

THE MESSENGER

from 
St Mary's
Worcester

Welcome

As we reach the end of term it is time for me to reflect on my first term here at St Mary's. It has been an extraordinarily busy one, for both pupils and staff, characterised by an immense amount of hard work, focus, and above all, fun! As a new girl myself, I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know everyone and I hope all our new pupils feel the same!

When we return in the new year, we will be entering a new decade. Together with my staff and trustees, I have been considering how to build on the strengths and traditions of St Mary's and create a school that will flourish in 2011 and beyond.

We at St Mary's are rightly proud of the balance we work hard to strike. We enable our girls to achieve excellent results which enable them to go on to great universities and careers, while we focus too on the development of the individual, at a deeper level than any string of grades can ever reflect. After all, there are no A*s for determination, integrity, leadership potential, responsibility, values, kindness, common sense or a positive attitude to life. At St Mary's, areas of personal development flourish alongside scholarship and enterprise.

Our new vision is to prepare our girls to face the challenges of being the women leaders of tomorrow - in effect to become a centre of excellence for the education of women leaders. This aim continues the vision and spirit of our founder, Julie Postel, to empower and equip young women to make their mark in the local and global community and to give every girl within our care the best possible future.

A new leadership programme will be launched in the new year. This will be integrated within the curriculum and will give each girl the opportunity to develop the key attributes of leadership from the moment they begin with us in Reception class. Underpinning this will be our ethos of mutual respect, tolerance and exceptional personal attention which pervades all aspects of life here at St Mary's.

In the future when girls at St Mary's are ready to leave school they will have acquired better exam passes - especially in vital subjects - been exposed to an extraordinary range of extra-curricular opportunities and developed greater self confidence. But they will also be better equipped for a life in which they will be both career women and mothers, balancing roles to an extent that few men ever do.

I thank everyone - trustees, staff, parents and above all the pupils - for their friendship and support this term. I wish you all a very peaceful and happy Christmas and I look forward to seeing everyone back in school refreshed for the new term.



St Mary's Scoops Young Enterprise Award

Spark, the young enterprise company consisting of St Mary's sixth formers, beat off competition from King's School, The Chantry and Bewdley High School to win the best young enterprise stall at the Bewdley Charity Fayre held in November.

The company, consisting of all lower sixth students and managed by Grace Cleary and Bethany Randall, came up with a fantastic idea which they executed with great aplomb - Sir Alan Sugar would have been proud!

Their product was a recipe book, named 'Truly Scrumptious yet Delightfully

Simple', comprising family favourite recipes for each season made easy. It is packed full of recipes from friends, family and the students' favourite eateries in Worcestershire, and is beautifully presented.

Commenting on their success, Bethany Randall said: "We really enjoyed putting this recipe book together but we had no idea we would come away with the Young Enterprise Award. The competition was stiff so we are absolutely delighted that the judges recognised the quality behind our product!"

To whet your appetite, see the back cover for a fantastic recipe for a Christmas favourite, Chocolate Yule Log.

If you are impressed and would like to purchase your own copy of 'Truly Scrumptious yet Delightfully Simple' please send a cheque for £6.99, made payable to 'Spark' to Bethany Randall, Spark, St Mary's School, Mount Battenhall, Worcester WR5 2HP.



St Mary's Worcester tops national league!

Pupils at St Mary's are exceeding expectations! The school has been placed in the top 5% of schools nationally for our value added measure.

The value added measure is based on the difference between the predicted results of a pupil entering Year 7 and their performance in GCSE at 16 years of age. When pupils enter Year 7 they undergo tests (National Cognitive Ability Tests) which then produce predicted grades in the core GCSE subjects. A comparison can then be made in Year 11 between the grades predicted on pupils cognitive ability when they entered the school and their actual results.

Pupils in schools placed in the top 5% of schools are judged to be making exceptional progress.

Headmistress, Mrs Catherine Jawaheer, believes the school's success lies in the very particular brand of single-sex education we offer:

"At St Mary's the teachers are experts at understanding what makes girls tick. School life is focused around nurturing a girl's self confidence, developing her intellectual curiosity and encouraging

creative thinking. This is achieved within very small classes which allows for an extraordinary level of personal support and care. In addition to this, the learning environment is one in which all the scientists are girls, all the artists are girls, all the mathematicians are girls and all the writers are girls. They are not bound by gender stereotypes and they are encouraged to take risks and be independent thinkers. As a result their aspirations and ambitions are limitless."

A book at bedtime

Children from the early years and their families enjoyed our first 'Story at Bedtime' evening held in November to promote the key skills of Communication, Language and Literacy. Staff and children dressed up in their pyjamas and enjoyed listening to stories whilst parents relaxed with a cup of hot cocoa! A wonderful evening was had by all.



Spot the Fundraising!

An outbreak of spots (and stripes) occurred in the Preparatory School on Friday 19th November 2010 to raise funds for BBC Children in Need. Thank you to all those who contributed.



