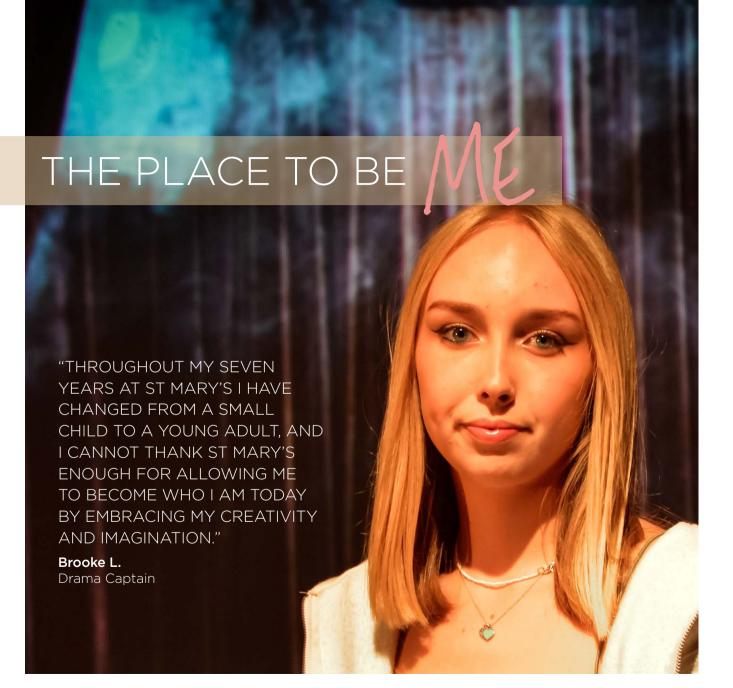


A YEAR AT ST MARY'S

#placetobeme

stmaryscambridge.co.uk/magnolian



Founded in 1898. St Mary's School Cambridge continues to be a place where girls are inspired to aim high, to be courageous, compassionate and confident.

Our school is a place where the talents and interests of every student are celebrated and nurtured, across the curriculum and in school life.

Every year, the outstanding achievements of our students illustrate the true impact of our founding ethos, and 2021-22 is no exception.

Following the disruption of the pandemic, being able to share experiences discussions about lost and achievements whether in class, on the stage, the sports field. or in everyday school life - has felt particularly special. In this Annual Review, we're delighted to share some of these memorable moments with you.

This year, we celebrated receiving the highest grade of 'excellent' from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and duty as headmistress. - confirmation that we continue to deliver a firstclass education.

Given the disruption caused by the pandemic. learning and generations - and the huge effort we made to ensure this is not the case for St Mary's - it is gratifying that the inspectors judged the academic attainment of students of all abilities to be excellent.

Sending students off well-educated and equipped for the next stage of their lives is my most profound service

"WE ARE EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH OUR ISI INSPECTION RESULTS, WHICH FURTHER ILLUSTRATE OUR DETERMINATION TO DELIVER A FIRST-CLASS EDUCATION."

Charlotte Avery Headmistress





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From Preschool to Sixth Form, we are committed to academic excellence, in an environment tailored to meet girls' needs at each stage of their development.

In our Preschool, girls experience the very best start to their academic journeys. Days are filled with adventure, discovery and funled by an experienced early years team and supported by specialist teaching in areas such as STEM.

Throughout Junior School, horizons broaden and confidence builds, as students develop the core skills, values and attitudes that distinguish us as a World Class High Performance Learning (HPL) School. These characteristics then build year-on-year as students move up to our Senior School and Sixth Form.

Every girl is supported to pursue her unique talents to the very best of her ability.

Emphasis is placed on listening to students and valuing their voice, with staff and students working collaboratively to enhance key aspects of school life.

Through wide ranging enrichment and extracurricular opportunities, students personalise their experience – creator, adventurer, influencer, innovator, competitor – every girl can find her own expression of 'me'.



World Class School









Our history is rooted in the vision of Mary Ward (1585-1645), a pioneer of education for girls. Today, our all girls' environment is unique in Cambridge – and St Mary's is a place where each student can achieve her full potential.



Yingting Qian STEM Lab in Junior School

> In 2022, 43% of A Levels at St Marv's Sixth Form were awarded at A* or A grades. against a national average of 36%. This enabled 90% of our students to secure their first-choice university offer, at prestigious universities - 50% Russell Group.

With equally impressive results at GCSE, it has been another year of exceptional academic results. However, we'd like to take this opportunity to highlight our wider academic achievements and initiatives.

