# ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER

## THURSDAY 22ND MAY 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Despite being a very short half term, it has been as busy as ever and the children have managed to pack lots in!

Key stage 2 held their 'Ascension Thursday' Celebration of the Word in school on Wednesday. The children read and sang beautifully and it was lovely welcoming parents and carers to join us for this event.

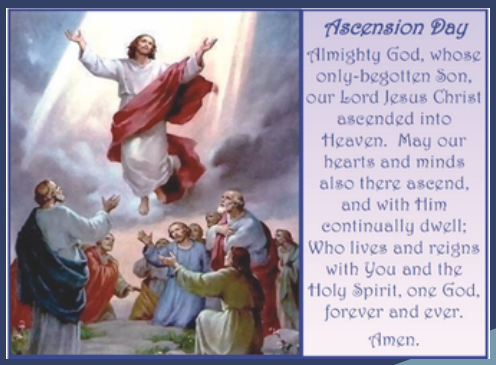
Today we held our Celebration Assembly and celebrated the children's hard work this half term. Attendance prizes were also given out, with those children on 100% attendance being entered into the prize draw. This half term, Jacob (Y2) won the 100% attendance hamper of goodies!

It is hard to believe that we are heading towards the final half term of the academic year. Please see the comprehensive list of dates at the end of the newsletter to keep updated. In the second half of the summer term, we prioritise transition for the children. We also welcome our Reception '25 starters into school for taster sessions and support our year 4 leavers in their transition to their respective middle schools.

Have a restful half term,

Mrs. Oakes

'We Love, We Learn, We Live as followers of Jesus'




KS2l Celebration of the Word

Attendance Ted Winners this week - Year 3

Attendance Raffle Winner Jacob

REMINDER

**Key Stage 2 Project Visit**

Hexham Book Festival are running a new outreach project this summer called 'It's Got Legs!, aimed at engaging young people in nature and our changing climate. Our key stage 2 pupils (years 3 & 4) have been invited to take part. The project will allow students to become nature detectives and to produce a creative guide for other young people to spot and care for the tiny creatures who inhabit our local environment. The guide will be printed and made available at National Park sites for the summer holidays.

The project involves a visit to Walltown Country Park on the afternoon of **Tuesday 3rd June**, for a ranger led Nature Detective session plus creative writing with Hexham Book Festival, followed by a school visit from Hexham Book Festival to produce an illustrated guide to the creatures they discovered.

The great news is there is no cost to the school to take part, as transport costs to and from Walltown are covered by Hexham Book Festival. All we ask is for parents/carers to sign the consent form to give permission for your child to participate in this event. Children will return in time for home time and will wear school uniform as usual, bringing a sunhat/waterproof to accommodate the weather.

**Year 4 leaver photographs**

During the Leavers Mass and Talent Show we like to celebrate the children's final days at St Mary's. We are hoping to create a special PowerPoint presentation dedicated to our year 4 leavers. We are inviting parents of Year 4 to email in pictures of their child on the first and last day of School (maximum 2 photographs please). This will be displayed in an end of year presentation celebrating their time throughout school. If you have any photos you wish to contribute, please email them to info@smfs.bwcet.com by Friday 4th July.

## Cake Raffle

If your child would like the chance of winning the weekly cake, please bring £1 to the school office. Please note, the next cake raffle will be on Friday 13th June

### Sports Day Dates

We appreciate that many families like to spectate at our annual Sport's Day event and may need to book time of work in advance in order to attend. This year we aim to hold Sport's Day on Thursday 10th July from 9.30am, finishing before lunch time at approximately 11:45am. As we can never rely on British weather, we have also booked in a second provisional 'back-up' day just in case the weather gets the better of us on the 10th July. The second 'back-up' date is Monday 14th July from 1:30pm.

**Bag2school Clothes**

By getting involved in our Bag2School collection, you have an opportunity to sort through your cupboards and wardrobes and donate good quality unwanted textiles in the bag provided – this can include adults' and children's clothes, shoes (tied together please), hats, belts and handbags, (please refer to https://bag2school.com for full details). In addition to raising much needed funds it will also raise awareness amongst the children of the benefits of recycling and reuse.

