of the school community and help you make an informed decision when choosing to send your child to St Mary's.

We pride ourselves that we take an active interest in every child within the school, not simply focusing on their ability to learn but also the development of all aspects of their personalities. As a Catholic school we extend this interest to include their spiritual, moral and personal development and aim to help them prepare for the future beyond school.

Our pupils take a pride in themselves, their appearance and their work – always striving for high standards of achievement and presentation at all times.

St Mary's is proud of its warm, friendly and welcoming atmosphere, a fact which is constantly being remarked upon by visitors. It is a reputation that we are determined to maintain and enhance – something that we invite you to experience firsthand – whether by visiting the school to look round, attending events that we organise or by volunteering to help in class either on a one off basis or more regularly.

After reading this prospectus, please do not hesitate to contact the school to arrange a visit or simply to speak with the head teacher if you are unclear of anything at all.

We are confident that the wide range of experiences, the dedication of our staff and governors and our aim to constantly seek opportunities for further improvement means that your child will be very happy at St Mary's and be well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Claire Mills

Head Teacher

Welcome to our
School. We pray that
here you will find
peace, happiness,
the love of God and
an awareness of His
care for us all.



The Principles of our School

Our Mission Statement

We are happy living and learning in God's Friendship

St Mary's School was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The School works closely with the Church to ensure that its educative mission is fulfilled.

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is an important part of the parish of St Mary and St Anselm in Bacup and Whitworth. We aim to work with you, the parents and carers, the parish and the local community to help the children as they grow in faith and knowledge.

Our Mission Statement, which was decided in consultation with the children, parents and staff of St Mary's, reflects our values.

Aims of St Mary's School



At St Mary's we aim to:-

- create a stimulating, Christian environment which is warm, open, friendly and welcoming while remaining both disciplined and ordered;
 - realise the full potential of every member of the school community;
 - develop all your child's gifts, skills and talents, and aspirations;
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- demand the highest possible standards both for and from the children;
 - help develop every member of the school community educationally, physically, emotionally and spiritually;
 - ensure that every member of the school community is confident, independent of thought and fully prepared for the next stage in their education;
 - enable the smooth transition of every pupil to other schools by effective, exciting and appropriate delivery of the curriculum;
 - prepare every individual to take their place as a valued member of our community.

Inclusion

At St Mary's we believe that each individual is unique in the eyes of God and as such it is the basic right of each person to be valued and cherished for who they are, regardless of their background. This means that:

- everyone should have equality of opportunity;
- each child shall have access to the full range of curriculum experiences which are offered by the school;
- no person should be, or feel, diminished or discriminated against.



Background to our School

A brief history of our school

- 1852 Father Henry Mulvaney established a Mission in Bacup. A garret over a shop in Market Street (now Crowthers Opticians) was used as Church and School.
- 1857 A Smithy over Princess Street was said to have been used for Services at this time. It is not clear whether the school occupied the same premises.
- 1862 The School moved to Wesley Place.
- 1871 A new School and a Presbytery were built next to the church.
- 1904 A new Infant School was built in Dale Street and the other buildings were enlarged. This is now used as the Parish Centre.
- 1956 Part of the School's buildings were condemned as unsafe.
- 1959 A new School was built on the present site. It was opened by George Andrew Beck, the Bishop of Salford in 1960. The cost of the building was £60,000.
- 1984 A nursery class was established at the school.
- 2000 The School celebrated its 40th anniversary at the present site.
- 2002 The School celebrated 150 years of academic achievement in the town.
- 2010 The School celebrated 50 years at its new site.

Our School Today

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is the only Catholic School in the town of Bacup. It has a thriving nursery of over fifty-part time places. Offering all the advantages of a Church school, its roll is not limited to Catholics but rather caters for families who believe in giving children a strong moral understanding of today's world as well as an excellent all round education. St Mary's is proud to be called an Extended School with a Breakfast Club beginning at 8.00 am every morning and free after school activities and flexible paid cover that can provide child care until 5.15 pm every day.