Every day, our students are encouraged to go beyond the curriculum, through an inspiring programme of enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs. Examples include our collaborative, creative Junior School coders, who regularly compete nationally and internationally; our aspiring historians who have completed a thought-provoking exploration of grassroots history; or our Year 8 STEM enthusiasts, who have applied complex Microbiology to solve a real-world challenge.

Achievement at St Mary's is much broader than just exam results. It's also about the wider values and attitudes that sit at the heart of our ethos and our approach as a World Class High Performance Learning School.



In 2021 we opened a new STEM (Science. Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Lab in Junior School. We also recently celebrated the official opening of our £6.6 million investment in state-of-the-art sports facilities at Long Road. In 2022, Magnolia 125, our 125th Anniversary Appeal, was launched to build on these successes.

Magnolia 125 will raise funds to support our ambitious Senior School redevelopment project, a new Creative Arts Hub. new Sixth Form Centre. a music theatre, and the expansion of our STEM outreach programme. Our vision is bold and will ensure we offer future generations of St Mary's girls the first-class education they deserve.

stmarvscambridge.co.uk/magnolia125





Image by Masha I. Year 13



YOUNG CODERS RANK IN TOP 20 NATIONALLY

A computer game designed by Year 5 students was praised by judges of the Young Coders Competition 2022 for its design and strong environmental message. Out of the 600 teams entering the national competition for Years 4 to 8, our St Mary's team was placed in the top 20. An amazing result for Emma C-R., Emily E., Gayatri K., and Brontë M. that recognised their creativity, maturity, teamwork and, not least, their coding skills.



SHOW AND TELL PHOTOGRAPHY SUCCESS

Out of 34.531 entries, four St Mary's students, Masha I., Olivia B., and Sofia A. (Year 13) and Gemma M. (Year 9), were selected for inclusion in The Photography Movement's Show and Tell exhibition. The show explored the theme of capturing emotions and students developed outcomes to reflect their personal responses. This creative success adds to the long track record of competition success at local and national level established by our Visual Arts Department.



MY HISTORY, MY STORY

Celebrating diversity is a core Mary Ward value and this year, a student-led My History, My Story project encouraged students and staff to share stories or artefacts that illustrated the impact of historical events on their family. The response was fascinating and often moving, with stories spanning cultures and continents. An exhibition, curated by Years 11 and 12 and ably supported by keen historians in Years 7 and 8, displayed the stories, and vividly illustrated how the past shapes our present.



INTERNATIONAL COMPUTER SCIENCE OUTREACH

Our new STEM Lab provided a great setting for our first Computer Science outreach day. Year 8 students visiting from Spain joined our Year 6 girls for a workshop and complex programming challenge. Teams worked collaboratively to programme robots to complete a series of objectives, whilst avoiding obstacles and traps. Reflecting on the day, students agreed that the differences in age, language and culture had enhanced their teamwork and the end result.



DIYA S. COMPETES AGAINST UK'S TOP YOUNG MATHEMATICIANS

Diya S. (Year 7) gained a Merit Certificate for her impressive score of 102 marks, which placed her in the top 25% of competitors in the prestigious annual *Junior Kangaroo Challenge*. Entry to the Challenge is by invitation only and this year, 8,000 of the UK's most talented young mathematicians participated, based on their performance in earlier rounds of the competition.



GOLD AWARDS FOR TALENTED LINGUISTS

Olivia K., Tilly B., and Stacey G. gained impressive Gold Awards for their Mandarin language skills, in a national competition led by the UK Association for the Promotion of Chinese Education. They were joined by a wider team who secured Silver (Eleanor D., Tanvi A., Brontë M., Emma C.-R.) and Bronze (Orla M., Marnie J., Eleanor W.) Awards. A great success, illustrating the impact of our specialist Mandarin teaching in the Junior School, led by Mrs Ariel Skillings, who collected the Best Teacher Award at the same event. Congratulations all round!



LATIN READING COMPETITION

Year 8 students, Genevieve M. and Tuppence J.K. competed in the Classical Association's Junior Latin Reading Competition held at the Faculty of Classics, University of Cambridge in March 2022. Both performed extremely well, delivering the complex passage with clear pronunciation, and dramatically conveying the sense of the story. They performed to a packed audience of students and teachers from various schools but rose to the challenge brilliantly.



