

ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 13TH MARCH 2026

Dear parent/carers,

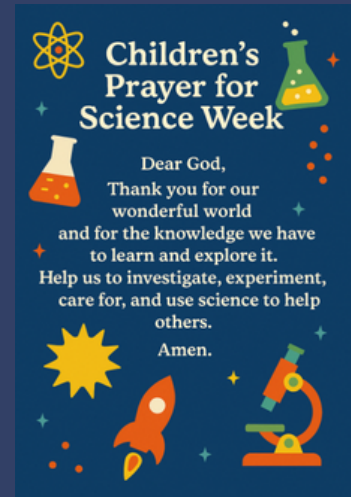
This week, the children have been participating in Science Week and worked on a special homework project linked to our theme: "Curiosity: What's Your Question?" We were delighted with the homework entries where children have created their own science questions and explored them using simple, everyday materials. Throughout the week, the children have taken part in daily curiosity challenges, sparking discussion, investigation and problem-solving across the classes. They have also participated in several online STEM Ambassador webinars, which have inspired their thinking and broadened their understanding of science in the real world. During today's assembly, prizes were awarded for the most curious questions, the clearest communication, brilliant fails, young engineers, and our Science Week Superstars. Well done, all the winners are shown below.

The children have been doing their daily laps for The Big Lent Walk. Please don't forget to sponsor them as we aim to raise over £100 for CAFOD—please see the QR code below.

Next Friday, St. Mary's are taking part in the Down Syndrome Sunflower Challenge for World Down Syndrome Day 2026! Just like sunflowers, every child grows and blooms uniquely. The children have already planted their sunflowers and some have started to germinate already! Next Friday (20th March), 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. (to represent their sunflower). **Donations to Down Syndrome UK are now live via Arbor 'School Shop'**, for those who wish to make a contribution, you will then add the quantity you would like to donate. At home time on Friday, the children will be able to bring home their 3-week-old sunflower, so that they can continue to nurture it and watch how tall it grows.

Best wishes,

Mrs. Oakes

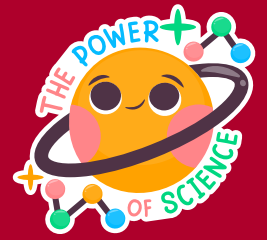


Wear school uniform + 1 Yellow Item
Friday 20th March



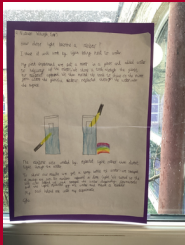
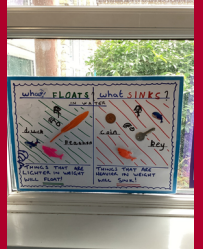
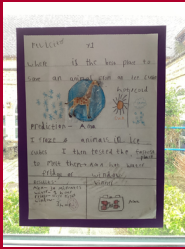
Wild Passport-
Making Garlic Bread



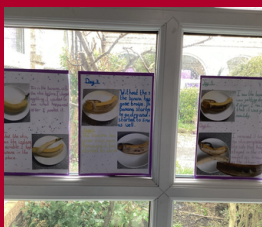


SCIENCE WEEK

“Curiosity: What’s Your Question?”



Reception Winners	Class Winner - Millie Most Curious Question - Robson
Y1 Winners	Class Winner - Sienna Science Week Superstar - Orla
Y2 Winners	Class Winner - Erin M Young Engineer - Isabel
Y3 Winners	Class Winner - Hazel Clear Communicator- Grace H
Y4 Winners	Class Winner - Heidi Homework Winner - Olivia H



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:

Reception - Date changed due to a diary clash, please see new date below.

Y1-2:10-2:20pm

Y2-2:20-2:30pm

Y3-2:30-2:40pm

Y4-2:40-2:50pm

Reception - Tuesday 24th March at 9.30am

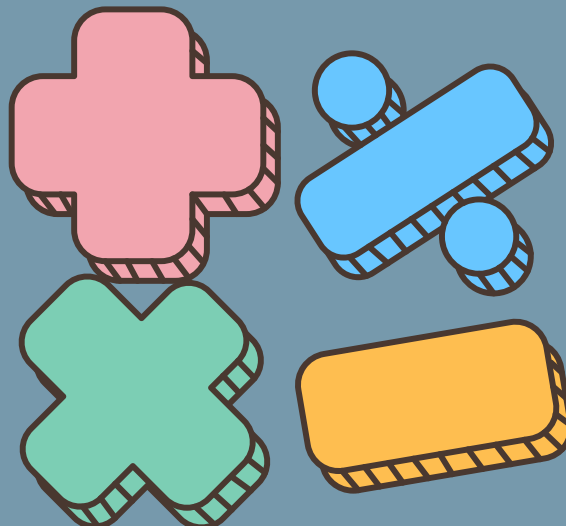


Easter bonnet making and Big Lent Walk

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.