If you fill the donation bag and still have more then you can use any other large bags to donate your items and don't forget to ask grandparents, friends and neighbours to have a sort out as well!

The children will be coming home with their bags next week.

Bag2School will be collecting from school on 9th June (early). Please bring your bag (or bags!) to the right hand side of the main doors and help us have a really good collection. Please ensure the bags are not obstructing the school entrance.

Many thanks indeed for helping us with this unique fundraising opportunity.

Y3 & Y4 Swimming

The 'Summer' swimming payments are now live on the Arbor app

# Year of Jubilee Competition

As we approach the month of May, the diocese of Hexham & Newcastle would like to inform you of the competition that we will be running during this month as part of the Jubilee Year celebrations. We are asking all children and young people to look closer at the world that they live in and look for signs that give them hope. Please see the competition and instruction poster attached, remember, no people are allowed to be in the photo you send. All entries are to be sent directly to the diocese: edu.entries@diocesehn.org.uk
The deadline for all entries is Friday 23 May 2025 and the winners will be announced on Bishop's Day, Thursday 5 June 2025.

**School Meals /School Lunch Payments**

The Trust are now providing us with weekly reports identifying accounts that currently have an outstanding balance. As part of the Trust's guidance, it is essential that children's meal accounts remain in credit to ensure they can continue to order school meals without any interruptions.

School Lunch Menu

**Snacks**

The School Fruit & Vegetable Scheme is a government program that entitles all pupils in Early Years and Key Stage 1 to a piece of fruit or vegetable, each school day. Children in Key Stage 2 are permitted to bring in a healthy snack for break if they wish (no chocolate bars & sweets please).

**Uniform**

Trainers are not permitted (except for KS2 on Mondays). Thank you for your cooperation with this. Black Nike trainers do not constitute as school shoes. **Please can children bring in a waterproof coat to school each day, the weather can be changeable and we like to get the children outside as much as possible.**

ORDER ONLINE – https://www.saltouk.com/ Tel – 01661 835240

**Universal Free school Meals**

Currently, pupils in reception, year 1 and year 2 are entitled to a free school meal thanks to a different government funding scheme known as universal infant free school meals (UIFSM).

If your child is in reception, year 1 or year 2 and is eligible for free school meals

We urge parents to still register because school will receive the extra pupil premium funding. In school, none of the children are aware of who is on FSM or not as they all access their lunch in the same way. Apply for Free School Meals

**Your child might be eligible if you access:**

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- See gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals

Pupils who are registered for free school meals don't have to eat them. If you're eligible but you want your child to have packed lunches you should still register because the school will receive the funding which can support your child in other ways. At St. Mary's Catholic First School, we receive an extra £1480, for every eligible pupil who is registered for free school meals. This extra money could make a real difference to the quality of education we offer.

**Penalty Notice Information for Families**

New legislation comes into force on 19th August 2024 regarding the issue of Penalty Notices to address attendance concerns. There will be a new "National Framework" which introduces consistency in the use of Penalty Notices across England by introducing a new national threshold at which they are considered. This will be met when a pupil has been recorded as absent for 10 sessions (5 school days) within a rolling period of 10 school weeks. To commence, there will be a transitional period, but this new legislation will take effect for absences recorded from the start of the new academic year commencing in September 2024. For further information please see our website 'Attendance' page: Attendance – St Mary's First School, Hexham (bwcet.com)

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|---|---|
| Mon 26th-Fri 30th May | Half term |
| Wk Beg 2nd June | Y4 Multiplication Times Table Check Statutory Assessment Week 1 (of 3) |
| Tues 3rd June | Years 3 & 4 visit to Walltown-'It's Got Legs' project (afternoon only) |
| Fri 6th June | HMS Staff visit Y4 pupils transferring to HMS in September |
| Monday 9th June | Bag2school collection (early) |
| Wk Beg 9th June | Phonics Screening Check Statutory Assessment Week-all Y1 pupils and Y2 resit pupils |
| Wed 11th June | Visit to St. Joseph's Middle School for all Y4 pupils transferring in September. remaining Y4 pupils will remain in school as usual. |
| Fri 13th, 27th Jun & 4th July | Nursery Transition Visits 9.30-10.45am |
| Friday 20th June | Reception End of Year Trip- Farm<br>Payments for this trip are now live on the Arbor app |
| 24th June | New Reception Starters-Parents meeting-5pm |