DISCOVERING LANGUAGES THROUGH MUSIC

Junior School students have thoroughly enjoyed their first exploration of the French language in our popular French Musical Club. This extra-curricular club encourages girls to discover a new language, using a fun, musical approach. The hard work of our aspiring linguists culminated in a witty performance of *Les Malheurs de Sophie* (The Misfortunes of Sophie) – an entertaining collection of short stories.

THE PLACE TO BE EARD "ALL OF US HAVE OUR OWN THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT SCHOOL LIFE AND IN ORDER FOR OUR SCHOOL TO REFLECT THOSE BELIEFS. WE EACH NEED TO SPEAK UP AND MAKE OUR THOUGHTS KNOWN, THERE ARE MANY AVENUES FOR STUDENT VOICE AT ST MARY'S." St Mary's students ISI Report 2022

Our ethos is based on the life of Mary Ward who worked tirelessly to effect change. This means student voice is incredibly important at St Marv's.

This year has been particularly active in terms of nurturing avenues for student voice from our highly productive School Council, to establishing new forums such as the Inclusivity Committee.

Whether it's the proactive initiatives of our Eco Committee, to building confidence in our

"STUDENTS FORM HIGHLY POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH STAFF AND THEY DEVELOP GOOD LEADERSHIP SKILLS WITH STUDENTS FEELING READY AND WELL PREPARED FOR THE NEXT STAGE OF THEIR LIVES."

Debating Club or the collaborative projects between staff and students that influence key aspects of school life, student voice is a driving force.

It's not just about developing a confident voice. It's about shaping a well-informed, passionate voice, and from an early age, our students learn to collaborate, influence and represent. They are the change-makers of the future, and we can't wait to see what they go on to achieve.

HPL: A STUDENT VIEW

As high performance learners, our students are empowered to question the status-quo. to take the lead and to work

collaboratively to deliver change.

wellbeing and inclusion, student

From environmental issues to

voice at St Mary's is clear and,

more importantly, effective.

Since its launch in 2017, High Performance Learning has been embedded across St Mary's, and its impact is now fully evident. In 2022, students met with external HPL Assessors to share their experiences of HPL and here are some of the emerging themes:

- A Year 8 student explained that she had previously worried about getting the 'right' answer, but HPL has helped her to understood there is 'no right or wrong' and that she should listen to alternative viewpoints. She also really enjoys being encouraged to have her own opinion.
- A Year 9 student described how the independence and options provided by HPL to complete tasks and solve problems in her own way, are hugely helpful.
- A Year 9 student noted that HPL encourages her to find her own solutions and to be creative, making learning more enjoyable and rewarding.



Image by Olivia B. Year 13

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NEW INCLUSIVITY COMMITTEE

This year, students launched our new Inclusivity Committee, which strives to connect with each student to ensure everyone benefits from full access to the opportunities on offer at St Mary's. Following consultation with staff and students, the Committee has plans to effect change in areas including neurodiversity, introversion and hidden disability over the coming year. Members have also been instrumental in a new scheme which aims to ensure boarder and day girl communities feel more seamlessly connected.

TOP DEBATERS HARNESS THE POWER OF VOICE

Our popular Debating Club enables students to develop and use their voice and, as Amelia A. (Year 13) reflects, its impact is significant: 'Self-confidence is a key quality of any aspiring debater. However, I feel it's one that young women often struggle with. Over the past few years of being involved with debating, I've been lucky to have had the opportunity to compete on several

occasions – whilst this is exciting, moving away from a friendly club environment and into a larger sphere was something I found incredibly intimidating. With the help of a wonderfully supportive team, I've learned to begin to own the space that my thoughts, ideas and opinions take up. I am now even considering a future in law – a path I would have otherwise never considered.'

YOUNGER VOICES

Student voice is equally strong in our Junior School. Here, girls start as they mean to go on, with opportunities to take the lead in school life through our School Council, Faith Council, Eco Council, Tech Council and Arts Council, or as a member of our Prefect team.

COLLABORATION SHAPES BEHAVIOUR POLICY

As a High Performance Learning School, students at St Mary's are 'partners' not 'subjects' in their learning. Our philosophy of working with students prompted us to reconsider how we approach our behavioural policy. Working with the Student Council, we developed a new system based on our school values, which focuses on Hard work, Empathy, Agility, Responsibility and Thinking: HEART. This initiative reflects who we are: a community built on trust, where efforts are made to work together to create an environment in which everyone can be their very best.



