Academic Excellence

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL









St Mary's School
Hampstead

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INTRODUCTION TO *Academics*

At St Mary's, we believe that academic success begins with a genuine love of learning. Our ambitious curriculum, inspiring learning environments and exceptional teaching encourage every child to think deeply, ask questions and approach new challenges with confidence. Supported by small class sizes and teachers who know every child as an individual, pupils are nurtured, challenged and inspired to achieve their very best.

From the earliest years, we build strong foundations in English and mathematics before broadening learning through specialist teaching, our innovative creative curriculum and dedicated STEAM programme. Whether exploring the Amazon rainforest through virtual reality, designing robotics projects in our Global Learning Centre or presenting independent research, girls are encouraged to make connections across subjects and apply their learning in meaningful ways.

Knowing every child well is one of our greatest strengths. Regular assessment, together with teachers' day to day understanding of each pupil, allows learning to be carefully adapted so that every girl receives the right balance of support and challenge. This personalised approach enables pupils to make excellent progress, with our assessment outcomes consistently placing them well above national expectations.

As pupils move through the school, they are prepared for the next stage of their education through our comprehensive 11+ programme and bespoke Year 6 Mind the Gap curriculum. Year after year, St Mary's girls secure places and scholarships at many of the country's leading senior schools. Above all, they leave us with the knowledge, curiosity and confidence to flourish both academically and personally.

Assessment AT ST MARY'S

Assessment is a regular and purposeful part of teaching and learning at St Mary's. It enables us to understand each girl as an individual, carefully track her progress and ensure that teaching is responsive to her strengths and areas for development.

Informal assessment is embedded within every lesson through questioning, feedback and teacher observation. Progress is regularly reviewed by teachers and senior leaders, with dedicated meetings to discuss each girl and identify where additional support or greater challenge may be needed.

Formal assessment begins in Year 1, with termly assessments in English, mathematics and reasoning. From Year 2, girls also complete annual CAT assessments. We use a combination of written and online assessments so that, by the time girls approach the 11+, different forms of assessment are familiar and can be approached with confidence. Results are shared openly with families as part of our ongoing partnership between school and home.

Our girls consistently achieve well above national and preparatory school averages. Across Years 1–6, our average age-standardised scores are 116 in mathematics, 115 in English, 120 in verbal reasoning and 123 in non-verbal reasoning. We also see excellent value added: between Years 2 and 6, girls make an average improvement of 14.5 points in their age-standardised scores.

Assessment is not simply about measuring attainment; it helps us understand progress, inform teaching and ensure that every girl is appropriately supported and challenged.

At a glance...



+14.5 points

Average value added improvement





11+ process AND RESULTS

Preparing pupils for senior school is one of the most important parts of life at St Mary's. We are proud of the outstanding senior school offers our girls receive each year, reflecting the excellent teaching, individual support and encouragement they experience throughout their time with us.

Our aim is simple: to help every family find the senior school where their daughter will flourish. Preparation begins in Year 3 with reasoning lessons, gradually building confidence and familiarity with different styles of assessment. In Years 5 and 6, pupils benefit from interview coaching, group task workshops with Oppidan Education, mock interviews and preparation for written and online assessments, including the London 11+ Consortium examinations, which girls can sit here at St Mary's.

Families are supported throughout the process by the Head and Deputy Head (Academic), who work closely with parents to offer advice tailored to each child. Our annual Senior School Fair brings together Heads and admissions teams from leading day and boarding schools. We maintain strong links with a wide range of senior schools, helping us to understand their individual ethos and admissions processes and to guide families towards the schools in which their daughters are most likely to thrive.

Each year, St Mary's girls move on to an impressive range of senior schools, including North London Collegiate, South Hampstead High School, Highgate School, St Mary's, Ascot, City of London School for Girls and Francis Holland, Regent's Park, alongside many others. We are also proud of the number of scholarships awarded to our pupils and our consistently strong success rate in securing places at families' preferred schools.

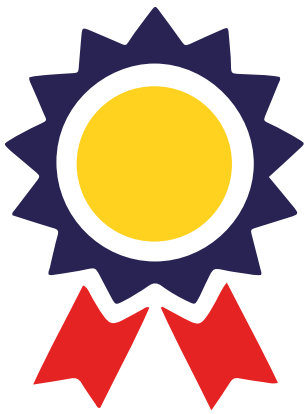
In 2025-2026...

100 offers

for 29 students

29 scholarships

among them were academic, sports, music, STEM and gymnastics



Mind the Gap YEAR 6 PROGRAMME

Following the completion of the 11+ process, our Year 6 pupils begin the Mind the Gap programme, designed to broaden their learning and prepare them for the move to senior school. Alongside the Year 6 curriculum and memorable experiences such as the ski trip and Year 6 production, the programme gives girls the opportunity to explore new interests, think independently and develop the skills they will need for the next stage of their education.

