

ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 27TH FEBRUARY 2026

Dear parent/carers,

Hope you all had a restful half term. As we have entered the season of Lent, we focus on how we will 'Give, Act & Pray'. The staff and children of St. Mary's are going to 'Act' by once again taking part in CAFOD's annual 'Big Lent Walk'. The Big Lent Walk is an annual challenge where we aim to walk up to 200 Km over the 40 days of Lent and get sponsored to raise money to help people fighting extreme poverty globally. Over the next 6 weeks in school, we will be aiming to walk an average of about 5k a day, we have already started this week!

Children, families and parishioners are also encouraged to take up the challenge and include any walks they do outside of school too. On Monday 30th March at 9.45am, the whole of St. Mary's school will conclude the Big Lent Walk Challenge by walking several laps around Sele Park wearing their Easter bonnets (see info below). Our target this year is to raise over £100 for CAFOD. All donations can be made via our school fundraising page that has also been shared on Arbor and Facebook this week-the QR code to our fundraising page is below. Please feel free to share this link with family & friends.



Next week is an exciting one in school, with two special dress-up days for pupils to enjoy.

- **Thursday 5th March** – World Book Day: Children are invited to come dressed as their favourite book character. We'll also welcome Cogito Bookshop for story time, and pupils can use their World Book Day vouchers to choose a book.
- **Friday 6th March** – Careers Showcase: As part of our Careers Week, children are invited to dress as the job or career they aspire to. They will also take part in our "Day in the Life" activity to explore their chosen role.

We look forward to a fantastic week filled with curiosity, creativity and inspiration. Please see further information below.

With best wishes,

Mrs. Oakes



PRAYER FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Loving God,
As we begin our journey through Lent,
help us to pause, to listen,
and to open our hearts to You.
Teach us to follow Jesus' example –
to choose kindness,
and to notice those who need our help.
Give us the courage to act with love,
the generosity to give to others,
and the quiet moments we need
to pray and grow closer to You.
Walk with us this week and guide our steps
as we try to become more like
Jesus each day.

Amen.

Year of Reading-Year 2 Book Detectives!



CAFOD
Catholic Agency for
Overseas Development



Whole School CAFOD Assembly

PTA Cake Raffle Winner - Luna P



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.

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.

Class Lent Celebration of the Word

On **Wednesday 25th March** we would like to invite parents/carers to join the children in their class as they participate in their end of RE topic Celebration of the Word about Lent. Timings will run between 2.00-3.00pm and will be approximately as follows:

Rec-2:00-2:10pm

Y1-2:10-2:20pm

Y2-2:20-2:30pm

Y3-2:30-2:40pm

Y4-2:40-2:50pm

THE BIG LENT WALK



Easter bonnet making and Big Lent Walk

As mentioned earlier, we are once again participating in our annual ‘Big Lent Walk’ for CAFOD. On Monday 30th March at 9.45am. the whole of St. Mary's school will conclude the Big Lent Walk Challenge by walking several laps around Sele Park (weather permitting) wearing our Easter bonnets. We will keep Wednesday 1st April at 9.45 am as a reserve day, should the weather be inclement on the 1st April. We would like to invite our families, governors & parishioners to also take up the challenge and join us as we complete our final stage of ‘The Big Lent Walk’ on the 30th March. As such, leading up to the 30th March, the children will be given the opportunity to make their Easter bonnets in school during their art lessons. Please could all hats and craft materials be brought into school in a named bag no later than Monday 23rd March. Please let us know in advance if you require support with this. Our target for this year’s Big Lent Walk Easter Bonnet Parade is to raise over £100 for CAFOD. All donations can be made via our school fundraising page that has been shared on Arbor and Facebook this week (see QR code above). Further information for parents regarding the route of our Lent Walk/Easter bonnet parade will be shared nearer the time.

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.

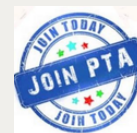
Schools Festival Book Orders

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>



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.

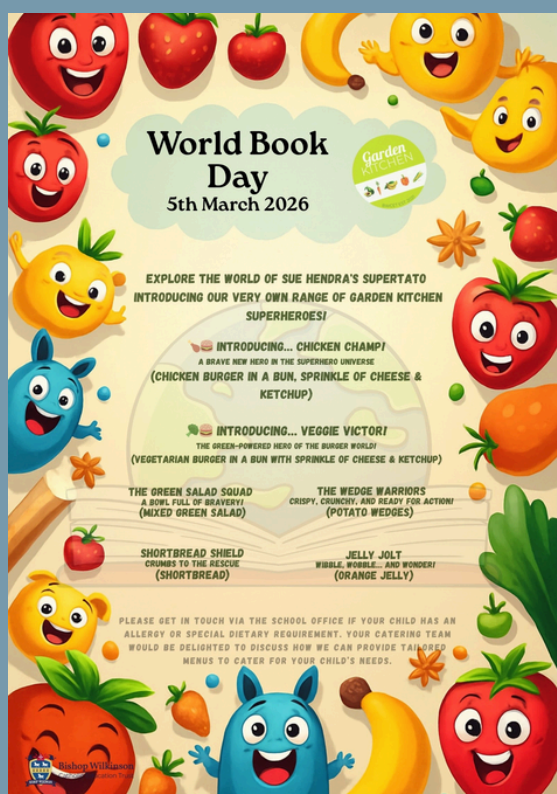
Thank you for your continued support of our school community.

