

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Governing Body's Annual Report to Parents 2024 – 2025

This report is available on the school's website. If you require a hard copy or an accessible version, please contact the school by email:

admin@stmaryscps.bridgend.cymru



St. Mary's Catholic Primary School Ysgol Gynradd Gatholig Santes Fair

As a Catholic Family we will do our best to live and learn as Christ taught us.

Llangewydd Road,
Bridgend,
CF31 4JW
01656 815560

head@stmaryscps.bridgend.cymru
www.stmaryscatholicprimary.co.uk

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS' ADDRESS

Dear Parents and Carers,

As I mark my 12th year as Chair of Governors and my 18th year on the Governing Board, I find myself reflecting with gratitude and pride on the remarkable journey our school has taken — and the exciting path that lies ahead.

Over the past nearly two decades, I've had the privilege of watching our school grow from strength to strength. This year in particular, I am pleased to report that the school is in a very strong position, both academically and organisationally. With a new leadership team now firmly in place, we are already seeing their energy, vision, and dedication translate into real improvements in the quality of teaching, learning outcomes, and day-to-day school life.

The school's financial position is also stable and well managed, allowing us to invest with confidence in the resources, people, and spaces that make our school such a special environment for children to learn and thrive. In a time when many schools face uncertainty and tough decisions, this is no small achievement — and it is a testament to the careful stewardship and strategic planning of the leadership team and governors alike.

Among the many strengths that make our school stand out, I want to highlight a few that are now rightly seen as sector-leading. Our Early Years Atelier is a shining example of innovation and creativity, offering our youngest learners a space that fosters curiosity, expression, and deep engagement with their learning. It's a model that other schools are increasingly looking to replicate, and we're proud to be setting that standard.

Equally inspiring is our close relationship with the parish and the strong presence of clergy in school life. This partnership enriches the spiritual and moral development of our pupils and reinforces the sense of community that underpins all we do. Our school is not just a place of learning — it is a place of welcome, faith, and mutual care.

I have always believed that the measure of a successful school is not only in its results, but in the environment it creates for children to grow. In this, our school excels. It is a safe, nurturing, and inclusive space where children are known, valued, and encouraged to become the very best versions of themselves.

As I look ahead, I do so with confidence in the team we have in place and with great optimism for the future. While my time on the board continues, this milestone has reminded me just how far we've come together — and how important your support as parents and carers continues to be. Thank you for walking this journey with us and for entrusting us with your children's education and wellbeing.

With warmest regards,

David Bolton

Chair of Governors

THE GOVERNING BODY

- The Clerk to the Governing Body is Simone Delaney, School Governance Solutions Ltd
- The Chairperson of the Governing Body is Mr David Bolton

Both the Chair and the Clerk can be contacted through the school address:

St Mary's Catholic School, Llangewydd Road, Bridgend, CF31 4JW

Name	Category of Governor	End of Term in Office
Mr David Bolton	Chair of Governors – Foundation	30.8.27
Mr Brendan Devine	Vice Chair of Governors – Foundation	30.8.27
Rev Robert Coyne	Foundation Governor	30.8.27
Mrs Maureen Harris	Foundation Governor	5.9.27
Mrs Denise Buckley	Foundation Governor	30.8.27
Miss Sarah Lee	Foundation Governor	
Mr Ashley Howells	Foundation Governor	31.8.27
Mrs Gemma Carpanini	Foundation Governor	31.8.27
Mrs Lloyda Henton-Jones	Community Governor	19.3.28
	Local Authority Governor	
	Parent Governor	
Mrs Lorna Large	Staff Governor	21.3.26
Miss Annalese Canter-Lewis	Teacher Governor	31.8.27
Mrs Rachel Azzopardi	Headteacher	3.9.28

Mission Statement

As a Catholic family, we will do our best to live and learn as Christ taught us.

School Aims

- To create a community where love, peace and joy are present and to be true to the values of the Gospel and to make our Catholic faith alive by building such a community.
- To develop a dynamic interaction between home, school and parish and provide a formation for each child to realise their full potential in all aspects of spiritual and moral development.
- To develop a zest for life and an enjoyment of learning.
- To allow children to respect all forms of life.
- To achieve high standards in academic learning.
- To develop creativity and a love of art, music and drama.
- To encourage children to learn physical skills and a knowledge and control over their own bodies to compete against themselves and others in order to raise their performance.
- To have experience of the Welsh Language and be introduced to Welsh culture and others from around the world to reflect the cosmopolitan nature of our school.
- To make sense of the world around them scientifically and by understanding other people, their history and their environment.
- To foster good attitudes and appropriate behaviour, manners and dress.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024 - 25

Please find a copy of the school's financial statement for the Financial Year 2024-25 in Appendix A.

