



St Mary's Catholic First School Newsletter –  
Friday 15th December 2023

*We love, we learn, we live.*

Dear Parents and Carers,

We started the week lighting the second candle on our Advent wreath and prayed for peace in our world this Christmas time.



Heavenly Father, Lord of All, come and fill this world with your peace. May there be an end to hatred and division among your people. Cease all the fighting and war in this world. Heal the bitterness and hurt in my own heart. **Amen.**

Christmas events were well underway this week in school, on Wednesday the whole school went to The Forum cinema to watch Arthur Christmas, followed by our Christmas lunch at school-well done to Mrs. Berges our catering manager for preparing a delicious lunch for us all!



On Wednesday afternoon, parents and carers joined us in school to support the children with our Christmas Art Afternoon, with many parents staying on to make Christingles in the hall in readiness for our Christingle service which took place on Thursday at St. Mary's Catholic Church. The children sang and read beautifully at the Christingle yesterday, and this morning they even had enough energy to perform their Nativity dress rehearsal for St. Mary's Nursery children and staff-phew!





Looking to the final week of the autumn term, the children are very excited to see their families on Monday for our Nativity. Please remember to bring your ticket with you to access the Nativity performance. Due to safeguarding policies, we ask that all mobile phones are switched off and remain out of site for the duration of your time in school, photographs and filming will not be permitted during the Nativity performances. All children will have a photograph taken of them in their outfit prior to the performance, this will be sent home with your child following the Nativity. Next week, we also have our end of term Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church at 9.30am on Wednesday, parents and carers are most welcome to join us at Mass.

Best wishes,

Mrs. Oakes



### **Homework**

There will be no homework sent out for the remainder of the autumn term, school appreciate this is a very busy time for parents and children. Reading books will continue to be sent home next week.

### **Year 3 & Year 4 - Parents Notice Swimming**

Children in years 3 & 4 have finished their swimming for this term and are not required to bring their swimming or PE kit in on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December. Children are to come to school wearing their school uniform on the 18<sup>th</sup> December. Swimming will commence on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January** as normal.

### **Christmas Pantomime**

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December at 1:30pm the whole school visited the Queen's Hall in Hexham to watch the performance of Snow White. A payment of £10 has now been set up on the Arbor App, the deadline for this trip is on **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December**.

### **Free School Meals**

**Universal free school meals** - All pupils in reception, year one, and year two are entitled to a free meal, without having to apply for this option.

**Eligibility for free school meals** - The government has made amendments to the eligibility criteria since April 2018. This is to reflect the introduction of Universal Credit.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Meals.aspx>

### **Application for First School:**

It is now time to apply for your child to start school, reception class in September 2024.

Children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020 should apply.

The portal opened on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023 and will close on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Here is the link to the portal where you can apply. First time users will need to register an account.




[http://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal\\_LIVE/en](http://schadm.northumberland.gov.uk/CitizenPortal_LIVE/en)

If you require any help or need advice please call the team on 01670 624889.



**Mission Statement Value Award Winners:**

If you would like to celebrate your child's achievements out of school and would like us to give them a mention in Celebration Assembly on a Friday, then simply fill out one of the Mission Statement Value Cards that have been sent home with your child or ask for one at our school office. We love to hear about all the children's wonderful achievements, both in school and out!

Class			
Reception	Evie	Jay	Fraser
Year 1	Evie	Austin	Mikey
Year 2	Kohan	Kaciek	Savva
Year 3	Joe	Ruby	Archie
Year 4	Emily	Alfie	Harley





## Attendance Ladder



St. Mary's Class Attendance	
This Week's Winners: Year - 4	
<u>Reception</u>	94.77%
<u>Year 1</u>	95.49%
<u>Year 2</u>	94.61%
<u>Year 3</u>	95.42%
<u>Year 4</u>	96.01%

**Please note that there will be no extra-curricular clubs running during the last week of term (Wk Beg: 18<sup>th</sup> Dec)**

### Diary Dates

After a recent Hexham Partnership meeting, we reviewed alignment of training days and term dates. As part of this, **on the final day of this term Friday 22nd December, we will be closing at 1.30pm. Children will have lunch in school as usual.**

<p><b>Nativity (2 Repeat productions-9.30am &amp; 2pm)</b></p> <p><b>More info to follow</b></p>	<p>Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December</p>
<p><b>Reception, Year 1 &amp; Year 2</b></p> <p><b>Class Christmas Party</b></p> <p><b>(If they wish, children can bring party clothes to change into for this event)</b></p>	<p>Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December (in school time)</p>



<b>Whole School End of Term Mass St. Mary's Catholic Church-all parents/carers welcome to attend</b>	Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 9.30am
<b>Whole School Panto Visit-Snow white-Queen's Hall</b>	Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 1:00pm
<b>Year 3 &amp; 4 Class Christmas Party (If they wish, children can bring party clothes to change into for this event)</b>	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> December (in school time)
<b>Last day of term-School closes at 1.30pm</b>	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December-1.30pm

### **Safeguarding**

This month our E-safety theme is 'Online Bullying.' Pupils will learn the ways people can be bullied through a range of media and will learn how to think carefully about how content they post might affect others and how others feel about them.

Please take a look at the following information and advice for parents and carers on supporting young people online: [Helping Children Deal with Bullying & Cyberbullying | NSPCC](#)

#### **Pupil Support & Safeguarding**

**Designated safeguarding Lead-** Mrs. Oakes

**Deputy safeguarding Lead-**Miss. Baird

**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](mailto:info@smfs.bwcet.com))

#### **Parent Communication**

Please can we kindly remind parents and carers that all emails sent by parents should be sent to the [parent contact address only](#). This is to ensure that the admin staff can forward emails to the correct member of staff to deal with your queries. [parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com](mailto:parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com)