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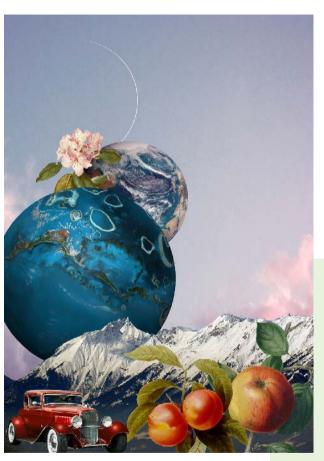


Image by Maisie V. Year 11

FROM OUR HEADMISTRESS

It has been such a pleasure and relief to be back in-person on our school site this year. The girls have been courageous, competent and compassionate in returning and energetic in wanting to take up established and new pursuits.



Charlotte Avery
Headmistress

Student voice has grown vigorously. I have been impressed by the work of the Student Council and our associated Committees: Ecology, Inclusivity, International and Wellbeing. These groups have delivered change in areas of importance to our students, including the refurbishment of the dining hall; designing new Wellbeing Rooms; working on integration, and reward and sanction projects; and raising awareness on environmental issues.

Outdoor learning opportunities have expanded, with new learning pods and an outdoor classroom supporting this endeavour. We have also added a short course GCSE and A Level PE to our

curriculum, alongside enhanced pre-season sports training, new Saturday morning activities and the recruitment of expert coaches.

Our PSHE programme has been restructured to better fit our needs as a Catholic Christian girls' school, espousing Mary Ward values and a High Performance Learning philosophy.

New clubs and societies have also flourished, including the rejuvenation of Astronomy Club and a new Psychology Club. We have been delighted by successes in national competitions, and notably, our Art Department has been at the forefront of a range of photographic and fine art competitions.

Looking ahead, plans for our inaugural World Challenge Trip to Tanzania are now in place for Summer 2023, and our digital strategy is entering an exciting next phase, with new student devices planned for the coming Autumn Term, alongside a Sixth Form trial of student-owned digital learning portfolios.

Add to this our recent launch of the ambitious Magnolia 125 fundraising appeal, to support significant transformation of our facilities in the coming years, and I feel hugely optimistic about what the future holds for St Mary's.



Jo Christian Head of Preschool and Junior School

FROM OUR HEAD OF PRESCHOOL AND JUNIOR SCHOOL

Upon joining St Mary's, I knew it to be an excellent school: the culture, the successes. and results were testament to that.



I also knew it was one of many schools worldwide built upon Mary Ward values. It was therefore heartening that both ISI and Diocesan Inspectors shared their delight that students convey these values, in an articulate, intelligent manner.

As a High Performance Learning School, we equip students with the skills, values, and attitudes needed for lifelong success. Here, girls learn through an exciting curriculum

and through a supportive, adaptive HPL framework. This year, students have thrown themselves into every opportunity with enthusiasm. They have embraced so many firsts: the Summer Concert at West Road. Sports Days at Long Road, drama productions, three residentials and numerous local trips!

To say I am proud to be Head is an understatement; these girls are incredible: curious, independent, resilient, hardworking and keen to be challenged. They are not

afraid to make mistakes; they prefer to try and get it wrong, than not try at all.

Looking ahead, our STEM Lab will benefit every student, and we are expanding opportunities for outdoor learning, leadership and student voice. I feel fortunate to be in a school in which teachers, support staff and girls work so well together for the common good, where students can't help but make progress every single day.

FROM THE CHAIR OF OUR **GOVERNING BODY**

Reflecting on the last two years, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the pandemic hit independent schools, together with much of the world, like a bombshell. St Mary's took prudent measures including, most importantly, reaching out to families affected and providing whatever we could by way of support.

We can now take stock, and the future looks favourable. The pandemic to excellence, has prompted the caused the number of students in schools in the Independent Schools Council to fall by just 2%. That national pattern, 2% down, then a full recovery, reflects the story at St Mary's. We can reflect that surviving such a challenge will make us stronger; consider for instance how teaching skills advanced through remote learning.

We also drew great encouragement from the findings of our 2022 Independent Schools Inspectorate report, with students' attainment and personal development judged to be 'excellent'.