School and Parish Links

St Mary's continues to maintain strong links with home, school and parish. Children regularly walk to church to celebrate Mass, particularly every Friday during Lent and for special occasions such as when the relics of saints visited the parish.

Other partnerships with the parish community included:

- 13th October – School led Mass at St Mary's Church.
- 1st December – School led Mass at St Mary's Church.
- 2nd December – The school Choir sang at the Remembrance service, Tree of Light at St Mary's Church, organised by the Lion's Charity.
- 6th December – Bridgend Male Voice Friendship Concert
- 10th December – The school Choir sang for the SVP Christmas Lunch for Senior Citizens in the Church Hall and distributed Christmas cards made by the whole school.
- 16th December – The school Choir sang at the Festival of Carols Service at St Mary's Church and distributed Christmas cards made by the whole school.
- 18th December – Advent Service led by Year 6 – reflection of Scripture, 'Shout and sing for joy, city of Zion, because the holy one of Israel is great among you' - Isaiah 12:6. Pupils and staff had the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation from Fr Tim, Fr Silvio and Fr Dale.
- 18th January – First Holy Communion Sacramental preparation programme started.
- 16th February – School led Mass at St Mary's Catholic Church.
- 5th March – Ash Wednesday service. School community invited to attend. We sang, reflected and received the ashes from Fr Tim.
- March – Children walked to Church during Lent to celebrate Mass with the parish community.
- 26th March – Prayer and Liturgy – reflection on Jesus in the Wilderness, followed by Reconciliation from Fr Tim, Fr Silvio and Fr Dale.
- 30th March – School led Mass (Mothering Sunday) at St Mary's Catholic Church.
- 18th May – Children made their First Holy Communion.
- 21st May – May Procession. Children wore blue to school and brought a plant or flowers to lay at the feet of Our Lady in our Marian Grotto. Flowers donated to St Mary's Church.
- June – Donations for people in Ukraine, in collaboration with the Parish SVP.
- 22nd June – Feast of Corpus Christi – Children who made their First Holy Communion took part in the procession at St Mary's Church.
- 29th June – Mass (Feast of Sts Peter and Paul) at St Mary's Catholic Church.

Community

St Mary's community worked together to support the local community.

- Children in Pod Heulog and Pod Enfys led our Foodbank appeal as a part of the mission from their Harvest Gweddiwn.
- Pupils raised a significant £706.34 during Advent for Y Bont, a Nursery that offers specialist support for children with disabilities.
- 24th October – United Nations Day – Children wore National costumes and took part in a parade. Parents/carers had the opportunity to sample some international dishes. Children's learning on 'The Rights of the Child' was displayed.
- 9th November – Pupils took part in the Remembrance Parade in Bridgend town to the Cenotaph
- Welcome meeting for new Nursery families. PTA attended to sell uniform.
- Lent Appeal – Children walked 974km (distance of a Pilgrimage from St Mary's to Lourdes). Mini Vinnies led the fundraising for SCBU (Special Care Baby Unit), Noah's Ark Children's Hospital and CAFOD. Children raised an enormous £2101.98. Over £700 donated to each charity.
- 28th March – Mother's Day event led by the PTA to celebrate Mothers and Mother figures in the children's lives.
- 29th March (Saturday) – In the dance of moon and sun during the partial solar eclipse, children were invited to use a range of telescopes and equipment in St Mary's Church grounds.
- Classes took part in litter picks at school and at local beaches and parks, inspired by Laudato Si' and caring for our Common Home.

Partnerships

St Mary's continues to work with:

- St Mary's Catholic Church.
- Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.
- Helen Usher, PhD student, Studying Rosetta's Comet Ground-based data and Comet Chasers Project lead - www.cometchasers.org education and outreach project.
- Cardiff Met, Initial Teacher Education.
- Nikki Coburn, New You Dance Cymru.
- Local Authority services such as: Early Help, Social workers, Family Engagement Officers, Communication and Relationships Team etc.
- Cardiff and Vale Music Service.
- Local Authority Music Service.
- Bumbles of Honeywood, 2B Enterprising.
- Ospreys Rugby with Year 6.