The Organisation of the School

The Nursery



Places are available in our nursery as soon as your child turns three. We can provide:-

- 15 hours free childcare for all families with 3-4 year old children. Additional paid sessions can also be booked.
- 30 hours free childcare for working families with 3-4 year old children.
- St Mary's Nursery is also registered with the Government's Tax-Free childcare scheme for working families. For every £8 you pay in, the Government will add £2, up to £2,000 per child.

Visit the website www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to find out which scheme would be most beneficial to you and how to apply. Our EYFS leader is Mrs Webster, and our EYFS team can help you with applications if needed.

The Nursery Class

We aim to provide a happy, stimulating nursery environment where your child can play, be with other children and enjoy themselves. The activities that take place are carefully planned and organised, so that, through this play, the children are learning, using and developing skills and ideas which are the basis of their education, forming a foundation upon which their learning will be based for the rest of their lives.

When your child leaves the nursery we hope that they will be:

- independent, self-confident and fully prepared for school;
- have all the appropriate skills for their age;
- be eager to learn;
- be able to communicate and co-operate with other children and adults;
- be able to care for each other and the environment.



The Primary School



School Uniform

The school uniform consists of: a blue jumper or cardigan, tartan or grey skirt, grey trousers, white polo shirt and sensible flat black shoes. During adverse weather boots can be worn when walking to school and during playtimes, these must be changed into black shoes or pumps whilst inside the school building. School uniform helps to promote a sense of belonging and reflects the high standards that are set by everyone associated with St Mary's.

For health and safety reasons earrings of any kind cannot be worn in school, long hair (shoulder length or longer) must be tied back and must be of natural colour; no shaved patterns are allowed. Nail varnish and makeup cannot be worn to school.

Children must change for PE and Games. The PE kit consists of: black shorts, a white T-shirt and a pair of black pumps or training shoes (outside). In colder weather, children can wear black jogging bottoms/leggings instead of shorts. PE kit must be kept in a pump bag in school. In Key Stage 2 children go swimming, a towel and swimming trunks/costume are needed (no shorts or bikinis). Children wishing to wear trainers to play sports at playtimes can do so but they must change their footwear into black shoes or pumps whilst in the school building.

Items of school uniform must be clearly labelled.

Behaviour

We recognise that to maintain high standards of behaviour we need to work in close partnership with the parents of the school. Children are expected to be well mannered, co-operate with others, speak courteously and respect everyone in our community **at all times**. We prefer to focus on the positive aspects of a child's behaviour. As a result, we try to modify a class's behaviour by praising children who are doing what is expected rather than focusing on the activities of a very few individuals who may not. Children will receive additional praise through a range of merit badges/certificates both in class and during lunch times, being awarded house points and stickers, as well as being verbally praised for the things that they are doing well.

On Friday morning the whole school gathers for a Celebration Assembly, where 'Star of the Week' certificates are handed out and children are once more recognised for their achievements. If your child has received a certificate during the week then you will be invited to attend the Celebration Assembly. If it is at all possible we would strongly encourage you to attend, since the children take a real pride in their achievements.



There are times, however, when steps need to be taken to correct behaviour which is unacceptable in a Christian Community. Often this can be achieved by imposing sanctions such as the removal of privileges e.g. being kept in for a period at lunchtime, losing some reward time or reflection time to complete work.

Lunch Times

Lunch time is a very important social occasion at St Mary's. Children are encouraged to eat their meals with friends in our dining hall, before going outside to play.



School Dinners

Excellent dinners are prepared in the school's kitchens. Parents are encouraged to order their child's dinner from home using our School Gateway system. Every day the children are given a choice of main courses and puddings. There is also a selection of fresh fruits and a salad bar. It is possible for your child to bring a packed lunch to school.

Free Milk

Free milk is provided to all Nursery and Reception children (until their 5th birthday) and all pupil premium children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Assessment and Reporting Arrangements

Children's progress through the school is continually assessed by the class teacher and this forms the basis of the Annual Report which is provided to parents in July of each year.

Parents are also informed of their children's progress and well-being at Parent Teacher evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms and a formal written report at the end of the Summer term. However, teachers are always willing to discuss any concerns you may have. Half-termly letters are sent out for each class, and teachers updates their class pages on our school website.