A key part of the programme is the ISEB Project Qualification (iPQ), an independent research project in which pupils choose a topic that interests them. They learn how to plan their project, carry out research, evaluate information and present their findings, developing valuable skills in independent study, critical thinking and public speaking.

The programme also includes an introductory course in Spanish, giving pupils a useful foundation for senior school, alongside philosophy and critical thinking workshops that encourage lively discussion, thoughtful debate and the confidence to question, analyse and consider different perspectives. By the time they leave St Mary's, our Year 6 pupils are well prepared for the opportunities and challenges of senior school, ready to embrace the next stage of their education with confidence.





Scholastica PROGRAMME

The Scholastica programme offers Upper and Lower School pupils the opportunity to explore subjects beyond the timetabled curriculum. Designed for girls who enjoy academic challenge, it encourages them to broaden their interests, tackle complex questions and learn alongside like-minded peers.

Throughout the year, pupils take part in specialist clubs and enrichment activities across a range of subjects. Recent opportunities have included maths problem solving, computing and coding, Mini United Nations and debating, allowing girls to develop their knowledge while building confidence in discussion, teamwork and independent thinking.

The programme also includes opportunities to represent St Mary's in competitions, conferences and workshops beyond the school. Pupils have attended a Mini United Nations conference at North London Collegiate School, a debating competition at South Hampstead High School and a Maths Olympiad at Queen's College School. These experiences encourage girls to think critically, communicate with confidence and embrace academic challenge beyond the classroom.

Learning Support (SEND)

At St Mary's, we are committed to ensuring that every child is known, valued and supported to achieve their potential. We recognise that every pupil learns differently and work closely with families, teachers and external professionals to provide the right support for each individual.

Where additional support is needed, it is carefully planned and tailored to the child. Wherever possible, pupils are supported within the classroom, alongside their peers, while targeted small group or individual sessions are provided when appropriate. Support may include additional teaching in English or mathematics, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and play therapy.

Our experienced staff receive regular training to ensure they are well equipped to meet a wide range of needs and provide effective support across the school. Above all, every child is, first and foremost, a St Mary's girl. We celebrate each pupil's strengths, nurture their confidence and help them develop the skills they need to thrive, both at St Mary's and beyond.

> I would strongly recommend St Mary's... It's a lovely school - doesn't feel pushy, girls very happy, gets great results at 11+.
>
> Parent

EYFS EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

At St Mary's, the foundations of academic success are laid from the very beginning. Across Pre-Nursery, Nursery and Reception, children learn through purposeful play, exploration and discovery, alongside carefully planned adult-led direct teaching of knowledge and skills.

Our children are taught by fully qualified teachers and Early Years Practitioners who, through small classes and careful assessment, know each child as an individual and provide the right balance of support and challenge for all.

Strong foundations in personal, social and emotional development; physical development; communication and language; literacy; and mathematics are at the heart of our curriculum. Learning is brought to life through rich, practical experiences, with children encouraged to Investigate, create, question and problem-solve including critical thinking.

Our Secret Garden, outdoor learning spaces and mini Global Learning Centre extend learning beyond the classroom, while from the Early Years, children benefit from specialist teaching in French, Music and PE. By the end of Reception, our children are confident, curious and independent learners, ready to thrive in Year 1 and beyond.

93%

of the 17 Early Learning Goals were met by our girls in 2025-2026, compared to 82% nationally



Curriculum

ENGLISH

English is a central part of life at St Mary's. We want every child to become a confident reader, thoughtful writer and articulate speaker. Through engaging lessons, pupils develop the skills to write with accuracy, creativity and purpose.

Children enjoy writing stories, poems, letters, reports and diaries, giving them experience of writing for a range of audiences and purposes. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught alongside writing. Opportunities for public speaking are woven throughout school life, from classroom discussions to our regular Praying Together Services and school productions, helping every child develop confidence when speaking in front of an audience.

Reading develops throughout each child's journey at St Mary's. In the Early Years, children build strong foundations through our systematic phonics programme, developing the confidence to read with fluency and enjoyment. As they move through the school, they explore increasingly rich and challenging texts, discovering new authors and making links across subjects such as history, geography and science. Regular visits to our welcoming library and events such as World Book Day encourage a genuine enjoyment of reading and help children discover books they will remember long after they leave St Mary's.

> Teachers balance academic rigour with creative learning.
>
> ISI (Independent Schools Inspectorate)

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics at St Mary's is built on a secure understanding of number and a belief that every child can succeed. Following the White Rose mastery approach, pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking, solve problems and develop confidence as mathematicians.

In the Early Years and Lower School, children use practical resources and visual models to help them understand new concepts before moving on to more abstract methods. As they progress through the school, they become increasingly confident in applying their knowledge to reasoning, problem solving and more complex mathematical challenges.