Policies

The school has a large number of policy documents covering both curriculum and non-subject areas. These documents are reviewed and revised by staff and governors on a rolling programme to reflect changing legislation, procedures and approaches. Further information is available by contacting the office during school time.

Terms Dates 2025/26

TERM	START	HALF TERM HOLIDAY		END
AUTUMN	Monday 1 September 2025	Monday 27 October 2025	Friday 31 October 2025	Friday 19 December 2025
SPRING	Monday 5 January 2026	Monday 16 February 2026	Friday 20 February 2026	Friday 27 March 2026
SUMMER	Monday 13 April 2026	Monday 25 May 2026	Friday 29 May 2026	Monday 20 July 2026

The School Day

Morning	Afternoon
8.50am – 12pm	12.50pm – 3.15pm

Wrap Around Care

The Welsh Government funded Free **Breakfast Club** has continued to grow in popularity and ranges in age from Nursery to Year 6. Children are guaranteed a nutritious breakfast in a caring environment that helps them to prepare for optimised learning for the day.

If you would like information or to register your child for the Free Breakfast Club, please contact Mrs Large.

The After School **Sunbeam Club** runs from 3.15pm – 5pm and continues to be very popular. Early booking is advisable to secure a place. If you would like information, please contact the Sunbeam Team on 07840 378886 or, contact Mrs Large.

Prospectus

Our school prospectus is maintained and can be downloaded here:

www.stmaryscatholicprimary.co.uk/prospectus

Any family wishing to receive an additional copy of the school prospectus may request a copy from the office.

Curriculum Organisation

St Mary's provides all children with a broad and balanced curriculum throughout the school, organised broadly into Progression Steps 1 (Nursery / Reception), 2 (Years 1 – 3) and 3 (Years 4 – 6). Faith and spirituality is explored throughout the curriculum with Gospel values underpinning all aspects of school life

We deliver a Core Knowledge curriculum in which we place strong emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and key vocabulary, while also developing pupils' skills across the Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs). We regularly review our Curriculum to ensure it is progressive and fulfils the requirements of Curriculum for Wales, whilst promoting a holistic approach to achieving the 'four purposes' for education for all learners.

Staff at St Mary's use a variety of strategies and methodologies to develop a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding for all pupils. Children are given opportunities to develop their learning through combinations of whole class, group, paired and individual activities. Staff support pupils in developing an understanding of their own learning processes and how they can strengthen them, drawing on the dispositions outlined in Building Learning Power. Staff aim to give children the skills to become independent and confident learners, and there is a strong emphasis on developing thinking skills across the curriculum.

In the school's first research period (September), pupils took part in collaborative research linked to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, exploring articles chosen by their class. In the second research period (July), pupils took part in increasingly independent research, building on the skills developed earlier in the year.

Religious Education and Collective Worship

St Mary's has worked hard to develop a new RE curriculum that is engaging, creative, cross curricular and fulfils the requirements of the RE Directory. The RE curriculum is taught through six branches: Creation and Covenant, Prophecy and Promise, Galilee to Jerusalem, Desert to Garden, To the Ends of the Earth, Dialogue and Encounter.

Prayer is an integral part of the school day at St Mary's and all pupils are invited to participate in their own personal way. Pupils are taught traditional prayers and they are introduced to a variety of ways to pray allowing them to spontaneously express their praise and thanks to God. Pupils take part in daily prayer and meditation.

The Catholic Pupil Profile virtues are embedded throughout the life of the school, with a pair of virtues focussed on each half term. The school has also introduced the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, which are explored alongside the virtues every half term.

Arrangement for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, we implement robust procedures to ensure early identification and support for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). Our approach includes the use of appropriate screening and assessment tools, such as:

- Screening and diagnostic tests
- Standardised assessments
- Progress review meeting with HT and DHT/ALNCo
- Information gathered during transition meetings – between classes.
- Parental input and reports from external professionals
- Evidence from teacher observations and ongoing assessments

Staff work collaboratively to maintain high standards of teaching and learning, providing targeted support and scaffolding for individuals and groups. They liaise closely with the ALNCo where appropriate. For pupils transferring from other schools, we allow a suitable settling-in period while reviewing previous records and assessments to inform differentiated learning and identify any ALN needs.