Life Long Learning

The Foundation Stage Curriculum



In Reception, staff build on the work begun in the Nursery class. With the support of our dedicated teaching assistants the children are educated in line with an Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum which is divided into the following areas of learning:

- communication and language;
 - physical development;
 - personal, social and emotional development;
 - literacy;
 - mathematics;
-
- understanding the world;
 - expressive arts and design.

The National Curriculum

St Mary's offers a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

We are legally required to follow the statutory national curriculum which sets out programmes of study for KS1 and KS2 . For more information about our curriculum subjects, please visit the St Mary's school website www.stmarysbacup.org where you can find out what your child's class are learning. We plan a personalised curriculum catered to the needs of our pupils, where they develop skills progressively. We aim to embed our Catholic values within our lessons, as well as to encourage a positive growth mindset and to reflect and promote British values.



Extra-Curricular Education

The school is also particularly proud of its record in providing extracurricular activities. In addition to our Breakfast club and After School Club, children are also offered a variety of different after-school activities which have included dodgeball, board games, multi-sports, homework club, Forest Schools and doodle club. These clubs are either run by members of staff, or by professional coaches.



Equality of every opportunity

All lessons at St Mary's are carefully tailored to the needs of every child in a given class. This is achieved in a wide range of different ways:

- catering for different learning styles which include visual – children who learn by seeing and reading things, auditory – children who learn through listening and through talking and kinaesthetic – children who learn through activity i.e. times tables aerobatics, PE and role play;
- By providing different levels of support or challenge in written work;
- By encouraging children to work collaboratively, either in pairs or larger groups;
- By making use of computers, iPads and other ICT equipment;
- By allowing children to interact with teachers and teaching assistant;
- By encouraging children to take a lead in their own learning by identifying personal interests and goals;
- By developing understanding of growth mindset to build confidence, resilience and readiness for learning.

Able, Gifted and Talented

We believe strongly in ensuring that all children's needs are met. As a result, all teachers provide stimulating and challenging work designed to ensure that our most able (collectively known as Able, Gifted and Talented) take an active role in developing lifelong learning skills.

Special Educational Needs

During their time in school, children may be identified as requiring additional support to access the curriculum. We are very proud of the quality of support that is provided for all children at our school. Our Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO), Mrs Love, the Acting Assistant Headteacher, identifies children who may need support, but each member of staff takes responsibility for monitoring and assessing all children's progress in their class. Children with additional needs have access to a range of resources and are taught strategies to help them access the curriculum.

Pastoral Support

At St Mary's we have a pastoral team who provide pastoral support for our pupils through nurture sessions, behaviour support, Thrive time, Art and Lego therapy. We have a Family Support Worker, Miss Cunningham, who meets with parents and children regularly and signposts our families to further support within the community. We also run Rainbows groups for children experiencing loss or bereavement; Inclusion PE sessions to help social development and each class learns yoga.



Pupil Participation and Leadership Groups

We also believe that children themselves are at the centre of all learning and that their opinions need to be valued and listened to. As a result, there is a school council who liaise with all classes to share ideas and feedback about different issues and initiatives within school. We also have teams of:

- Mental Health Champions
- Eco-Warriors
- Digital Leaders
- Sports Leaders
- Librarians

The GIFT Team

At St Mary's, we have a Growing in Faith Team who are the 'School Disciples sent to spread the word of God'. The GIFT team are trained by Salford Diocese to be Prayer Disciples and lead prayers in assembly and class-worship to encourage others to grow in their faith. The GIFT team meets weekly to plan activities, film videos to share with other classes, lead worship and organise events.

Home Learning

Studying at home is a strong and important link between home and school. We recognise your role as every child's first and primary educator. We try to give as much help and support as we can to families, recognising the need for a true home / school partnership for the education of every child.

Home Learning does not take the place of class work but is an opportunity for you, and your child, to build and reinforce learning that has already taken place at school. You can help by ensuring that it is neatly presented and returned on time.

Some children may choose to complete additional work in their own time, but it is important to remember that home learning is not limited to the work set by school and can include clubs and activities as well as simply playing out with friends.

