



St Mary's Catholic First School Newsletter –  
Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2023





*We love, we learn, we live.*

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was great to see so many parents in school this week at our parent's evenings. The children have settled in well to the academic year and worked hard this half term.

Following on from your generosity raising money for MacMillan cancer care and collecting for The People's Kitchen in Newcastle, we would like to continue to support others in need by taking part in Operation Christmas Child: <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>

The idea within school is that we all work together as a whole school to contribute items to fill as many shoe boxes as possible. Many thanks for the shoeboxes that have already been donated, please feel free to donate more empty shoeboxes if you have spares. If you wish to donate a fully completed shoebox from your family then please feel free, we have labels and leaflets in the office to help with this should you need them. The following items are suggestions only, any donations (whatever the year group) would be gratefully received:

	
<b>Operation Christmas Child Class Suggested Donations</b>	
<b>Reception</b>	<b>Toys:</b> Small cuddly toys, dolls, toy cars, small musical instruments, yo-yos, skipping ropes, balls, small puzzles etc
<b>Years 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>School Supplies:</b> Pens, pencils & sharpeners, crayons/felt pens, stamps & ink pad sets, writing pads/notebooks, solar calculators, colouring/picture books etc  <b>Hygiene Items:</b> Toothbrush, bars of wrapped soap, comb or hairbrush, flannel etc
<b>Years 3 &amp; 4</b>	<b>Other Items:</b> Hat, gloves, scarf, cap, socks, T-shirt, flip-flops, hair accessories, jewellery set, wind up torch.
	Please <b>do not</b> include the following items:  Toothpaste, sweets, lotions and liquids; used or damaged items, war-related items, seeds, gum, chocolate or food items, medicines, aerosol cans, sharp or fragile items.
<b>Deadline date: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November</b>	

Finally, just a reminder to bring any pets to St. Mary's Church at 4pm this Sunday for a special pet blessing from Fr. Jeff. You can also take the opportunity to see the children's work about the special animals in their lives, which will be displayed in the Narthex of St. Mary's Church. Some of the St. Mary's staff will be there with their four-legged friends-hope to see you there!

Mrs. Oakes



### **Mini Vinnies**

Please note, the next Mini Vinnies session is on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October**. Children participating in the club should be collected from school at 4:30pm.

### **Census Day Trust Winners**

All children who had a free school lunch last Thursday (Superhero Day) were entered into a Trust wide raffle. St. Mary's had 3 lucky winners who received the following prizes in today's assembly-well done!

Ella	£10 WH Smith Voucher
Jack B	£30 Smyths Voucher
Nyla	Selection of Books

### **PTA News**

On Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November at 2pm in school we would like to invite any parents that are interested in being part of the St. Mary's PTA. All parents welcome!

The current PTA have organised a 'Spooky Disco' to take place on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October from 3.30 until 4.45pm. Children attending the disco would remain in school at 3.15pm and change into home clothes or a costume (no scary masks allowed). Children will attend the disco from 3.30-4.45pm and will be given a snack and a drink at the event. Children will exit school from their usual exits at the end of the disco. Any children not attending will leave school via the main entrance at 3.15pm.

Tickets for the disco are £4 per child (& £3 a sibling) and are available to purchase from Mrs. Stoves on the morning of the Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October from 8.30-8.45am and also after school from 3.15pm. Mrs. Stoves will make herself available outside the school entrance. Mrs. Stoves will also be available on the morning of the disco, the 24<sup>th</sup> October from 8.30am for any last-minute disco tickets. Tickets and payment are not available from the main school office, only from Mrs. Stoves.

### **Open Days**

The online applications for First and Primary schools will open on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023. We would like to invite prospective Reception 2024 parents to look around St. Mary's. Please contact the school office on (01434) 603 791 to arrange a viewing on one of the following mornings (alternative times can be arranged if required):

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 9.30-11.30am**

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 9.30-11.30am**

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October 9.30-11.30am**

### **Bikeability**

Year 4 have been booked in to take part in Bikeability on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October. In order to take part in this bike safety course, each child must have a bike which is road worthy along with a suitable safety helmet. Please contact Miss. Baird if you wish to discuss this matter further.