Graduated Response

We follow a graduated response to meet the needs of all learners, which includes:

- High-quality teaching supported by appropriate resources, including support staff and a variety of resources (Universal Provision)
- Reasonable adjustments where necessary
- Individualised and targeted support for pupils with identified ALN requiring Additional Learning Provision (ALP)

Concerns and Actions Process

When a class teacher identifies a concern about a learner, they complete a Concerns and Actions prompt sheet and typically discuss this with parents/carers to gather their views. Parents/carers are kept informed of progress throughout. At this stage, interventions may be introduced by the class teacher, in consultation with the ALNCo if appropriate, and an Action Plan may be developed.

It is important to note that having an Action Plan does not automatically mean a learner will be formally identified as having ALN. However, if adequate progress is not achieved within the agreed timeframe, consideration may be given to referrals to external professionals and formal ALN identification.

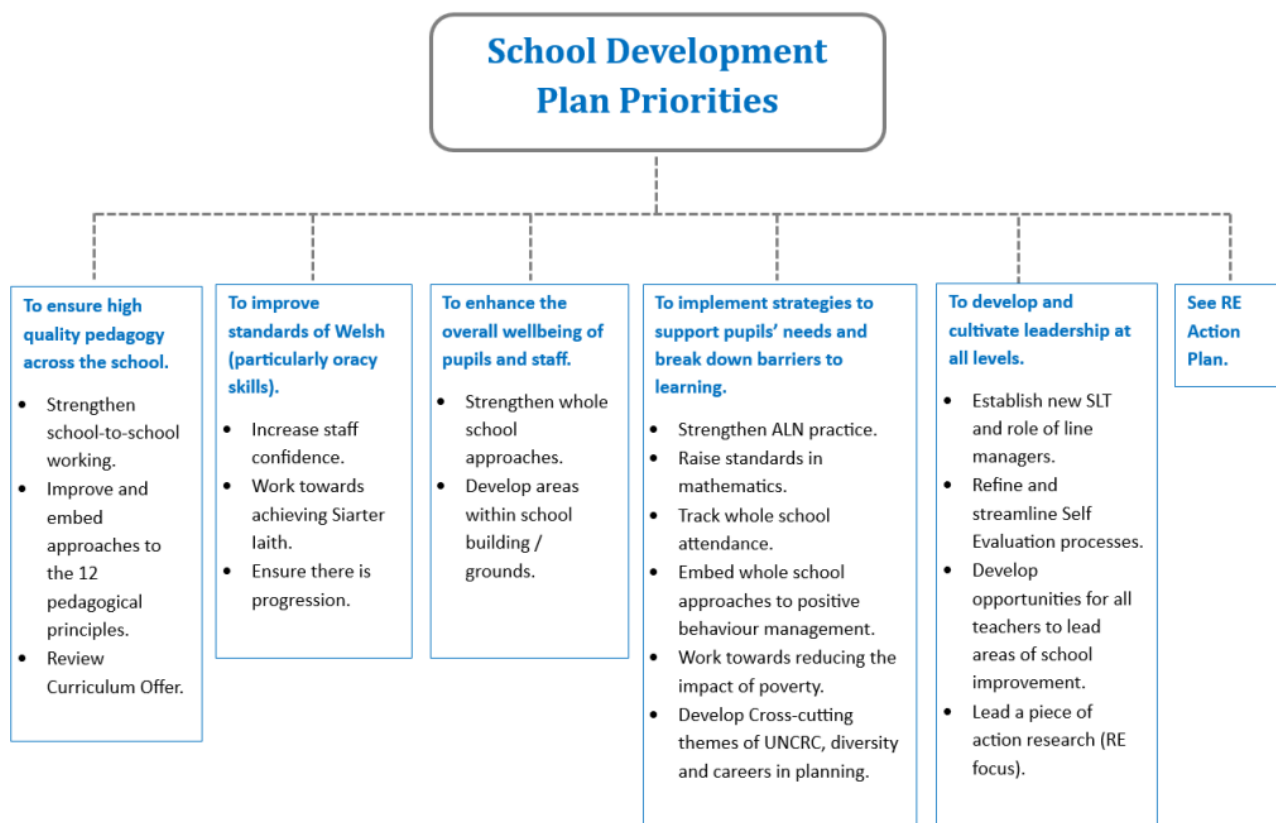
Ongoing Assessment and Review

Assessment is continuous. For learners identified as having ALN, parents are regularly updated on progress by class teachers, for example during parents' evenings. Formal PCP reviews are held at least annually to update Individual Development Plans (IDPs) and ensure provision remains appropriate and effective.

School Development Plan

The School Development Plan (SDP) represents the vision for improvement in the form of targets and actions and ensures a commitment to raise achievement in all areas of school life.

