



# ST MARY'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

a Catholic Voluntary Academy

Newbold Road • Upper Newbold • Chesterfield • S41 8AG

Headteacher: Mrs M Dengate M.Phil

Telephone: 01246 201191

Email: [enquiries@stmaryschesterfield.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@stmaryschesterfield.org.uk)  
[www.st-maryshigh.derbyshire.sch.uk](http://www.st-maryshigh.derbyshire.sch.uk)

22 May 2020

Dear Year 13

I hope you and your families are safe and well. As the school community approaches the May half-term break, I wanted to touch-base with you all after what has been an unusual and challenging half-term.

I want to thank you again for such a wonderful leavers' day – thrown together at great speed with outstanding leadership and help from so many of you. Your tenacity continued in the organisation of your own leavers' hoodies independently of school – so impressive. I also want to publicly thank Jennifer and Tom who continue in their roles of Head Boy and Head Girl as they independently plan and negotiate a 'Reunion Ball', currently rescheduled to Friday 8 January 2021, where we can celebrate your achievements and say a proper goodbye. They may well rope a few of you into helping! Our finance team are rolling over the leavers' ball payments.

Your yearbook looks fabulous – well done to the team for all your work, which continued into lockdown. It is currently being printed and we'll be in touch about how to collect it and also how to return your text books and A-level course materials. On that note, can I urge you to check your Parent Pay accounts for any outstanding balances? Our finance department are starting an audit and will be chasing payment in the coming weeks. They are also rolling over the Leavers' Ball payments we are holding and you will see in coming weeks a payment option called 'YR 14 Leavers Jan 2021' if you haven't already paid in full and would like to join us for this event.

Good luck to those of you who are currently in the midst of applying for apprenticeships. Your persistence in these uncertain times will certainly hold you in good stead! Please share with me your good news when you secure one.

For those of you who are planning on university this year, I'm sure some of you are feeling anxious. As some universities move to online lectures for the next academic year, I understand you could feel an urge to defer your places out of concern that you will not get the 'full' university experience. I urge caution. Universities will be working really hard to ensure the quality of subject degrees is as high – if not higher – in these circumstances. You are paying 'customers' of the higher education system and they will be working hard to ensure you get value-for-money and to avoid any backlash. They rely on your fees for their income! Also please keep in mind, universities are under no obligation to defer your entry and you may need to apply afresh next year. If that is the case, 2021 entry is bound to be more competitive; not only are we coming out of a population dip and there would be naturally more Y13 students applying in 2021, but there will also be an increased number of international students applying, who were not able to in 2020 due to the pandemic-driven uncertainties and travel restrictions. Add to this, students who have decided to reapply and those who 'resat' because they were not happy with their calculated grade...places are bound to be much more competitive.

It is also important to have a game-plan in these uncertain times. What will you do if you do take a gap year? Travel abroad and volunteer opportunities are bound to be more restricted in 2020-2021. You currently have time to consider this, so please do, and if you want to discuss your options, feel free to drop me an email. I can arrange a telephone appointment with our career's advisor or speak to you myself should you feel you need some support.

---

***Live, Love and Learn in the Light of Christ***

---

You'll be pleased to know I continue to plug our twitter account (@Vivastmarys) and page on Facebook...! We are giving regular updates and information here, relevant to you, so please follow.

If any of you are at a loose end and missing academic activity, you might want to look at some of the supra-curricular activities, links for which are on our website. I have put a couple of links at the bottom of this letter to interesting and mind-expanding activities. The lectures are scheduled to be live and very varied; topics from stem cells to poetry. There are also live-streamed concerts and final degree show cases in a variety of subjects. They look excellent and it is nice to see universities such as Newcastle offering these online opportunities.

I look forward to seeing your faces again and miss you most days. Please keep in touch.

Best wishes



**Charlotte Errington**  
Head of Year



**Chris Bradley**  
Assistant Headteacher

<https://www.ncl.ac.uk/events/noticeboard/> - Link to public lectures and events at Newcastle University.  
Use the details below to log into some free magazine subscriptions we have through school:

Log in using your six-digit library card number please follow the steps below.

1. Visit our log in page: <https://exacteditions.com/login>
2. Select the "library card" option in the top right-hand corner.
3. Enter your six-digit code into the "card number" bar and log in.

The six-digit code for St. Mary's High School is **526547**