Pupils are encouraged to think carefully, explain their methods and tackle unfamiliar questions with resilience. Lessons develop fluency alongside understanding, helping girls to become accurate and confident mathematicians.

Beyond the classroom, pupils have the opportunity to take part in a range of national competitions. Girls in Years 3 and 4 enter the First Mathematical Challenge, Year 5 pupils compete in the Primary Mathematics Challenge, and our Upper School Scholastica team represents the school in the UKMT Team Mathematics Challenge.

By the time they leave St Mary's, our pupils have a secure understanding of mathematics, the confidence to tackle new challenges and an enjoyment of the subject that stays with them.

National competitions...

FIRST MATHEMATICS CHALLENGE

PRIMARY MATHEMATICS CHALLENGE

UK Maths Trust
Team Mathematics Challenge





STEAM

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) is at the heart of learning at St Mary's. It encourages curiosity, creativity and problem solving, giving every child the confidence to ask questions, test ideas and learn from the process.

Each week, pupils in Years 1-6 enjoy dedicated STEAM lessons in our Global Learning Centre, where ideas become reality. From coding and robotics to virtual reality, green screen technology and 3D printing, girls use industry standard technology as part of their everyday learning.

STEAM projects grow in challenge as pupils move through the school. Younger children might investigate life cycles or design weatherproof shelters, while older pupils carry out scientific enquiries, create 3D printed Moon base prototypes inspired by NASA's Artemis mission, or wire Victorian dolls' houses with working electrical circuits.

Learning extends beyond the classroom through clubs and competitions. Pupils take part in our Inter-house STEAM Day, compete in the First Lego League robotics tournament and the NXTLVL Problem Solving Olympiad, and explore the natural world through our Mother Nature Science Club.

At St Mary's, STEAM inspires girls to think creatively, solve problems with confidence and develop the skills they need for the future.





RE

Religious Education plays an important role in life at St Mary's. Guided by the new Religious Education Directory, To Know You Are Known, pupils develop a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith while exploring the beliefs, traditions and values that shape our world.

From the Early Years through to Year 6, children build their knowledge through engaging lessons, discussion and reflection. As pupils move into the Upper School, their studies become increasingly theological, encouraging them to ask deeper questions, consider different perspectives and think critically about faith and morality. Alongside Christianity, pupils learn about other world religions and world-views, including Islam, Judaism and Hinduism, helping them develop respect for different beliefs and cultures. Workshops and enrichment activities bring this learning to life, giving children the opportunity to learn from people of different faiths and traditions. Catholic Social Teaching encourages pupils to think about justice, compassion and how they can make a positive difference to others.

Prayer and worship are woven into the rhythm of each school day. Children take part in whole school liturgies, Masses, sacramental preparation and pupil-led worship, while the liturgical year is marked through celebrations such as Advent, Lent and Marian devotions. Opportunities including the Arrupe Club and our school councils encourage girls to lead, serve others and put their faith into action.

GROWTH (PSHE)

Growth is our personal, social, health and relationships education curriculum. It helps children develop the knowledge, confidence and values they need to make positive choices, build healthy relationships and understand themselves and others.

Lessons are interactive and encourage discussion, role play and reflection, giving pupils the confidence to ask questions and share their ideas in a safe and supportive environment. As children move through the school, they explore topics including friendships, wellbeing, online safety, diversity, relationships and growing up in an age-appropriate way. Our programme is supported by Ten:Ten resources and reflects the values at the heart of St Mary's.

Learning is enriched through events including Anti-Bullying Week, Black History Month, Internet Safety initiatives, Careers Week and our International Food Fair. These opportunities encourage children to celebrate diversity, think about the world around them and put our school values into practice each day. In this way, the Growth curriculum helps pupils live out our mission statement by ensuring that spiritual and moral principles are reflected in everyday life.

> We have been particularly impressed by the topic approach each term with our daughter becoming passionate about her learning due to the immersive approach.
>
> Parent

CREATIVE CURRICULUM (HUMANITIES)

Our creative curriculum brings history and geography together through exciting topics that help pupils make connections across their learning. Each term, children in Years 1 to 6 explore a new theme, developing historical and geographical knowledge while building skills in research, discussion, writing and presentation.



Learning is designed to be hands on and memorable. Every topic begins with an engaging introduction and builds towards a final project that allows pupils to apply what they have learned. Whether stepping into the Amazon rainforest using virtual reality, investigating ancient civilisations or exploring life in different parts of the world, children are encouraged to ask questions, think critically and share their ideas with confidence.