The improvement plan targets for 2024-25 were:



The Language of Curriculum Delivery

Whilst the main language of instruction is English, pupils throughout the school are encouraged to speak Welsh to their peers and other adults whenever possible. There is a comprehensive development and progression programme in place for Welsh language development, and 'Helpwr Heddiw' is employed in each classroom. Daily 'Helpwr Heddiw' sessions takes place in all classes, where pupils engage in a range of activities and games to develop language patterns and vocabulary.

The teaching of Welsh language is largely focussed on the development of oracy skills, but with an increasing emphasis on reading and writing in Welsh as children mature and gain confidence. Across the school, we continue to work to improve pupils' confidence in use of the Welsh Language and we are currently working towards achieving the Siarter Iaith Cymraeg Campus Bronze Award. We give pupils the opportunity to experience Welsh culture and heritage wherever possible. Welsh is taught as a second language; there is no provision for any subject to be taught through the medium of Welsh.

Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are catered for according to their needs and are fully integrated into our inclusive classrooms.

Gifts to the School

The Friends of St Mary's (PTA) provide invaluable support for our school and Governors are indebted to the committed group for their continued hard work in organising social events for pupils and families, fund raising initiatives, and regular pre-loved uniform sales. The Friends have purchased a range of resources for the school, for example: t-shirts for Year 6 leavers, Christmas crackers, Easter eggs and a summer ice cream treat.

The Governors would once again like to thank the Friends for their support, enthusiasm and commitment. All parents are automatically members of the Friends, but those wishing to become an active member of the group can contact them via their [Facebook page](#).

Toilet Facilities

The Welsh Government requires annual reports to contain a brief statement on the provision of toilet facilities at the school. There are sufficient toilets for the number of pupils in the school, including one disabled toilet. The condition of toilets across the school ranges from adequate to good. Toilets are cleaned daily, and the caretaker ensures that supplies of soap and toilet paper are replenished daily. Toilets are inspected regularly and are maintained by the school caretaker and the Local Authority.

Healthy Living

Pupils learn about their health and well-being throughout their time at school, with external experts contributing when appropriate. In age-appropriate ways, they learn about healthy eating, the benefits of exercise and rest, relationships, respect for others, self-esteem, and the development of their own bodies.

As a recognised *Healthy School*, staff encourage parents to provide nutritious and balanced packed lunches. Children who have hot school meals for lunch are provided with healthy and nutritious food. Children are encouraged to bring healthy snacks for morning play, such as fruit, vegetables, salad items, crackers, or a breakfast bar. They are also invited to bring drinks (water or weak squash) to stay hydrated throughout the day, and bottles can be refilled in school. Children in Nursery – Year 2 are offered milk every day.

Children participate in physical activity every week and, this year, St Mary's has benefited from specialist dance provision from Nikki Coburn of NYD Dance and a variety of sporting activities from Adam Carpenter from Spanish Soccer. Children in Years 3 – 6 all took part in a week block of swimming lessons in the summer term.

The Playground Peacemakers continue to make a positive impact on children's well-being during playtimes. They receive training to help peers resolve disagreements, talk issues through, and pass on important information to staff.

All classes take part in daily meditation after lunchtime, providing a valuable opportunity for children to be still in the presence of God.

Staff make regular use of our wonderful grounds to enhance learning opportunities and to help children explore, engage, and appreciate the awe and beauty of the natural environment.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training, ensuring our school remains a safe and caring place for everyone.

Admission / Transition Arrangements

The Governing Body has sole responsibility for admissions to the school. Parents are invited to apply for a place for their child at St Mary's via the school's application form:

www.stmaryscatholicprimary.co.uk/joining-us

The Pupil Admission Number (PAN) for each class is 30. St Mary's has nine classrooms and so there is always at least one class that is a mixed year group e.g. Year4/5. This depends on numbers of pupils in the school.

In the event that the applications for places exceed the school's admissions number, the following Oversubscription Criteria will be applied:

1. Looked After baptised Catholic Children or Previously Looked After baptised Catholic Children (proof of baptism must be submitted with the application form).
2. Baptised Catholic children (proof of baptism must be submitted with the application form).
3. Siblings of baptised Catholic children who will be attending St. Mary's School at the time of admission (see note 3 below).
4. Looked after children or Previously Looked After Children who are baptised in another Christian denomination (proof of baptism must be submitted with the application form).
5. Other Looked After Children or Previously Looked After Children
6. Children who are baptised in another Christian denomination (proof of baptism must be submitted with the application form).
7. Siblings of children baptised in another Christian denomination who will be attending St. Mary's School at the time of admission (see note 3 below).
8. Other children for whom parents/guardians seek a specifically Christian education.

