

ST MARY'S NEWSLETTER

FRIDAY 20TH MARCH 2026

Dear parent/carers,

At the start of the month, the children began growing their sunflowers as part of the Down Syndrome Sunflower Challenge for World Down Syndrome Day 2026. Just like sunflowers, every child grows and blooms in their own unique way. Today, the children took part in special in-school activities to mark World Down Syndrome Day and proudly wore an item of yellow to represent their sunflower. The children will be bringing their sunflowers home today so they can continue to nurture them and watch how they grow. If you would like to support this wonderful cause, donations to Down Syndrome UK can be made via Arbor under the 'School Shop' section. Simply select the quantity you wish to donate. Thank you for supporting our school community and this meaningful initiative.

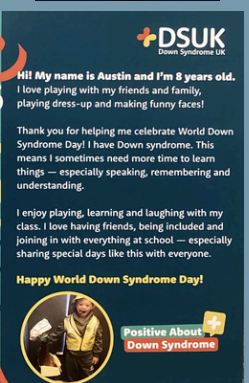
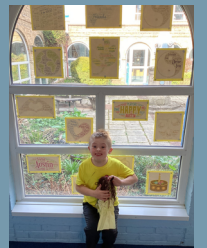
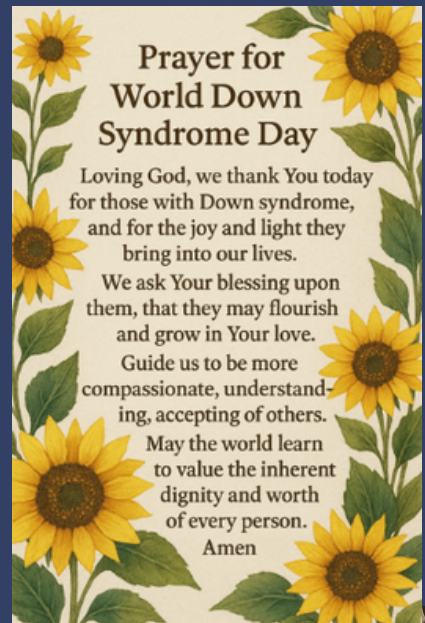
The children have been continuing their daily laps for 'The Big Lent Walk'. Thank you so much for all the donations. Our target was to raise £150, to date we have raised £210! If you would like to make a donation and see if we can raise even more for CAFOD then please see the QR code & link below.

Just a reminder that on Monday 23rd March, Year 1 are doing a Holy Week Celebration of the Word. All families are invited to attend this at 9.30am in the school hall (entry via the rear hall fire exit). Next Wednesday afternoon, parents of children in years 1-4 are invited into school to their child's class to participate in their end of Lent topic Celebration of the Word. Reception parents are welcome into school on Tuesday morning. Please see dates and timings outlined below.

Finally, we would like to share a staffing update as Mrs Hogg will be starting her maternity leave shortly after the Easter holidays. We are delighted to confirm that Miss Wright will be taking over as the Year 1 class teacher. Miss Wright knows the children extremely well, having taught Year 1 weekly throughout this academic year. Both Mrs Hogg and Miss Wright have already begun a thorough handover process to ensure a smooth and successful transition for the pupils. The children were informed today and were delighted with the news.

Best wishes,

Mrs. Oakes



Congratulations to our Y3 Peer Mentoring Leads who completed their training this week!

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 - New Date & Time - Tuesday 24th March at 9.30am

Y1-2:10-2:20pm

Y2-2:20-2:30pm

Y3-2:30-2:40pm

Y4-2:40-2:50pm



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.

Esmee	Frankie
Heidi	Ashton
Riley	Leo
Luca	
Olivia	

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 Spring Garden Kitchen menu, please find our school menu's on the school website under the parent section.

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 27th March

Reception & KS1 Class Mass



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
<p>Curling Club Mrs Stoves (All Year Groups) Mrs Stoves will be starting a Curling Club after Easter.</p> <p>To introduce the club, she will be running a taster session on: Thursday 26th March – 8:15am to 8:40am There are only <u>10 places available</u>, 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.</p>	 <p>Thursday 8.20am</p> 
Wellbeing Club Mrs Stoves	Friday 8.20am



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 Whole school-Holy week Celebration of the Word-All families welcome to attend in school hall at 9.30am
Tuesday 24th March	Updated - Reception class Lent Celebration of the Word in class. 9.30am in class. (Library)
Wednesday 25 th March	Hexham Book Fest- Yr 1 & 2 at 10.30am: The Lion Inside by Rachel Bright
Wednesday 25th March	Individual class Lent Celebration of the Word Y1-4 held in classes. Times listed above.
Thursday 26th March	Hexham Book Fest - Reception at 10.30am: Hank Goes Honk by Maudie Powell-Tuck Yr 3 & 4 at 1.30pm: Alice with an A why by Anna James
Friday 27 th March	Easter Fair 3.15pm, see poster below.
Monday 30 th March	CAFOD Big Lent Walk-Easter Bonnet Parade-Sele Park-from 9.45am. Further route details to follow next week. 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	Lottie	Loriea	Millie
Year 1	Orla	Molly	Zeke
Year 2	Erin	Penni	Alfie L
Year 3	Evie	Florence	Eabha
Year 4	Esmee	Luca	Phoebe



Attendance Ted



St. Mary's Class Attendance Winners- Well done - Reception	
Reception	100%
Year 1	95.79%
Year 2	97.78%
Year 3	99%
Year 4	97.14%

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.

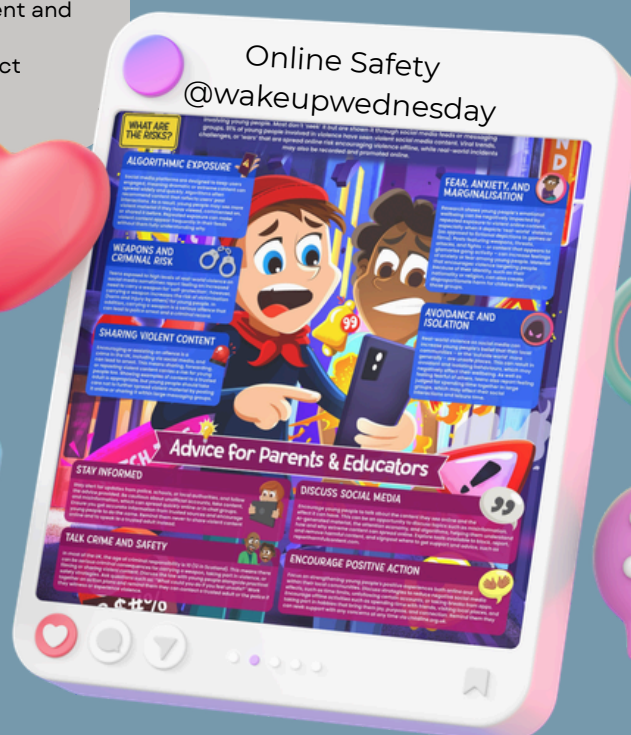
For more comms material and information you can contact vicki.collins@northumberland.gov.uk



www.stmaryshexham.bwcet.com



@stmaryscatholicfirstschoolhexham



THE BIG LENT WALK

Big Lent Walk - Sele Park
Monday 30th March at 9.45am

All Welcome

Scan the QR code to donate



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



We are also selling raffle tickets for our amazing M&S Easter hamper donated by Miss Fiori and a beautiful hamper donated by Mrs Monnelly.

Tickets are £2 per strip and can be purchased from the school office or at the Easter Fair.

Please bring cash to the school office if you would like to be in with a chance of winning.

Thank you for your support!