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.

Extra-curricular Clubs

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





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



Fri 27 th Feb	Science Week (9 th -13 th Mar) Homework Competition Launch. Deadline 13 th March.
2 nd -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.

21 st March	World Down Syndrome Day. Children are invited to come to school wearing their school uniform but embellishing it by adding 1 yellow item i.e. yellow socks, yellow hair band etc. and donating what they can to Down syndrome UK
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.
Monday 23rd March	Deadline for Easter Bonnet making materials to be in school. Please house them in a bag with your child's name clearly labelled.
Monday 23rd Mar	Year 1 Holy week Celebration of the Word-All families welcome to attend in school hall at 9.30am
Thursday 25 th March	Individual class Lent Celebration of the Word held in classes. Times listed above.
Friday 27 th March	Easter Fair 3.15pm, more details to follow
Monday 30 th Mar	CAFOD Big Lent Walk-Easter Bonnet Parade-Sele Park-from 9.45am. Further route details to follow at later date. Please note Wednesday 1st April will be a reserve date should weather be inclement on the 30th March.
Wednesday 1st-Thursday 2 nd April	Year 4 Residential Trip to Weardale.
Thursday 2 nd April	Last Day of Spring Term. School closed at 3.15pm.



Class	WE LOVE	WE LEARN	WE LIVE
Reception	Lara	Catherine	Millie
Year 1	Charlie	Sienna	Luna
Year 2	Elsie	Isabel	Alice
Year 3	Dexter	Raffy	Lumen
Year 4	Phoebe	Leo	Riley



St. Mary's Class Attendance Winners- Well done - Year 2, 4 & Reception	
Reception	100%
Year 1	97.53%
Year 2	100%
Year 3	96.67%
Year 4	100%

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](https://www.facebook.com/stmaryscatholicfirstschoolhexham)



The poster features a vibrant, cartoon-style border. It is filled with various Easter-themed illustrations: colorful Easter eggs with patterns like stripes, polka dots, and floral designs; several bright orange carrots with green leafy tops; and a variety of flowers in shades of pink, purple, blue, yellow, and red. The background is a light, neutral color, making the colorful border stand out.

Easter

FAIR

Friday 27th March

3.15pm

School Hall

Chocolate Tombola

Face Painting

Candy Floss

Hook a Bag

Name the Teddy

& Lots More



🌟 Science Week Curiosity Challenge! 🌟

We are excited to be taking part in Science Week (9-13th March) and in the run-up to the week itself we are launching a whole-school challenge called:

“Curiosity: What’s Your Question?”

Over the next 2–3 weeks, children are invited to complete an additional homework task:

Think of your own science question, plan a simple way to explore it using everyday materials, and share what you discovered on one page (a poster).

A Science Proforma Sheet will be sent home with this week’s homework to help children plan and record their investigation.

Please submit entries by Monday 9th March.



🏆 Prizes will be awarded for:

- The most curious questions
- Clear communication
- Brilliant fails (best learning from a mistake!)
- Young Engineers
- Science Week Superstars

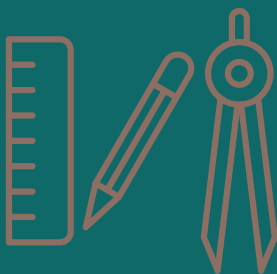
The focus is on curiosity, safe testing, and clear communication—not buying materials or achieving “perfect” results.

- ◆ Please use household-safe materials only.
- ◆ Adult supervision is required.

Need inspiration?

Children might explore questions about:

- 🌀 Floating & sinking
- ❄️ Melting & freezing
- 🚗 Ramps & friction
- 📄 Paper strength
- 🌱 Plant growth
- 🎵 Sound
- 💡 Light & shadows
- 🏠 Simple structures



Good luck—we can’t wait to see your wonderful investigations! 🧪

THE BIG LENT WALK



Scan this QR to support the challenge



CAFOD A better world needs all of us

CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales and part of Caritas International.
Registered charity no. 1860584 and company no. 09587398

