



St Mary's Catholic First School Newsletter –
Friday 8th December 2023

We love, we learn, we live.

Dear Parents and Carers,

We started the week lighting our first candle on the Advent wreath as we countdown and prepare for the birth of Jesus.



God of light, as we wait through the long winter nights for the birth of Christ, help us to keep watch. Help us to tend the tiny flame of hope. Make us alert until your gift of joy arrives. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

Wednesday was a busy day in school, we had parents in school participating in our class Celebration of the Word in the morning, followed by our Christmas Fair after school. Thank you to our PTA and parent volunteers and everyone who donated and participated in the Christmas Fair, it was real success and has got us all in the Christmas spirit!



Today, the children participated in the annual Santa Dash, it was great to see so many 'Santas' running together and spurring each other on, all the children were awarded their very own Santa dash medal for taking part.



Next week, Christmas continues with a whole school cinema trip to The Forum to watch Arthur Christmas, followed by our school Christmas lunch and then the Christingle!

Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs. Oakes



Nativity Tickets

We have organised two performances of our Nativity on Monday 18th December at 9:30am and then repeated at 2:00pm in the school hall. Due to fire regulations, tickets will be allocated at a maximum of two tickets per family to ensure we don't exceed the capacity of the school hall. An email will be sent out later today on Arbor containing the link to access the form, so parents can choose which performance they wish to attend. The deadline for this form to be completed is **Wednesday 13th December at 12 noon**, tickets will then be allocated accordingly. School will inform parents if any spare tickets become available.

Children have already been sent home with their Nativity costume requirements, please see the class teacher if you need any support with this. Due to safeguarding policies, we ask that all mobile phones are switched off and remain out of site for the duration of your time in school, photographs and filming will not be permitted during the Nativity performances. All children will have a photograph taken of them in their outfit prior to the performance, this will be sent home with your child following the Nativity.

Year 3 & Year 4 - Parents Notice Swimming

Children in years 3 & 4 have finished their swimming for this term and are not required to bring their swimming or PE kit for the next two Mondays in school. Children are to come to school wearing their school uniform on the 11th & 18th December. Swimming will commence on **Monday 8th January** as normal.

Wild Passport

Just a reminder as the weather gets cooler, please can children in years 1-4 bring suitable clothing to participate in their weekly Wild Passport session each Tuesday. Children need a warm coat, hat, scarf, gloves, additional thick socks and a change of clothes in case they get wet/muddy. The children really enjoy the sessions, it is important that they are appropriately dressed to remain as warm as possible.

Christmas Cinema Trip

A payment of £6.50 has now been set up on the Arbor App for the Arthur Christmas movie. **The payment deadline is Monday 11th December at 7pm.** Please pay before this date to ensure your child(ren)s place on the trip.

Christmas Pantomime

On Wednesday 20th December at 1:30pm the whole school will be visiting the Queen's Hall in Hexham to watch the performance of Snow White. A payment of £10 has now been set up on the Arbor App, the deadline for this trip is on Monday 18th December.

Open Art Afternoon

On Wednesday 13th December we would like to invite all parents/carers into school from 2:00-2:45pm to join your child(ren) in making some festive artwork. The children (& parents) really enjoy spending this time together in school, working together on a creative project. From 2:45-3-15pm while the children are finishing and tidying up, parents are welcome to have a catch up and a festive treat in the school hall, having a go at making your own Christingle (in preparation for our Christingle service the following day), while waiting for the children at the end of the day. **If parents/carers can bring an orange for making the Christingle, school will provide the rest!**

Children in Need

Many thanks for all the cakes and baked goods donated. St. Mary's managed to raise £164.00 for Children in Need-Amazing!

Bag 2 School

Thank you to everyone who brought their unwanted items for Bag 2 School, we raised £23.00.



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>

Application for First School:

It is now time to apply for your child to start school, reception class in September 2024.

Children born between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020 should apply.

The portal opened on 1st November 2023 and will close on 15th January 2024.

Here is the link to the portal where you can apply. First time users will need to register an account.

http://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en

If you require any help or need advice please call the team on 01670 624889.

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	William	Elsie	Ella May
Year 1	Evie	Noah	Mikey
Year 2	Miya	Ollie	George
Year 3	Oliver	Harrison	Archie
Year 4	Ariella	Tyler	Mason



Attendance Ladder



St. Mary's Class Attendance	
This Week's Winners: Year 4	
<u>Reception</u>	94.91%
<u>Year 1</u>	95.42%
<u>Year 2</u>	95.03%
<u>Year 3</u>	95.42%
<u>Year 4</u>	95.77%

Please note that there will be no extra-curricular clubs running during the last week of term (Wk Beg: 18th Dec)

Diary Dates

After a recent Hexham Partnership meeting, we reviewed alignment of training days and term dates. As part of this, **on the final day of this term Friday 22nd December, we will be closing at 1.30pm. Children will have lunch in school as usual.**

FORUM- Arthur Christmas	Wednesday 13 th December at 9.30am
Christmas Lunch in school School uniform (see note above) plus a Christmas jumper	Wednesday 13 th December
Open Art Afternoon 2:00-2:45pm-Parents invited into classes to join in making some festive artwork. From 2:45-3:15pm parents are welcome to have a catch up, make Christingles and	Wednesday 13 th December



a festive treat while waiting for the children at the end of the day.	
Whole school Christingle service in St. Mary's Catholic Church-all parents/carers welcome to attend	Thursday 14 th December at 11am
Nativity (2 Repeat productions-9.30am & 2pm) More info to follow	Monday 18 th December
Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 Class Christmas Party (If they wish, children can bring party clothes to change into for this event)	Tuesday 19 th December (in school time)
Whole School End of Term Mass St. Mary's Catholic Church-all parents/carers welcome to attend	Wednesday 20 th December 9.30am
Whole School Panto Visit-Snow white-Queen's Hall	Wednesday 20 th December 1:00pm
Year 3 & 4 Class Christmas Party (If they wish, children can bring party clothes to change into for this event)	Thursday 21 st December (in school time)
Last day of term-School closes at 1.30pm	Friday 22 nd December-1.30pm

Safeguarding

This month our E-safety theme is 'Online Bullying.' Pupils will learn the ways people can be bullied through a range of media and will learn how to think carefully about how content they post might affect others and how others feel about them.

Please take a look at the following information and advice for parents and carers on supporting young people online: [Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying | NSPCC](#)



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)

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

OPEN 10am until 4pm
Saturday 10th February 2024
Pre.Loved, BWCET HQ, Turbine Business Park,
Nissan Way, Washington SR5 3NY

Visit [Pre.Loved](#) to browse and select from our range of outfits on Saturday 10th February 2024, 10am to 4pm.

To arrange a visit please email: ethos@BWCET.com

There will be no cost to borrow the items, although we ask for them to be returned in excellent condition.

Under 18s must be accompanied by an adult.



FREE EVENT

Carols in the Park

Sunday 10th December, 4pm
Bandstand, Hexham Abbey Grounds
ALL ARE WELCOME

Image courtesy of Northallerton Museum