### **Free School Meals**

**Universal free school meals** - All pupils in reception, year one, and year two are entitled to a free meal, without having to apply for this option.

**Eligibility for free school meals** - The government has made amendments to the eligibility criteria since April 2018. This is to reflect the introduction of Universal Credit.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Meals.aspx>

### **Cauliflower Cards**

We have decided to participate in the 'Christmas Design Project' run by Cauliflower Cards again this year. The project aims to encourage pupils' creativity and design skills whilst also raising funds for our school. Your child has been creating his/her own Christmas design which can be professionally printed to produce personalized Christmas Cards, Gift Labels, Wrapping Paper and/or Mugs. Not only would it be very exciting for your child to see his/her work as a finished printed product, the cards themselves are great for sending a more personal greeting to friends and family at Christmas and the Mugs are great for gifts! Orders and payments must be made online using the unique code located at the top of the pupil order form, which you will receive on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October. Please refer to your order form for further instructions. Each order form must be unique so please do not photocopy the form for other members of your family. You can get extra copies from school. **All artwork where orders have been placed must be returned to school by: 26.10.23.** Products will be delivered by the beginning of December.

### **Royal British Legion – Poppy Appeal**

We will be selling the Poppy Appeal items in school from next week. Please see the table for priced items.

Paper Poppy	A small donation
Snap Bands	£1.00
Wrist Bands	£1.00
Zip Tags	50p
Reflective Poppy	£1.00



### **Mass**

On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October, year 2 and year 3 will be attending Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church at 9.30am. All parents and carers are welcome to attend this event.



### **Parent Communication**

Please can we kindly remind parents and carers that all emails sent by parents should be sent to the parent contact address only. This is to ensure that the admin staff can forward emails to the correct member of staff to deal with your queries. [parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com](mailto:parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com)

### **Application for Middle and High School:**

It is now time for children in year 4 (First to Middle), year 6 (Primary to Secondary) and year 9 Middle to High) schools to apply for the next phase of school starting in September 2024.

If you have a child who is due to transfer to either middle or high school, please see the link below.

The Portal will open 12<sup>th</sup> September 23 and close at midnight on 31<sup>st</sup> October 23.

[https://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal\\_LIVE/en](https://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en)

### **First Reconciliation & Holy Communion Preparation 2023-24 for St Mary's Y4 pupils**




Following the summer break, our parish community at Saint Mary's will begin to prepare children for First Reconciliation (Confession) and First Holy Communion. This programme of preparation is open to all baptised Catholic children in Year Four and above.

Should you judge your child to be ready to make this important step, please could you indicate your interest by completing the slip below and returning it to the Presbytery/Parish Office as soon as possible.

### **Mission Statement Value Award Winners:**

If you would like to celebrate your child's achievements out of school and would like us to give them a mention in Celebration Assembly on a Friday, then simply fill out one of the Mission Statement Value Cards that have been sent home with your child or ask for one at our school office. We love to hear about all the children's wonderful achievements, both in school and out!



Class			
Reception	Fraser	Alfie L	Felix
Year 1	Austin	Mikey	Dexter
Year 2	Kacey	Kohan	Ashton
Year 3	Bao	Charlie	Erin
Year 4	Ollie	Spencer	Harley

## Attendance Ladder



St. Mary's Class Attendance	
This Week's Winners: Year – 4	
Reception	96.28%
Year 1	94.82%
Year 2	94.59%
Year 3	96.49%
Year 4	96.8%



### Extra-Curricular Clubs

If your child wishes to attend a club that is before or after school, then please ring and inform the school office.