Focus on the Crocus to end polio



Year 5 girls have planted Focus on the Crocus bulbs for Rotary International. This is a project to raise awareness of the End Polio Now campaign which is happening worldwide. The colour of the flower will remind us of the special dye which is put on children's fingers once they have been immunised (this is so that the doctors know not to immunise the children again!).

What colour flower do you think our crocuses will have?

Powering the future

Year 11 students attended a fascinating lecture entitled 'Powering the Future' at Bromsgrove School this term. Organised by the Institute of Physics, the lecture was delivered by a young successful female plasma physicist, Dr Melanie Windrush, who shared her excitement for nuclear fusion!

Melanie, who has a PhD in plasma physics from Imperial College London, has appeared on BBC One's Bang Goes the Theory and National Geographic Channel's Mad Labs.

Our Year 11 pupils learned about how scientists, working on nuclear fusion, hope to replicate the behaviour of the sun here on earth to produce a plentiful and environmentally friendly energy source.

Wear it pink

Thank you everybody for dressing up in pink and raising £70 for Breast Cancer Awareness.



Festival of Light

Year 4 held a fascinating assembly all about Diwali – the Festival of Light – to mark this Hindu celebration which started on 5th November.



It's all Greek to me!

The Amphitheatre Club is a club run entirely by and for pupils who are interested in Classics and Drama. The club is run by pupils in Year 12, Hollie Christian-Brookes, helped by Beth Morris and Felicity Parkinson-Allsopp, and they work on dramatisations of Greek myths.

This term they put on a performance of Pandora's Box for members of the Lower School, with Eleri Clarke from Year 7 playing Pandora. All deserve congratulations for organising such a lively and accomplished performance all in their own time.

Their next project is going to be Theseus and the Minotaur.



A Masterclass with Lloyd Webber

Year 11 student, Phillippa Gleed, was chosen to take part in a cello masterclass with Julian Lloyd Webber in November. Organised by the Elgar Music School, Philippa had to undergo a rigorous selection process. She performed one of Bach's unaccompanied cello suites in front of an audience with guidance from Lloyd Webber himself.

Good Food on Show

Pupils from Years 12 and 13 visited the Good Food Show in November and enjoyed sampling the dishes and watching many celebrity chefs at work, including James Martin, John Torode, Paul Hollywood, Mat Tebbut, Rachel Allen and Greg Wallace.

On Stage

Congratulations to Keely Taylor Hall who will be performing in the Swan Theatre's production of Cinderella this Christmas and Eleri Clarke who has been selected for the Malvern Festival Theatre's production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat in January.

Stepping up to the Challenge of Debate

As current regional title holders of the English Speaking Union (ESU) Public Speaking Competition, it is no surprise that the Debating Society continues to be a popular extra-curricular activity at St Mary's.

We have welcomed two new Year 7s to the society this term, Cliona Gordon and Georgia Peters who show great promise and work very well with the older girls.

Beatrice Pallister from Year 12 has long been involved with the society and she has been joined by Beth Morris (Year 12) who is keen to get involved in the sixth form.

The Year 10 team did well in their first competition of the term in which they opposed the motion:

This house believes that single sex schools are harmful to a child's development.

The team gained positive feedback from the judges who complimented them on their 'welcoming manner' (Carys Aldous Hughes as chair), 'good questions' (Annabel Sale as questioner) and 'well spoken and brave delivery' (Jodie Fletcher as speaker).

Jodie Fletcher said, "I was nervous at first but I really enjoyed it as it has given me a lot more confidence about speaking in public and I'd love to do it again".

The team gained valuable experience for their next competition.

The Year 12 team beat Malvern College in their debate at the ESU Schools Mace held at Malvern College. Claire Cuerden and Grace Cleary opposed the motion:

This house believes national sporting events are a drain not a benefit to society.

Grace said, "This competition was much more intense than those we took part in during Year 11; we had to think on our feet much more." Claire added, "I definitely want to give this another go next year; you get a real sense of achievement when you win your debate."

Forthcoming Events for the Debating Society include:

Oxford Union Schools' Competition (Year 12: Beatrice Pallister and Bethany Randall).

Catenian Public Speaking Contest. Beatrice Pallister. March 13th 2011.

Remembrance and Reflection

November was a very busy time musically starting with All Souls Mass at St George's. The Mass included movements from Fauré's Requiem and Stefanie McMinn's singing of the Pie Jesu was poised and beautiful. Not only was the choir's contribution musically moving the girls also read and sung with dignity.

St Mary's has taken part in Lights of Love right from the very first service organised by St Richards Hospice many years ago and once again the choir took part in this special occasion in the Cathedral. 'Let it Be' by Lennon & McCartney was the choir's musical offering and despite the sadness of the service the girls singing was inspiring.

'Remembrance' a meditation in words and music has now become an annual musical fixture in the Chamber Choir's musical diary and was once again an evening of choral singing of the highest calibre. The audience were privileged to hear the first performance by Celiante of Amanda Ballard's new choral work De Profundis Psalm 130. Hollie Christian-Brookes' solo singing was outstanding and the whole

evening, with readings meditating on the Last Four Things interspersed with moving music, is one to watch out for next year.