Leo
Frankie Joe
Olivia H
Luca
Heidi

Y4 Timestable Superstars



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

We kindly ask that the £2.00 payment is made through the Arbor app by Tuesday 24th March to secure your child's place on the trip.

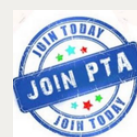
Schools Festival Book Orders

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.

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 Vinnie's (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

Curling Club



Mrs Stoves will be starting a Curling Club after Easter.

To introduce the club, she will be running two taster sessions on:

Thursday 19th March – 8:15am to 8:40am

Thursday 26th March – 8:15am to 8:40am

There are only 10 places available, so spaces will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. The sessions are open to all year groups.

If your child would like a place on either of the taster sessions, please contact the school office.

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 20 th March	Y2 Class Mass
Friday 27 th March	Reception & KS1 Class Mass

Friday 20th March	World Down Syndrome Day-School uniform & 1 yellow item i.e. yellow socks, hairband etc. Donations 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 March	Year 1 Holy week Celebration of the Word-All families welcome to attend in school hall at 9.30am
Tuesday 24 th March	Updated - Reception class Lent Celebration of the Word in class.
Wednesday 25th 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 March	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	Catherine	Archie	Lara
Year 1	Rachel	Felicity	Bodhi
Year 2	Felix	Suzie	Aanika
Year 3	Phuc	Frankie	Dani
Year 4	Ollie	Phoebe	Savva



Attendance
Ted



St. Mary's Class Attendance Winners- Well done - Year 1	
Reception	88.89%
Year 1	97.67%
Year 2	96.3%
Year 3	89.44%
Year 4	92.86%

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.

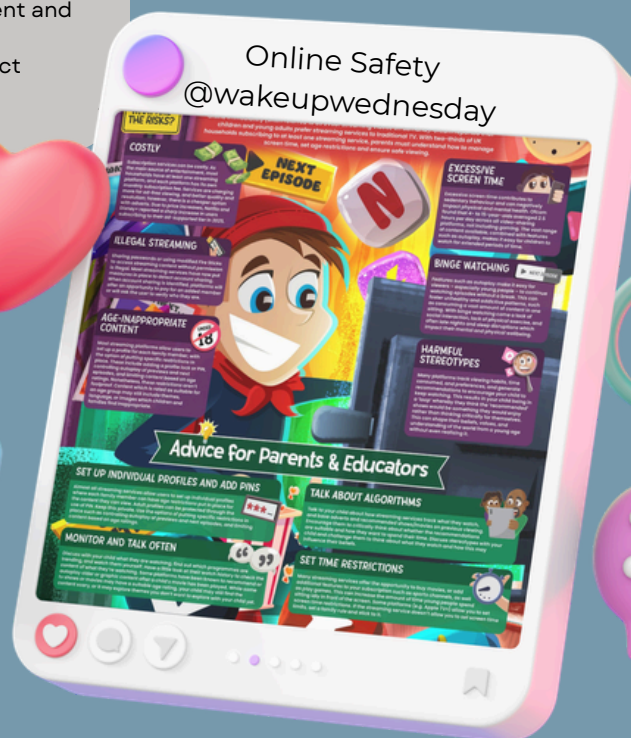
For more comms material and information you can contact vicki.collins@northumberland.gov.uk



www.stmaryshexham.bwcet.com



@stmaryscatholicfirstschoolhexham



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. 160384 and company no. 09587398

FR Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR



Easter

FAIR

Friday 27th March

3.15pm

School Hall

Can we kindly ask of any donations of
the following items

Reception - Lolly Pops

Y1 - Mini Eggs

Y2 - Small Toys

Y3- Chocolate Items

Y4 - Sweets/ Gift bags

NorthStandard
in partnership with

FESTIVAL — OF — THE GIRL NEWCASTLE

Saturday
21 MARCH

Sports Hall,
Newcastle University

For 7-11 year old girls
and their families



Activities and workshops range from:

Engineering to sports,
Aerospace to construction,
Shipping to science,
Mental health to sustainability,
Politics to friendships,
Forensics to activism and more.

Although aimed at girls everyone is welcome!

Tickets via QR code or website

www.festivalofthegirl.com

Pay-what-you-can and **SEND** options available