St Mary's is a feeder school for Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School. Year 6 pupils enjoyed a programme of transition activities held both at Archbishop McGrath and at St Mary's, where visiting staff delivered additional sessions.

Complaints

We work hard to maintain good relationships with parents and the community. These are based on mutual respect and a willingness to listen. The Governors sincerely hope that any concerns and problems can be addressed by discussion with the Headteacher and staff prior to becoming an issue for the attention of the Governing Body and the Local Authority. If, however, there are issues that cannot be resolved, a copy of the complaints policy is available on the school website or from the school upon request

Appendix A - Budget Expenditure for 2024-25

Bridgend County Borough Council		
Run for Period 12 2024/2025 on 08/05/25		
School:	St Mary'S Rc Primary	Expenditure
Budget allocation:	£965,798	
Employee Related Expenses		
AA	TEACHING STAFF	640,137
CA	CARETAKING	32,647
CD	SUPERVISORY ASSISTANTS	25,094
CJ	SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT ASSISTANT	24,151
DB	PLAY LEADERS	23,273
LG	SENIOR LEARNING SUPPORT OFFICERS	57,735
MB	SCHOOL CLERK	33,937
MC	LEARNING SUPPORT OFFICERS	217,027
MX	COVER SUPERVISORS	34,502
NY	LEARNING SUPPORT ASSISTANTS	3,213
WA & XX99	SUPPLY COVER AND AGENCY STAFF	26,592
WA09	MUTUAL FUND SLA	29,237
XX70	STAFF TRAINING	2,031
Total Employees		1,149,577
Premises Related Expenses		
1005	REPAIRS & MAINT (DELEG'D)	3,943
1101	MAINTENANCE OF GROUNDS	2,141
1202	GAS (EXCL.LPG)	5,213
1203	ELECTRICITY	14,513
1302	PREMISES HIRE	2,338
1401	BUSINESS RATES	2,120
1501	WATER	4,703
1611	FIRE RELATED FIXTURES	69
1701	CONTRACTOR PAYMENTS	19,979
1711	CLEANING MATERIALS (BUILDING)	3,461
1721	PREMISES RELATED COSTS	516
Total Premises		58,995
Transport Related Expenses		
2401	CAR ALLOWANCES	-
Total Transport		-

Supplies and Services		
3005	EQUIPMENT INSURANCE	1,537
3021	LICENCES (NON VEHICLE)	947
3053	CAPITATION	18,379
3202	SCHOOL MEALS	10,548
3620	POLICE CHECKS	137
3780	PERSONNEL SLA	2,849
3785	CLERK OF GOVERNING BODIES	1,025
3851	CONTRIB. TO FUNDS	145
3864	PURCHASE LEDGER SLA	737
3866	MATERNITY SLA - SCHOOLS	4,515
3870	INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SLA	3,049
3875	SCHOOLS LEGAL SLA	1,050
3876	CARETAKINGS SLA	1,150
3877	FINANCE SLA	2,543
3878	I.T. SLA	9,408
5226	WASTE DISPOSAL CHARGES	2,024
6802	COMPUTER COSTS: GENERAL	5,761
6803	POSTAGES	-
6804	TELEPHONE CHARGES	351
6821	PHOTOCOPYING	185
6871	LIABILITY INS'NCE	138
7301	NON IT EQUIP OPERATING LEASES	2,827
Total Supplies and Services		69,305
Total Expenditure		1,277,877
Estimated Income		
8007	GOVERNMENT GRANTS	(249,623)
8240	CONTRIBUTION-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	(602)
8242	OTHER CONTRS. ETC.	(19,468)
8311	SCHOOL MEALS SALES	(2,533)
8312	STAFF MEALS SALES-SCHOOLS	(109)
8471	OTHER FEES RECEIVABLE	(23,273)
8755	SUPPLY COVER	(2,250)
Total Estimated Income		(297,858)
St Mary'S Rc Primary		
Budget Allocation		965,798
Estimated Income		297,858
Underspend (+) or Overspend (-) in prior year		78,065
Total Amount Available		1,341,720
Total Estimated Expenditure		1,277,877
Estimated Credit		63,843