A wealth of festive music making was also on show at the Christmas Concerts and carol services. The Chamber Choir performed at Worcester Cathedral's 'Spirit of Christmas' concert on December 12th.

We will remember them

A poignant assembly was held to mark Armistice Day in which pupils thought about and prayed for our armed forces here and abroad, both in the past and in the present.



Operation Christmas Child!

Children in the Preparatory School learned about this amazing charity which provides Christmas presents sent in shoe boxes to needy children around the world. They were told some very sad stories of the lives some of these children lead. In response, the children have collected over 40 Christmas shoe boxes this year. These boxes will make children less fortunate than ourselves very happy. Thank you girls for your support.



Equestrian Success

The St Mary's Equestrian Team consisting of Antonia Gillett (yr12), Georgina Toole (yr10) Becky Wintle (yr11) and Cosette Darby (yr11) qualified earlier this year for the national schools dressage competition.

This event was due to take place on the 4th and 5th of December but was postponed until February 2011 because of the freezing conditions.

The team came 2nd at the Princethorpe inter schools dressage competition back in April with individual 1st going to Cosette Darby, 4th to Becky Wintle and 5th to Antonia Gillett. Finishing 2nd enabled them to qualify for this national event and Cosette also qualified to compete as an individual in the same national schools competition.

We look forward to the competition in February.



Chocolate Yule log

Ingredients:

6 large eggs, separated

150g (5oz) golden caster sugar

60g (2oz) fair-trade cocoa powder

For the filling:

284ml carton whipping cream

200g (8oz) bar plain chocolate, chopped

Few drops of vanilla flavouring

Icing sugar and cocoa, for dusting

18 x 28cm (7 x 11in) Swiss-roll tin, lined with baking parchment.

1. To make the log, whisk the egg yolks with the caster sugar until the mixture is very light and frothy, and leaves a trail when the whisk is lifted out of it. Fold in the cocoa powder.
2. Whisk the egg whites until they are stiff, then fold them into the chocolate mixture.
3. Pour the mixture into the lined Swiss roll tin and spread evenly out to the edges, taking care not to knock out too much of the air.
4. Bake the cake in the centre of a preheated oven at 180°C (350°F, gas mark 4) for 20-25 mins, or until the cake springs back when lightly touched in the centre.
5. Remove the cake from the oven and turn it out on to a sheet of baking parchment, dusted with icing sugar. Leave the lining paper on the cake, and cover the whole thing with a clean, damp tea towel. Leave the cake to cool completely.
6. To make the filling, bring the cream to the boil and then pour it over the chocolate. Stir until the chocolate melts. Add vanilla extract to taste. Leave the mixture to cool, then chill it in the refrigerator.
7. Whisk the chilled filling until it's light and fluffy.
8. Remove the lining paper from the cake and trim the edges. Spread the filling over the cake and then roll it up with the help of the baking parchment. Dust the top of the cake with icing sugar and cocoa, then transfer it to a serving plate.



Success in the Pool

Year 6 pupil, Sophie Monks, currently swims at County level and has already achieved at least six County qualifying times in various strokes for the Midland County Championships which will be held in March 2011. She was also ranked 95th in the UK for backstroke in November by the ASA (Amateur Swimming Association).



Match results

Week Beg Tues 2nd Nov

Yr 7 Hockey vs The Chase:

Won 2-1

Player of the Match: Hattie Cook

Yr 7A Netball vs RGS:

Won 4-2

Player of the Match: Kundai Chikosi

Yr 7B Netball vs RGS

Won 1-0

Player of the Match: Katie Lewis

Week Beg Mon 8th Nov

Yr 5 Hockey vs The Grange:

Lost 3-0

Player of the Match: Louisa Ridge

Yr 6 Hockey vs The Grange:

Lost 3-2

Player of the Match: Daisy Butt

Yr 8A Hockey vs Winterfold:

Lost 3-0

Player of the Match: Hannah Wragg

Yr 8B Hockey vs Winterfold:

Drew 2-2

Player of the Match: Harriet Hill

Yr 9 Hockey vs King's:

Lost 2-0

Player of the Match: Martha Milton

Week Beg Mon 15th Nov

Yr 9 reached semi finals of the Netball District Tournament

Yr 11 Hockey vs Prince Henry's:

Won 6-1

Player of the Match: Charlotte Bowyer

Yr 7 Hockey vs King's A:

Lost 3-1

Player of the Match: Hattie Cook

Yr 7 Hockey vs King's B:

Drew 1-1

Player of the Match: Holly Carson

Yr 8 Hockey vs King's A:

Lost 4-0

Player of the Match: Kerry Jones

Yr 8 Hockey vs King's B:

Lost 2-1

Player of the match: Olivia Hill

Unfortunately all the matches since this date have been cancelled due to the cold weather.