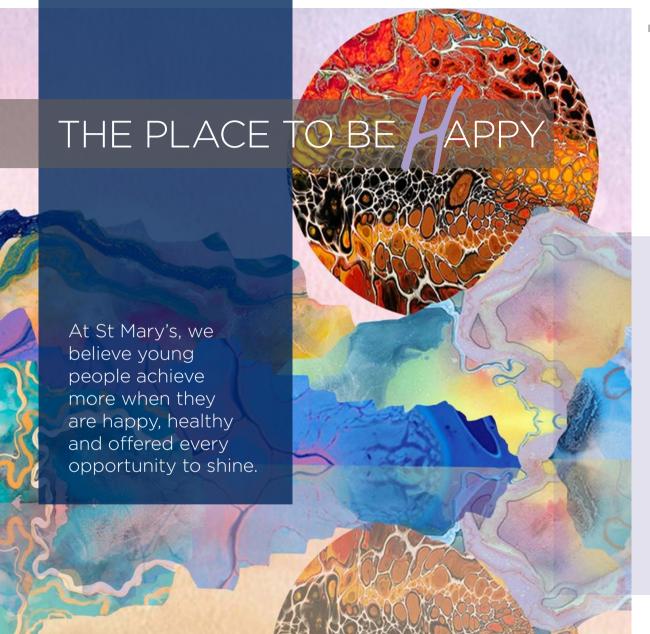
Ongoing resilience and a commitment Governors to judge that the time is right to re-instate our ambitious School Development strategy. Work has begun on improvements to the Senior School, creating four additional classrooms, a new facade on Bateman Street and new dining facilities. This represents the first phase of our bold Magnolia 125 Fundraising Campaign, which includes a new Creative Arts Hub. Sixth Form Centre and enhanced outreach provision.







Image by Eloise S. Year 11



"STUDENTS VALUE
THE SUPPORT GIVEN
TO THEM BY STAFF
AND WORK HARD TO
APPRECIATE AND FULFIL
RESOUNDINGLY THE
SCHOOL'S VALUES OF
INTEGRITY, JUSTICE,
RESPONSIBILITY AND
RESPECT WITHIN
A STRONG MORAL
FRAMEWORK."

ISI Report 2022



PASTORAL CARE, SPORT, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

As a school, health and wellbeing is actively promoted, and exceptional support is available through our dedicated pastoral care team.

Girls from the Junior School through to Sixth Form are now using our new sport facilities at Long Road, and we have welcomed new staff to the Sport Department, including hockey and cricket coaches, to provide high-level coaching and training. Staffing will further increase in September as we welcome a new Physical Education teacher and netball coach.

Student mental health and wellbeing continues to be a key priority. In Junior School, the approach has been 'hands on' with new opportunities for students to nurture plants in our school gardens. Seeds donated by Cultivating Change,

an organisation which distributes seeds that would otherwise be discarded, have been planted, with each house growing either herbs, salad, vegetables or flowers: we are looking forward to an abundant harvest!

In the Senior School and Sixth Form, a new programme of wellbeing activities, events and resources has been integrated into the curriculum, with the aim of raising awareness and to encourage students to share how they are feeling. Our studentled Wellbeing Committee has also been notably proactive in delivering their own projects this year.



STUDENT WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Students in Years 8 to 12 have delivered initiatives in response to a whole school survey on wellbeing issues. Key achievements include a new Wellbeing Room - a dedicated space for mindful activities and workshops. Students benefited from working with quest speakers who explored topics such as the impact of social media on self-esteem, body image and healthy lifestyles. Mental Health Awareness Week explored the theme of 'loneliness' and the Committee responded by producing 'wellbeing kits' for students to buy for friends and family, to show care and gratitude to those closest to them or to brighten someone's day.



BIOPHILIC CLASSROOM

The positive impact of spending time outdoors on mental health and wellbeing are well documented, and research also shows exposure to nature has tangible benefits for learning too. With all this in mind, we have expanded opportunities for outdoor learning. In Senior School and Sixth Form this has included a new outdoor classroom, and a drive to embed opportunities for outdoor learning in all subjects. We have also trialled a biophilic classroom in our Sixth Form Centre, which connects students to nature from inside our built environment.



LEADERSHIP THROUGH SPORT

In the Senior School and Sixth Form, students participate in a range of sporting activities where the focus is not only on physical performance but also on developing interpersonal skills such as teamwork and collaboration. This year, we introduced a Year 9 leadership unit, in which students put leadership skills into action by organising sports activities in small groups. Students then led activities, working with children at the University of Cambridge Primary School. This initiative will evolve into an Applied Leadership unit spanning leadership, communication and collaboration skills.



DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S AWARDS

We were delighted to resume residential D of E expeditions in 2021 and it was heartwarming to see how happy everybody was to be outdoors, spending time with friends again. Another highlight of this year was the formal recognition from the national award scheme that St Mary's students have accumulated 1,456 hours of volunteering in our local community. This is an impressive achievement and we are extremely proud of their hard work and unwavering commitment.



