

# ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2025

Dear parent/carers,


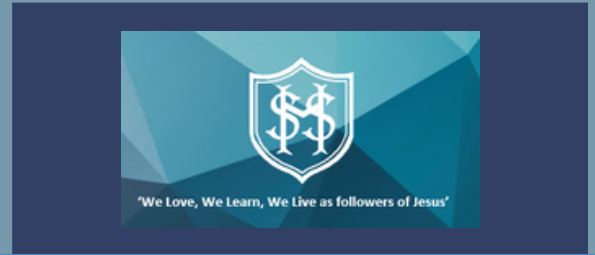
We are delighted to share that the St. Mary's community has come together to create and donate **16** beautifully packed shoeboxes for this year's Operation Christmas Child appeal. Each box is filled with thoughtful gifts that will bring joy to children around the world. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed their time, effort, and generosity—your kindness truly makes a difference!



This half term, our Mini Vinnies have answered the call to support those in need within our local community. They are leading a collection of food items and toiletries for our local food bank. We truly appreciate the incredible generosity shown during our Operation Christmas Child shoebox appeal, and we understand that times are challenging. Please don't feel any pressure—if you are able to donate even a small item, it will make a real difference to local families in need, but we understand this is not possible for all families. We will deliver all contributions to the food bank during the week beginning Monday 8 December. !

Today, we celebrated the Holy Jubilee Year with Mass at St. Mary's Church, it was lovely to be joined by some of our families for this service. As part of our Jubilee celebrations, parents and carers are also invited to join your child(ren) for a special art activity in school on Wednesday 26th November, 2:00–2:45pm, followed by our popular Regenerators Clothes Swap at 2:45pm. Please bring any donations of pre-loved children's clothes (especially Christmas jumpers!) to reception, clearly labelled 'Clothes Swap'. This free event is a great way to recycle and share within our school community. We look forward to celebrating together!

Thank you for your kindness and continued support  
Mrs. Oakes



## The Jubilee Prayer

*Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have given us in your son, Jesus Christ,  
our brother, and the flame of charity enkindled in our  
hearts by the Holy Spirit, reawaken in us the blessed hope for  
the coming of your kingdom.*

*May your grace transform us into tireless cultivators of the  
seeds of the Gospel. May those seeds transform from within  
both humanity and the whole cosmos in the sure expectation  
of a new heaven and a new earth, when, with the powers of  
Evil vanquished, your glory will shine eternally.*

*May the grace of the Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of  
Hope, a yearning for the treasures of heaven.*

*May that same grace spread the joy and peace of our  
Redeemer throughout the earth.*

*To you our God, eternally blessed,  
be glory and praise for ever.*

**Amen**

Reception-  
Class experiments



Mrs Stoves'  
Wellbeing  
Club



PTA Cake Winner- Jay



**WE RAISED A  
SPOTACULAR  
£60.00  
THANK YOU  
FOR CHILDREN  
IN NEED**





### **Mini Vinnies Food Bank Collection**

This half term Mini Vinnies have been called to action to help support those less fortunate within our local area. Therefore, the children have decided it would be fantastic to collect food items and toiletries for our local food bank. Any donations of items for this fantastic cause would be greatly appreciated. Miss Baird will deliver the items to the food bank during the week beginning Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December.

### **Jubilee Celebration Day**

Following our Jubilee Celebration Day Mass as part of the Holy Jubilee Year, celebrated by the Catholic Church, focusing on themes of hope & community. We are delighted to invite parents and carers to join us in school for another special art activity with their child on **Wednesday 26th November 2:00-2:45pm**. The art activity will be a wonderful opportunity to share in the spirit of the Jubilee, celebrate our school community, and create lasting memories together. We look forward to welcoming you into school and sharing this special time with you and your child.

### **Regenerators Clothes swap**

The Regenerators would appreciate any donations of unwanted / preloved children's clothes. On **Wednesday 26th November 2:45pm** (following on from the Jubilee art afternoon), parents/carers will be invited into the school hall and take whatever clothing they would like.