Club	Day/Time
Girls Football Club (Years 3 & 4)	Tuesday 12.25-12.55pm
Boys Football Club (Years 3 & 4)	Tuesday 12:25-12.55pm
Running Club (Years 2-4)	Wednesday 8.15-8.40am
Mini Vinnies (Years 1-4)	See following information below
Homework Club (Years 1-4)	Thursday 12.25-12.55pm
Singing Club (Years 1-4)	Wednesday 12.25-12.55pm
Regenerators	Wednesday 3.15-4.00pm

### Diary Dates

<p><b>All Creatures Great &amp; Small Exhibition and pet blessing at St. Mary's Church.</b></p> <p><u>All pets welcome!</u></p>	<p>13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> October</p> <p><u>Blessing to be held on Oct 15<sup>th</sup>-4pm outside St. Mary's Catholic Church</u></p>
<p><b>Mini Vinnies</b></p>	<p>Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 3:15pm-4:30pm</p>
<p><b>Purchase PTA Disco tickets from Mrs. Stoves outside school</b></p>	<p>Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October (8.30-8.45am &amp; 3.15pm)</p>
<p><b>Year 2 &amp; 3 Mass at St. Mary's Church (parents &amp; carers welcome to attend)</b></p>	<p>Fri 20<sup>th</sup> Oct 9.30am</p>
<p><b>PTA Disco</b></p>	<p>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October (Purchase of last-minute tickets from Mrs. Stoves outside school 8.30-8.45am)</p>
<p><b>Bikeability-Year 4</b> <b>All pupils need road worthy bike and a helmet to take part.</b></p>	<p>Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October</p>
<p><b>Cauliflower Christmas Card</b> <b>Orders &amp; artwork returned to school</b></p>	<p>Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October</p>



<b>Teacher Training Day</b> <b>School closed to pupils</b>	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October
<b>Half term</b>	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> Oct-Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup> November
<b>School re-opens for Autumn 2</b>	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> November
<b><u>Autumn Term Class &amp; Whole School Mass</u></b>	
<b><u>Autumn Term Class Masses</u></b> Following our Reception Welcome Mass on the 28 <sup>th</sup> September each class will have the opportunity to attend Mass at St. Mary's Church at 9.30am. Parents and carers are invited to attend class Masses at the Church. Dates are as follows: Y2 & Y3-20/10 Half Term Y1-10/11 Y4-17/11 Y3-24/11 Y2-1/12 Y1 & Rec-8/12 Thurs 14/12- <b>11am</b> Christingle Service-Whole School Wed 20/12-End of term Christmas Mass-9.30am-Whole School	

### **Safeguarding**

This month our E-safety theme is 'Online Relationships.' Pupils will discuss how to be respectful to others online and describe how to recognise healthy and unhealthy behaviours online. Pupils will be talking about this with their class teacher in class.

Please take a look at the following information and advice for parents and carers on supporting young people online: [Healthy Online Relationships | Childnet](#)

#### **Pupil Support & Safeguarding**

**Designated safeguarding Lead-** Mrs. Oakes  
**Deputy safeguarding Lead-**Miss. Baird  
**Assistant safeguarding Lead-**Mrs. Stoves  
**SENDCo/Assistant SENCo-**Mrs. Stansfield & Mrs Stoves

Please remember that we are here to support you and your child at any time. You can contact us via the main office (01434 603791) or by email ([info@smfs.bwcet.com](mailto:info@smfs.bwcet.com))



*'St. Mary's Catholic First is happy and welcoming.'* OFSTED 2023

*We Love, We Learn, We Live.*



We would like to invite prospective Reception 2024 parents to our OPEN DAYS on the following dates-

Monday 23rd October (9.30am – 11.30am)

Tuesday 24th October (9.30am – 11.30am)

Thursday 26th October (9.30am – 11.30am)

Please contact our school office to arrange a viewing appointment.

St Mary's Catholic First School, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 2EE. Please call [01434 603791](tel:01434603791). Email - [parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com](mailto:parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com)

