

ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER

THURSDAY 12TH FEBRUARY 2026

Dear parent/carers,

The last week of this half term has been a busy one! On Monday Reception held their Celebration of the Word, marking Children's Mental Health Week. The 2026 theme, Belonging, focuses on helping children and young people feel safe, valued, accepted and connected within their friendships, school and wider community. This week, the children have taken part in a range of activities designed to reinforce positive environments where they can confidently say, "This is my place."

On Tuesday, pupils marked Safer Internet Day, learning how to stay safe online, make positive choices and seek support when needed. This was linked with Children's Mental Health Week, helping pupils understand how online experiences can affect their wellbeing and encouraging kindness, balance and digital safety.

On Wednesday, we celebrated International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Pupils enjoyed an assembly led by Hollie and Kirsi, environmental scientists from Newcastle University, who spoke about their roles and careers in science. In the afternoon, Annabel Gammidge, a wind engineer and STEM Ambassador, visited each class to deliver interactive workshops, inspiring pupils to learn more about science, engineering and renewable energy.

On Wednesday, the whole school attended Mass at St Mary's Church with a Lenten focus. As the school will be on half term when Lent begins, this Mass provided an opportunity for the children to reflect and prepare for the season together.

We have also held our interim parents' evenings this week, and the interim reports discussed will be shared via Arbor this afternoon. We ended the week with our Celebration Assembly, where **all** children were recognised for their hard work and our attendance winners for the half term were announced. We wish everyone a restful half term and look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Monday 23rd February.

Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs. Oakes



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

Children's Mental Health Week

Dear God,

Thank you for every child in this school.

Thank you for their minds —
for their thoughts, their questions,
and their feelings, whether they are happy,
worried, calm, or confusing.

Help them to understand that
everyone feels differently at times,
and that all feelings matter.

Give them the courage to speak up
when something feels difficult
and the wisdom to listen when
someone else needs support.

When they feel under pressure, lonely, or
unsure,

remind them that they are not alone
and that asking for help is a strength, not a
weakness.

Guide them to be kind in their words and actions,
to look out for one another.

Amen.



Reception's Celebration of the
Word, marking Children's
Mental Health Week



Raffy won

100% Attendance
prize for this half
term!

Reception
Enjoying their pancakes





Careers Week & Careers Showcase – 2nd–6th March

We are excited to be holding our first Careers Week, running from Monday 2nd to Friday 6th March, giving children the opportunity to learn about a wide range of jobs, skills and future pathways.

Throughout the week, children will take part in a variety of engaging activities, including career-focused assemblies, class discussions about different jobs, and learning about the skills and qualities needed for different roles. We have also arranged for a wide range of visitors to come into school, who will talk to the children about their own careers and lead interactive workshops, helping pupils to gain real-life insight into the world of work.

The week will culminate in our Careers Showcase **on Friday 6th March, when children are invited to come to school dressed as the job or career they aspire to**. On the day, the children will complete a creative “Day in the Life” activity, exploring what their chosen role involves and the skills needed to succeed.

We are really looking forward to an inspiring week that promotes aspiration, curiosity and meaningful conversations about future careers.

Interim Reports

A copy of your child’s interim report will be sent to you through email today.

World Book Day Celebration

On **Thursday 5th March** we will be celebrating World Book Day! Children are invited to come dressed as their favourite book character and share the joy of reading. We’ll also be welcoming Cogito, our local independent bookstore, for a special story time session. Pupils will have the chance to use their World Book Day vouchers to choose a book and continue their reading adventures at home.

Hexham Bookfest



We are excited to share that Hexham Book Festival is taking place in March, offering a wonderful opportunity to celebrate reading and storytelling. The festival features a range of events for all ages, including author talks, workshops, and family activities designed to inspire a love of books. St. Mary’s have secured the following visits for our pupils to attend workshops:

Reception on Thursday 26th March at 10.30am: Hank Goes Honk by Maudie Powell-Tuck

Yr 1 & 2 Wednesday 25th March at 10.30am: The Lion Inside by Rachel Bright

Yr 3 & 4 Thursday 26th March at 1.30pm: Alice with an A why by Anna James

Payments of £2 are now live on the Arbor app. all payments must be paid online.

Schools Festival Book Orders

Enjoy the magic of reading at home with brilliant books by our school’s festival authors. Anyone attending our school’s festival can order these books at a special discounted rate and have them signed by the author (all except Storytelling & Crafts and Liz Fost event). To order yours, follow the links below to our website. All books will be made ready for collection on the day. Please get your order in by Tuesday 10th March and let us know the name of your child and their school in the checkout.