Extending our School

In an effort to develop our school's role within the community and provide for the needs of parents and families as well as our pupils, St Mary's has sought to offer extended provision. Most mornings our school day begins at 8.00 am with our Breakfast Club and ends at 5.15 pm as the last child leaves our Busy Kids After School Club.

Breakfast Club

Our breakfast club runs each morning. The club opens at 8.00 am and runs until 8.45 am. Children are given cereal, toast, fruit or juice for a small daily charge. The club is open to all children in the school. There is a charge of £1.60 per day. If you have more than 1 child, additional children are charged at 90p per day.

Children arrive in school at 8.45am for breakfast bagels and registration time. If your child is at breakfast club, they will still be offered a bagel as they return to class.



St Mary's Busy Kids After School Club

St Mary's is very proud of its after school club Busy Kids. Each day the children are provided with a substantial healthy snack and a range of games, activities and toys. The Supervisor keeps a record of your child's favourite games and makes sure that these are available on the days that your child attends. There are also art, craft and design activities run by the After School Club staff and the Club has access to the ICT suite. Space is also provided so that children who wish to complete home learning tasks can do so – with the Club Supervisor providing the same kind of support that you would do at home. The cost per child is £3.50 for a short session (from 3.20 pm to 4.15 pm) and £7.00 per child for a long session (from 3.20 pm to 5.15 pm).



Wider Opportunities

In addition to the requirements of the National Curriculum we feel that we have a duty to teach skills which will help prepare children for successful adult lives. To facilitate this, children are given the opportunities to learn a wider range of skills. These include musical instrument tuition, a range of different sports through our lunchtime provision, road safety and cycling proficiency, First Aid training and learning through visitor workshops. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to participate in a residential trip to an activity centre.

We also like to participate in events with other local schools including Sports Days; work on community initiatives including litterpicking and working with local businesses; and welcome our local police in to work positively with our pupils on a range of objectives.

Healthy Schools

At St Mary's, children eat healthily through our dinner choices and also by participating in the 5 a day project which allows us to provide fruit and subsidised milk to children throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

Additionally pupils in KS2 can purchase a healthy snack from their class snack shop at breaktimes.

The Sacramental Programme



Each year our Catholic children in Year 3 are offered the chance to take part in the Salford Diocese Sacramental Programme. This helps them to prepare to take their first Holy Communion in the Summer term. This preparation takes place in partnership with the children at St Anselm's school in Whitworth and is led by our parish priest Father Chris McGrane.

As we are a Catholic school, Father Chris often comes to school to celebrate Mass with us, and to visit children and staff.

Charity

We believe that it is integral to our mission that our children learn how to participate in charity events. In addition to supporting specific charities, children are encouraged to think of fund raising ideas of their own and are given opportunities to plan out these events under the supervision of the teachers.



School Trips

If you think back to your own time at school I am sure that amongst your fondest memories will be a school trip. At St Mary's we believe that school trips form enriching and valuable opportunities within a child's education. Every year teachers spend considerable time and effort planning exciting and stimulating trips.

Year 6 Residential Trip

In Year 6 all children are encouraged to go on a three-day Residential Trip to Robinwood, an outdoor activities centre based in Todmorden. This is a fantastic experience where children participate in new team-building challenges in an outdoor environment. Robinwood gives children a superb opportunity to develop confidence, strengthen friendship bonds and tackle various physical and mental tasks.

Safeguarding

The School has a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. This is available via the School Website or paper copies can be requested from the School Office. All concerns regarding child protection are treated as confidential. There is a dedicated team of Designated Safeguarding Leads within school, and a pastoral team to support your child and offer family support in a range of ways.

Should you have cause to be concerned about the conduct of any member of staff, including the Headteacher, you should contact the School to discuss your concern with the Headteacher or alternatively, should the safeguarding concern relate to the Headteacher, you can request a meeting with the Chair of Governors. All allegations against staff are investigated in line with the Child Protection, Safeguarding and Complaints Policies.

Please visit our website to find out more about our school, or contact the office with any questions.

<https://www.stmarysbacup.org>

