

16.1.2026

ST-PHILIP HOWARD
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY



From the Headteacher

Dear Readers,

Happy New Year! I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas break, and that the return to school routines has been smooth for you and your children.

For us as a school, the start of term was certainly not a gentle one—Monday morning brought the news of our inspection, meaning there was little time to settle back in, especially with the challenging weather.

Once our report is ready for publication, I will send a copy home. At present, the process is taking longer than with previous inspections due to the requirements of the new framework. I've included more information about this later in the newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support throughout the inspection, as well as for the kind messages many of you sent in. As I mentioned in my letter, our school is made up of dedicated staff and pupils who truly embody our mission: **TEAMSPH – Head, Heart, Hands – together on the journey**, supported by incredibly committed parents and carers. The last two weeks have only strengthened my belief in this.

Looking ahead, we have another busy term planned, including Parents' Evening, Options Evening, and a number of parental workshops. I look forward to seeing many of you at these events.

Kind Regards
Mr M Kays
Headteacher



Important dates

- UKMT Maths Challenge – Wednesday 28th January.
- Year 11 Parents evening – Thursday 29th January
- Year 11 Mocks (Core Subjects) – Week beginning 2nd February.
- SEND parents evening – Wednesday 11th February
- End of the half term – Friday 13th February.

#TEAMSPH – Head, Heart, Hands, together on the success journey

Telephone: 01457 853611

Email:
enquiries@sph.srscmat.co.uk



Understanding Ofsted New Framework

Ofsted has updated the way it reports inspection findings by introducing redesigned report cards that focus on clarity, transparency, and the needs of parents and carers. The previous single overall judgement has been removed and replaced with colour-coded grades across key areas such as curriculum and teaching, attendance and behaviour, leadership, achievement, inclusion, and personal development and wellbeing.

These areas are now graded on a five-point scale—**Exceptional, Strong standard, Expected standard, Needs attention, and Urgent improvement**—providing a more nuanced and detailed overview of each setting's strengths and priorities for development. Safeguarding is assessed separately as either Met or Not met. The new report cards are designed to be more accessible and informative, giving families a clearer understanding of how well an education provider is performing and where improvements may be required

Please follow the link for further overview. <https://youtu.be/kbl0FvY976g>

Sport Leaders

Our Year 10 and Year 11 Sports Leaders did a fantastic job on Thursday 15th January, supporting the organisation of the High Peak Schools Football Competition for both boys and girls.

Throughout the event, the leaders took responsibility for refereeing, organising fixtures, managing league tables, and ensuring the smooth running of the competition from start to finish. Their professionalism, confidence, and teamwork were evident throughout the day.

We were especially proud to receive positive feedback from a member of staff at one of the primary schools, who commented on how wonderful the leaders were and what a fantastic representation they gave of our school and the wider community.

This was an excellent opportunity for our students to develop their leadership, communication, and organisational skills, and they rose to the challenge brilliantly.

Rock Climbing

This week, a group of pupils spent two days Rock climbing at the Rope Race in Marple, where they developed the skills required for the event, including safety procedures, a range of knot techniques, climbing, and abseiling. This opportunity was offered to help boost their GCSE PE practical marks.

Their dedication and commitment throughout the two days were a testament to how much they value their studies and their determination to achieve the highest grades possible

Period 6 & Period 0

Last week marked the start of our Period 6 and Period 0 lessons for our Year 11 pupils. These additional sessions, organised by teachers across all subjects, are designed to support pupils as they prepare for their Summer GCSE examinations.

It has been fantastic to see so many pupils taking advantage of these opportunities, whether attending after-school sessions or arriving bright and early for the 8:00am lessons.

A massive thank you to our dedicated staff, who generously give up their time to facilitate these sessions and ensure our pupils have every chance to succeed

From Student Leadership



A Message from Student leadership team

It has been a busy and exciting fortnight here at SPH. We recently welcomed Ofsted into school, and we were incredibly proud to represent our community. As we move into the Lenten term, we have lots of meaningful and engaging activities planned.

This half term, we are delighted to open our new Wellbeing Hub, offering mental health support for students across all year groups—from help with exam stress to supporting younger pupils with worries about the future.

We will also be marking several important events, including:

- Children's Mental Health Awareness Week
- Race Equality Week
- The launch of our Lenten fundraising initiatives
- And, we hope, the much-loved Big Lenten Walk

We look forward to keeping you updated with all that's happening in the coming weeks.