**We are especially looking for donations of any pre-loved Christmas jumpers in advance of Christmas jumper days in December.** This is a **FREE** event which our Regenerators hope can help reduce clothes waste. Please can any clothing donations be brought to the main reception clearly labelled as 'Clothes Swap'.

### **Key Stage 2-Tyne Rivers Trust-**

On Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November, years 3 & 4 are participating in a fully funded learning session with the Tyne Rivers Trust interactive river model based at the Queen's Hall, Hexham. Thanks to funding from the Reece Foundation, the interactive model of the Tyne catchment helps pupils explore how climate change affects river systems. Featuring flowing water, rainfall zones, and interchangeable parts, the model demonstrates how land management techniques—like leaky dams, tree planting, and peatland restoration—can slow water flow and reduce flooding. It highlights how upstream actions impact downstream outcomes, encouraging thoughtful discussion on natural flood management and climate resilience. Children will attend the event during the afternoon, returning to school for the usual home time.



### **School Meals**

If you would like to take a look at the Winter & Spring 25 Garden Kitchen menu, please find our school menu's on the school website.

### **Penalty Notice Information for Families**

Since 2024, the government introduced legislation regarding the issue of Penalty Notices to address attendance concerns. There is a "National Framework" which introduces consistency in the use of Penalty Notices across England by introducing a 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. For further information please see our website 'Attendance' page: Attendance – St Mary's First School, Hexham (bwcet.com)

### **Reception Starters 2026**

Online Admissions Portal for First and Primary school admissions will be open on the 1st of November 2025.  
[https://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal\\_LIVE/en](https://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en)

(You need to register as a new user if you haven't used the Portal before. If you've forgotten your password, click on forgotten password link) - (for late applications see below). You must complete an application for a place in a Reception class even if your child attends the school nursery or pre-school setting.



<b>Mini Vinnie's - Miss Baird (Y1-Y4)</b>	Wednesday Lunch
<b>Singing Mrs Stansfield (Y1-4)</b>	Tuesday lunch
<b>Games Miss Wright (Y1-Y4)</b>	Wednesday 3.15-4pm
<b>Regenerators Miss Stoves (Y2-4)</b>	Thursday lunch
<b>Dance Mrs Hogg (Y1-4)</b>	Thursday 3:15-4pm
<b>Well Being Club Mrs Stoves (Y1-Y4)</b>	Friday 8.20am
<b>Colouring Miss Carr (Y2-Y4)</b>	Friday lunch

## 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 and Fr. Paul. Class Masses are usually held on Fridays at 9:30am and all parents/carers and families are welcome to attend these events. Please see rota below for details of dates for each class.

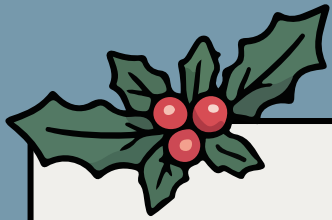
28 <sup>th</sup> November	Rec and KS1 Mass St. Mary's Catholic Church 9.30am
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Whole School Christingle Service St. Mary's Catholic Church 9.30am

**SHOOTING STARS BASKETBALL**  
ELITE COACHING & DEVELOPMENT  
HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL, NE46 3JB  
THURSDAYS 5.30-6.30PM  
ACADEMIC YEARS 3-7  
Email [shootingstarsnortheast@gmail.com](mailto:shootingstarsnortheast@gmail.com) to register


## November Dates



Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> November	The payment deadline for the Forum Christmas & Queen's Hall trip has now been extended to Monday 24th November. Please make this payment as soon as possible, as we need to finalise numbers with the Forum/Queen's Hall next week.
Wed 26 <sup>st</sup> Nov	Jubilee Celebration Day-Parents/carers welcome into school from 2-2.45pm to support their child(ren) in art activity.
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Regenerators Clothes Swap in hall 2:45pm-parents/carers only. (Follows on from Jubilee Art Afternoon)
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Key Stage 2-Tyne Rivers Trust Learning Trip.