The Lion Inside – <https://www.hexhambookfestival.co.uk/product/the-lion-inside-by-rachel-bright>

Hank Goes Honk – <https://www.hexhambookfestival.co.uk/product/hank-goes-honk-by-maudie-powell-tuck>

Alice With A Why – <https://www.hexhambookfestival.co.uk/product/alice-with-a-why-by-anna-james>



Reading

All children In Reception and Year 1 will bring a Read, Write Inc phonics book home. Please complete and sign your child's Reading Record when you have listened to them read.

Swimming

Swimming for years 3 & 4. All KS2 children to attend school wearing their P.E. kit on Monday's. **The Spring swimming payments are live on Arbor under 'School Shop'.**

PTA

Cake Raffle

From January, our cake raffle will be the last Friday of each month. The next cake raffle will be Friday 27th February 2026.

PTA Treasurer Vacancy

We are currently looking for a friendly and enthusiastic volunteer to take on the role of Treasurer for the St Mary's PTA.

This role is designed to fit around your existing commitments, and full support will be provided. You don't need to be a financial expert – just organised, reliable, and happy to be part of a supportive team.

Key responsibilities include helping to oversee fundraising activities, keeping simple financial records, and managing the PTA bank account.

If this is something you might be interested in, or if you'd like to find out more, please contact the school office on 01434 603791 or email info@smfs.bwcet.com.

Thank you for your continued support of our school community.



School Meals

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

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)

Extra-curricular Clubs

All clubs will remain the same after the holidays.

Mini Vinnies Miss Baird (Y2-Y4)	Wednesday Lunch
Singing Club Mrs Stansfield (Y1-Y4)	Tuesday Lunch
Craft Club Miss Wright (Y1-Y4)	Tuesday 3.15-4pm
Lego Club Miss Carr (Y1-Y4)	Wednesday Lunch
Regenerators Miss Stoves (Same pupils as last term)	Thursday Lunch
Dance Club Mrs Hogg (Y1-Y4)	Thursday 3.15-4pm
Wellbeing Club Mrs Stoves	Friday 8.20am



International Day of Women and Girls in Science.



Church 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.

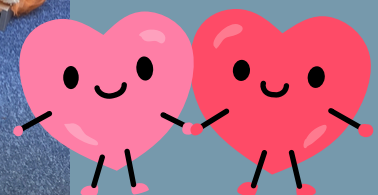
Friday 6 th March	Y4 Class Mass
Friday 13 th March	Y3 Class Mass
Friday 20 th March	Y2 Class Mass
Friday 27 th March	Reception & KS1 Class Mass

Riley	Olivia
Leo	Ollie
Frankie	Luca
Heidi	
Ashton	

**Y4 Maths Superstars-
Scoring full marks in this
week's times tables
challenge!**



Friday 13 th February	Teacher Training Day- School closed to pupils
Monday 23 rd February	School will Reassemble
2nd-6 th March Friday 6th March	National Careers Week. On Friday 6th March, children are invited to come to school dressed as the job or career they aspire to.
Thursday 5 th March	World Book Day-Pupils come to school dressed as their favourite book character. Storytelling visit from Cogito books.
Wednesday 25 th & Thursday 26 th March	Hexham Bookfest for all year groups- Payments of £2 are now live on the Arbor app. All payments must be paid online.
21 st March	World Down Syndrome Day
Friday 27 th March	Easter Fair 3.15pm, more details to follow



Adalyn & Orla and their
dance medals



Class	WE LOVE	WE LEARN	WE LIVE
Reception	Robson	Loriea	Archie
Year 1	Lola	Caleb	Zeke
Year 2	Fraser	Felix	Layton
Year 3	Hazel	Austin	Mikey
Year 4	Leo	Savva	Ollie



St. Mary's Class Attendance Winners- Well done - Year 2	
Reception	97.5%
Year 1	90.28%
Year 2	99.31%
Year 3	97.5%
Year 4	98.21%

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)

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



A vibrant, colorful border surrounds the text, featuring various Easter eggs with different patterns and colors (blue, purple, yellow, red, green), carrots, and flowers (white, pink, orange, blue).

Easter

FAIR

Friday 27th March

3.15pm

School Hall

Chocolate Tombola

Face Painting

Candy Floss

Hook a Bag

Name the Teddy

& Lots More