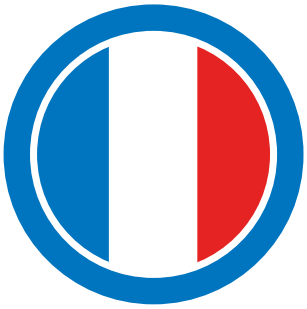
By making links across subjects, the creative curriculum helps pupils see the bigger picture, deepen their understanding and develop a genuine curiosity about the world around them.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French is introduced from the very beginning at St Mary's through fun, interactive lessons that spark a love of languages. In Pre-Nursery and Nursery, children enjoy songs, rhymes and French picture books, while Reception pupils look forward to lessons with our friendly French speaking bear, *Camembear*.

As pupils move through the school, they build their vocabulary and confidence in speaking, listening, reading and writing in the target language. They learn about French grammar in an age-appropriate way, while developing the skills to hold conversations, express opinions and write with increasing accuracy. Alongside the language itself, children also explore the traditions and celebrations of France and other French speaking countries, making comparisons with their own experiences and learning about different cultures.

French is brought to life through a range of memorable experiences, including performances by a visiting French theatre company and study and ski trips where pupils can use their language skills in real situations. In Year 6, girls also enjoy an introductory term of Spanish to support their move to senior school, while Little Linguist Spanish and German clubs provide further opportunities to develop a love of languages.







PE

Physical Education is an important part of life at St Mary's. With excellent facilities, including our astro pitch and indoor sports hall, pupils enjoy a wide range of sporting opportunities throughout the year.

From the Early Years to Year 6, children take part in lessons that develop movement, coordination, teamwork and game skills across a variety of sports. They are encouraged to challenge themselves, work together and enjoy being active, whether they are trying a new activity or representing the school in competition.

St Mary's has a proud sporting tradition, with pupils achieving success across a range of local and regional competitions. A wide range of clubs and squads gives every child the opportunity to develop their skills, while our busy fixture programme allows girls to represent the school regularly with pride. We are also proud to host local football and cricket tournaments, welcoming schools from across the area` and strengthening links within our sporting community.

> PE is excellent at the school. I love how they encourage everyone of all abilities to take part and develop their skills.
>
> Parent









MUSIC & DRAMA

Music is an important part of life at St Mary's. From the Early Years onwards, pupils develop their musical skills through singing, composition, listening and instrumental work, while exploring a wide range of musical styles. Singing features throughout the school day in music lessons, hymn practice and performances, helping children develop confidence and enjoy making music together.

Many pupils choose to extend their learning through individual peripatetic lessons in singing, violin, flute, recorder and piano, as well as clubs including string ensemble, choirs and music technology. There are many opportunities to perform, from our informal half-termly Cake Concerts to larger events such as the annual Carol Concert at St John's, Hampstead. Pupils also have the opportunity to perform with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican and share their music with the local community through our Age UK Camden afternoon tea concert.

Drama is equally valued at St Mary's and plays an important role across the curriculum. Every child has opportunities to perform, whether in class assemblies, liturgies or school productions. Recent Year 6 productions have included *Mary Poppins*, *Shrek the Musical* and *Finding Nemo Junior*, alongside the Year 3 Easter production and the Year 4 Pentecost play. These experiences help children develop confidence, teamwork and a love of performing.

ART

Art encourages every child to explore ideas, experiment with different materials and develop their own creative style. Through drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and mixed media, pupils build their skills while studying the work of a wide range of artists.

Children are encouraged to take creative risks, reflect on their work and refine their ideas as they develop. Art is often linked to topics from the creative curriculum, allowing pupils to respond creatively to themes they are exploring in subjects such as history and geography and make connections across their learning.

The school year ends with our much-anticipated Art Fair, where every pupil has the opportunity to exhibit work created throughout the year. It is a wonderful celebration of creativity and a chance for children to share their achievements with family and friends.





COMPUTING

Computing gives pupils the knowledge and confidence to use technology safely, creatively and effectively. From the Early Years onwards, children develop a wide range of digital skills, from creating simple programs and digital artwork to coding, animation and problem solving.

As pupils move through the school, they learn how computers work, develop programming skills using Scratch and Python, create digital content and explore topics such as data, networks and cyber safety. Online safety is an important part of the curriculum and is taught in every year group, helping children make informed and responsible choices whenever they use technology.

Learning extends beyond the classroom through computing and robotics clubs, where pupils can experiment, design and build using a range of technologies. Every year, the whole school also takes part in the Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge, an international competition that develops logical thinking and problem solving while giving pupils the opportunity to measure their skills against others around the world.

With the support of our dedicated Director of Innovation and our outstanding facilities in the Global Learning Centre, computing at St Mary's prepares pupils to use technology with confidence, curiosity and creativity.



11+ results: 100 offers, 29 scholarships and an average of 3.6 offers per pupil.

Outstanding Senior School Destinations



St Mary's School Hampstead

47 Fitzjohn's Avenue, London NW3 6PG
020 7435 1868 office@stmh.co.uk
stmh.co.uk