# December Dates

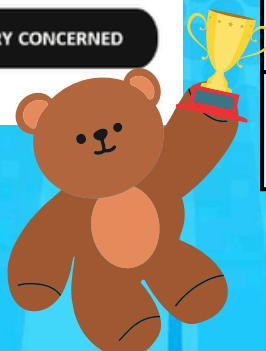
<p>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December</p>	<p><b>Christmas Fair</b> in school hall. Parents/carers invited from 2.45pm (children remain in school until 3.15pm) Following school pick-up, children can attend the fair with parents/carers after school. Donations needed - Tombola items, cuddly toys, gift bags, toys, books etc.</p> <p>If you can help out on the day please contact the school office.</p> <p>Each class will be having their own stall, the class teachers will send out more information.</p> <p><b>Class Advent Celebration of the Word.</b> Parents welcome to join their child(ren) in class to participate in their end of Advent RE topic celebration. (Timings outlined above)</p>
<p>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December</p>	<p>Santa Dash-Children can wear school uniform and Christmas jumper/Christmas accessory if they wish. Children will need trainers for this event.</p> <p><b>Flu Vaccination team in school for all year groups.</b></p>
<p>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> &amp; Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December</p>	<p>Nativity performances at 9.30am in school information. Further information to follow nearer the time, just to allow parents to book time off work if needed. <b>Just a reminder that on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, there will be no parking in the church car park due to their Mass.</b></p>
<p>Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December</p> 	<p><b>Christmas Jumper Day</b> ( &amp; usual school uniform)- Save the children-suggested donation £1.</p> <p><b>Queen's Hall Whole School Panto</b> - Red Riding Hood. Payments of £10.50 are now live on the Arbor app, found under 'Trips'. The deadline date for payment is Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November. This will secure your child's place on the trip.</p> <p><b>Bag2School Collection 8am</b> - can all bags be brought to the school office by Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December.</p>
<p>Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December</p>	<p><b>Forum Christmas Movie Trip</b> £8.00 per pupil. For whole school. Payments are now live on the Arbor app, can the trip be paid no later than 21<sup>st</sup> November. This payment secures your child's place on the trip. (U movie TBC)</p> <p><b>Christmas Lunch day</b>- After the Forum Cinema trip. <u>Pupils are welcome to wear their usual school uniform along with their Christmas jumper if they wish.</u></p> <p><b>Christingle Making</b> for parents/carers 2.45-3.15pm in school hall. Time for a cuppa and a catch up too!</p>
<p>Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> December</p>	<p>Whole school Christingle service in St. Mary's Catholic Church 9.30am-all families welcome to join us.</p>
<p>Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December</p>	<p>Last day of autumn term. <b>School closes early at 1.30pm.</b></p>



Class	WE LOVE	WE LEARN	WE LIVE
Reception	Jasmine	Adalyn	Archie
Year 1	Sienna	Alexander	Theo
Year 2	Felix	Erin	Alice
Year 3	Phuc	Evie	Beauden
Year 4	Esmee	Riley	Ashton



St. Mary's Class Attendance Winners- Well done - Year 3	
Reception	97.26%
Year 1	97.39%
Year 2	96.69%
Year 3	99.23%
Year 4	95.15%



# St Mary's Safeguarding Information

## Pupil Support & Safeguarding

Designated Safeguarding Lead- Mrs. Oakes

Deputy Safeguarding Lead-Miss. Baird, Mrs. Stansfield & Miss. Stoves

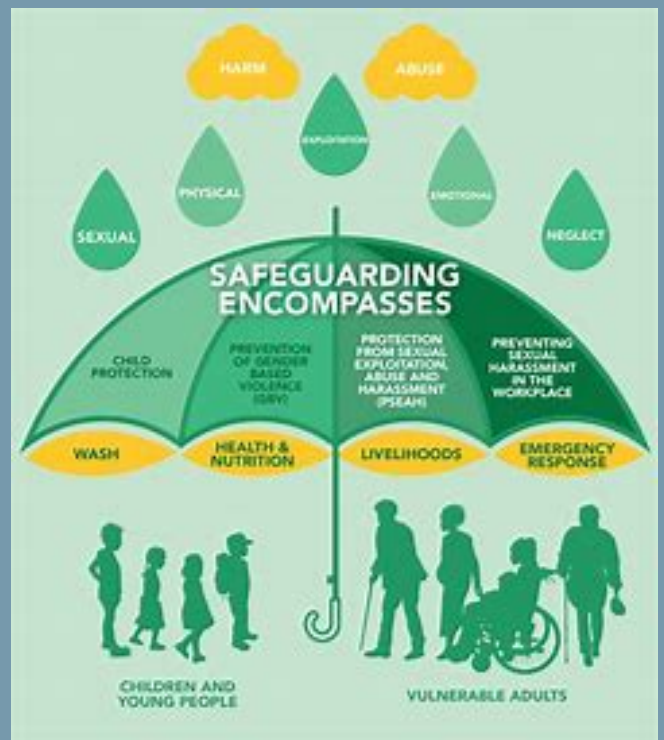
Assistant Safeguarding Lead-Mrs. Stoves

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)

### 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)



At The National College, our [Workplace necessary guides](#) empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formally delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](http://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TRACKING DEVICES

Bluetooth tracking devices like Apple's AirTag and Samsung's SmartTags have exploded in popularity, with millions sold each year. These small tools help people locate their lost items, but their discreet design has also made them attractive for more sinister purposes. From stalking to bullying, tracking devices present unique risks that trusted adults need to understand and address.

**WHAT ARE THE RISKS?**

- STALKING AND HARASSMENT**  
Because of their tiny size and unassuming appearance, tracking devices can easily be hidden in bags or clothing. They've been used to monitor individuals without their knowledge, with a trend in the US labeling AirTags "the weapon of choice of stalkers and abusers". In the UK, use of tracking devices in coercive control and stalking cases reportedly rose by 37 percent between 2019 and 2021.
- INVASION OF PRIVACY**  
These devices are designed to share location data with the user via other people's phones, which can unintentionally broadcast someone's movements without their consent. This makes them vulnerable to being monitored by strangers without realising.
- DIFFICULT TO DETECT**  
Many tracking devices are designed to be discreet, but that also means they're easy to hide. Without proactive checking or the right tech to detect them, children and young people might not realise they're being tracked.
- FALSE ACCUSATIONS**  
Because tracking devices are linked to user accounts, they could be misused to "prove" ownership of someone else's possessions. Some could, for example, plant a tracker on another person's belongings to falsely claim them as their own.

### Advice for Parents & Educators

- WATCH FOR WARNING SIGNS**  
If a child's peers always seem to know their location - whether in person or located online - it could be worth checking for tracking devices. Some, like AirTags, will eventually make a noise if separated from their owner. Listen out for a chirping sound.
- CHECK LIKELY HIDING SPOTS**  
Common places where trackers may be placed include jacket linings, bag zippers, pockets, or under bike seats. If you find one, take a photo of the serial number before disposing of it - this could help police trace the account it's linked to.
- USE DETECTION APPS**  
Apple devices running iOS 14.5 or later will notify users of unknown AirTags nearby. Android users can install Apple's "Tracker Detect" or the third-party app AirGuard to scan for tracking devices from various manufacturers.
- HAVE THE CONVERSATION**  
Talk to your child about what tracking devices are, what signs to look out for, and how they might be misused. Emphasise the legal consequences of using them to prank, harass, or monitor someone.

Meet Our Expert  
Alex Martin is a seasoned technology journalist with bylines in Wired, TechRadar, The Guardian, The Evening Standard, The Telegraph, and The New Statesman. He specialises in consumer tech, online safety, and emerging risks in the digital landscape.

#WakeUpWednesday The National College

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### 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](mailto:vicki.collins@northumberland.gov.uk)



[www.stmaryshexham.bwcet.com](http://www.stmaryshexham.bwcet.com)



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