STUNNING DANCE AND GYMNASTIC DISPLAYS

In June, over 40 talented Junior School gymnasts and dancers performed flips, tumbles, jives and moves in a crowd-pleasing show, enjoyed by family and friends. Likewise, in the Senior School and Sixth Form, our Dance Showcase and Gymnastics Display were once again great highlights of this school year. Students explored a variety of styles and techniques, working together to create pieces of work. The outcomes performed were outstanding and we are very proud of all students involved.



U17 COUNTY HOCKEY CHAMPIONS

In March 2022, Sophie H. (Year 12) and Lucia C. and Emma A. (Year 11) represented Cambridgeshire in the County Hockey Finals and were crowned East Region U17 County Champions! They competed against five county teams: Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, winning three matches and drawing two to secure the champion's crown. The team scored an impressive nine goals in total, six of which were scored by Lucia C. Well done to all!



A strong sense of community is part of what sets the St Mary's experience apart; we support one another and look beyond our school to improve the lives of others.

COMMUNITY AND COMPASSION

Who better to explain what it feels like to be a part of our beautiful school community, than students who have taken on key roles in school this year?





"St Mary's has undoubtedly affected my life. I've been at this school for seven years, and while I understand that this is quite a short amount of time in the context of my future, I think that what I have been taught by my friends and teachers here, I will remember for a long time."

Sarah H. Drama Captain

"I worked especially hard to try and reunite all boarders, as I know personally how much it influences the boarding experience. I was extremely lucky to have such a supportive, dedicated Prefect team by my side to discuss everything with me. I'm very grateful that we worked so well together in trying to achieve that and feel grateful that other members of the house helped us out so readily."

Aliyah D-A. Head Boarder

"Throughout Lower School, I would push myself to take advantage of opportunities to speak in front of larger groups. I quickly became a lot more confident and comfortable with myself. When it came time for Prefect applications, I decided to give it a go and have been amazed at how much I have learned about myself and the variety of skills I have been able to develop. I will certainly miss the kind and loving environment the students and staff have created, and I am extremely grateful for the encouragement and comfort they gave me over the years."

Alice G. Head Girl



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RADIO INNOVATORS WIN NATIONAL AWARD

In 2022, Christian radio station, Radio Maria Youth, won a national award for 'Most Innovative Team' at the Youth Audio Awards with the support of our Chaplain, Mrs Ward, who volunteers for the station and student, Maryam G., who is a presenter. The awards celebrate young people in radio and aim to widen the talent pool coming into the radio industry. Maryam G. has volunteered at Radio Maria since 2020. Since then, she has hosted a weekly show, alongside fellow Year 13 students, working innovatively to engage listeners across a variety of platforms, from digital radio to TikTok and YouTube.



CHOIR SINGS AT CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY DAY

Our Junior School choir wowed crowds at the Cambridgeshire County Show with a memorable performance. The event, attended by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, was held at Newmarket Racecourse and our students performed five songs, including a special Jubilee anthem composed by Sir Richard Stilgoe entitled 'She Not Only Reigns, But She Pours'. A truly unforgettable experience and we are proud to say that our girls gave it their all.



SUPPORTING SCHOOL CHILDREN IN ZIMBABWE

We have a long-term commitment to support the development of a new Mary Ward High School in Zimbabwe, to improve educational opportunities for children of secondary school age. Our latest donation, generously raised by parents, staff and students during our annual Fun Run and other fundraising activities, is helping to fund a new water pump



ECO COMMITTEE GOES FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

Throughout the year, our Eco Committee has worked with great dedication and ingenuity. From introducing the ReWorked scheme to increase our plastic recycling, to raising awareness of plastic pollution, litter-picking for the Great Big School Clean, researching student understanding of waste management in school, and engaging with guest speakers such as Cindy Forde, Founder of Plantari as part of our Sustainability Day – it has been a busy year. The team is also working towards an Eco Schools Green Flag Award – setting their sights on the highest level of achievement. Watch this space!

Image above: Working with Year 2 to explore climate change through the children's book *Finding Home Again*, by Alumna, Elena Gough.



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DISCOVER IF ST MARY'S IS THE PLACE FOR YOU









Junior School

Senior School Sixth Form

St Mary's Boarding

STAY IN TOUCH

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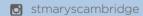
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