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| 25th June | 1.15pm SJMS & HMS Rounders afternoon-more information to follow |
| 27th June | Jubilee Day-More information to follow |
| 30th June | Y3 Enrichment morning at SJMS, all children will have a lunch provided by St Joseph's before their usual swimming lesson |
| 1st July | Be You Team in school to discuss transition with Year 4 |
| Wednesday 2nd July | Y3 End of Year Bowling Trip<br>Payments for this trip are now live on the Arbor app |
| 3rd July | Y4 Celebration of Sport-Trust Event-Further details to follow (parents can spectate at Gateshead Stadium) |
| Wk Beg 7th July | Healthy Schools Week-more information to follow |
| 8th July | Hexham Partnership Transfer Day-Y4 pupils spend day at their respective middle schools. Rest of school spend time in school in their new classroom for the next academic year, working with their new class teacher |
| 10th July | Sport's Day 9.30-11:45am (Back-up day is Mon 14th July at 1:30pm) |
| 17th July | Y4 Leavers Mass in school 9.30am |
| 18th July | Y4 Talent Show in hall 1:30pm |
| 18th July | Last day of the academic year-school closes at 3:15pm for Summer holidays |

# Class Mass Times

**Class Masses**

Throughout the year each class has the opportunity to attend Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Mass is lead by our Parish Priests Fr Jeff or Fr. Paul. Class Masses are usually held on Fridays at 9:30am and all parents/carers and families are welcome to attend theses events. Please see rota below for details of dates for each class.

| Class Masses are held in St. Mary's Catholic Church at 9.30am-all families are welcome to attend these services. | |
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| 6th June | Y3 Mass |
| 13th June | Y2 Mass |
| 20th June | Y1 Mass |
| 27th June | Reception Mass |
| 17th July | Y4 Leavers Mass-in school hall-9.30am |

WOW!

# Weekly Winners!

## Value Award Winners

| Class | WE LOVE | WE LEARN | WE LIVE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Reception | Theo | Charlie J | Laya |
| Year 1 | Penni | Alfie I | Josie |
| Year 2 | Florence | Noah | Eabha |
| Year 3 | Esmee | Ashton | Frankie |
| Year 4 | Skylar | Gabriel | Grace |

| St. Mary's Class Attendance Winners- Well done Year 3 | |
|---|---|
| Reception | 95.85% |
| Year 1 | 94.95% |
| Year 2 | 96.59% |
| Year 3 | 97.13% |
| Year 4 | 97.01% |

# St Mary's Safeguarding Information

**Pupil Support & Safeguarding**

Designated Safeguarding Lead- Mrs. Oakes

Deputy Safeguarding Lead-Miss. Baird & Mrs. Stansfield

Assistant Safeguarding Lead-Mrs. Stoves

SENDCo/Assistant SENCo-Mrs. Stansfield (Maternity), Mrs. Oakes & 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)

**Operation Encompass**

St. Mary's is an Operation Encompass school, run in partnership with both Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Police. The project, which commenced in April 2015 aims to support children who are affected by domestic abuse. Operation Encompass aims to support children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse. Witnessing domestic abuse is really distressing for a child or young person, who often see the abuse, hear it from another room, see a parent's injuries or distress afterwards or can be physically hurt by trying to stop the abuse. Please visit the Operation Encompass for more information: Home : Operation Encompass & support services: Northumberland-Support-Services.pdf (bwcet.com)

**Online Safety**
Northumberland County Council, in partnership with the Solihull Approach, offer free access to online courses expertly designed for parents, carers, grandparents and teens living in the region. All schools in Northumberland are in a pre-paid area for emotional health resources hub:

https://inourplace.co.uk/northumberland/

This means parents can access a range of online support to better understand children's emotional health, brain development and wellbeing.
For more comms material and information you can contact vicki.collins@northumberland.gov.uk

www.stmaryshexham.bwcet.com

@stmaryscatholicfirstschoolhexham

Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle