



## St Mary's Catholic First School Newsletter – Friday 8th March 2024

*We love, we learn, we live.*



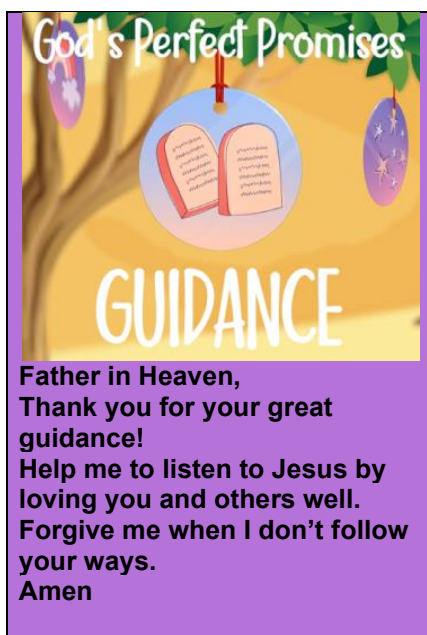
Dear Parents and Carers,

On Thursday, St Mary's have had a fun filled day celebrating World Book Day in their wonderful costumes! The whole school had a visit from Cogito Book shop and chose a book with their World Book Day voucher to take home. Year 2 had a virtual visit from author and illustrator of 'The Lost Horse' Charlotte Manning. Year 3 had a virtual author visit from Joanna Nadin who has written 'The Worst Class in the World'. We all took part in the Masked Reader challenge and had a good go at guessing who was behind the mask!



Just a reminder that during Lent, the staff and children of St. Mary's are going to 'Act' by taking part in CAFOD's annual 'Big Lent Walk'. The Big Lent Walk is an annual challenge where we walk up to 200 miles over the 40 days of Lent and get sponsored to raise money to help people fighting extreme poverty globally. Over the next 5 weeks in school, we will be aiming to walk an average of about 5k a day for the duration of Lent. Children, families and parishioners are also encouraged to take up the challenge and include any walks they do outside of school too. During the last week of the Spring Term, the whole of St. Mary's school will conclude the Big Lent Walk Challenge by walking several laps around Sele Park.

Our target this year is to raise £150 for CAFOD. Thank you to those who have already donated on via our 'Just Giving' page, all donations can be made via our donations page by following this link: [St Mary's Catholic First School Fundraising Page is fundraising for CAFOD](#) please feel free to share this link with family and friends. All donations would be greatly appreciated!



Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs. Oakes

### **Year 1 Whole School Celebration of the Word**

Just a reminder that year 1 are holding a whole school Celebration of the Word in school next Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March at 9.30am. All parents/carers are welcome to attend this event.

### **Parent Survey**

Thank you to all the parents/carers that recently completed our parental survey. More than half of all parents completed the survey. It was pleasing to hear that the majority of parents described the food on offer at St. Mary's as tasty, sufficient, healthy or good value. A detailed letter was sent out earlier in the week sharing key information with parents. I have summarised the key points and actions from the survey in the 'You said, We did' diagram below. I would once again, like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers about the school website:

### **School Website**

The purpose of this letter is to promote our school website: [St Mary's First School, Hexham – Part of the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust \(hexhamstmarys.uk\)](http://www.hexhamstmarys.uk). The website has all the key information that parents/carers need, from curriculum information to term dates etc. Our weekly newsletters are always posted on the website (on the bottom of the home page) and have all the key dates and notices for events taking place in and around school.

### **School Lunch Menu**

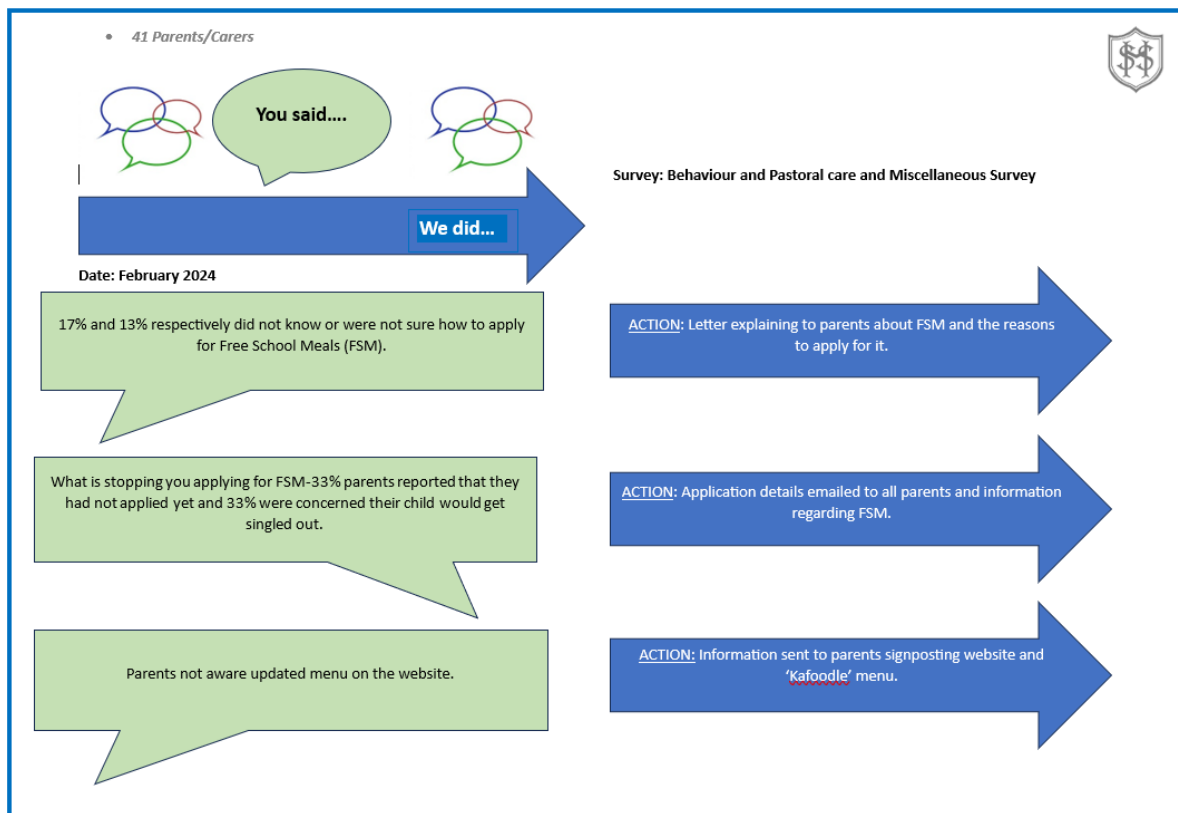
Under the 'Parents' section of our school website there is a section 'School Meals'. In this section, there is a link to our school lunch menu page - 'Kafoodle': [School Meals – St Mary's First School, Hexham \(hexhamstmarys.uk\)](http://www.hexhamstmarys.uk). Throughout the year, our menus are automatically updated via this page. The menus run on a 3-week rotation, this week we are currently on week one of the three week cycle. The menus display all the menu choices, allergens and nutritional values, as well as the variety of food choices on offer to children each day. The children have a choice of 3 meal options a day, plus the option to have a jacket potato or a sandwich. The salad bar is open daily.

## 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>



## World Down Syndrome Day

St. Mary's is taking part in the Down Syndrome Sunflower Challenge for World Down Syndrome Day 2024! Just like sunflowers, every child grows and blooms uniquely. This challenge for Nurseries and Primary Schools serves as a beautiful metaphor for the diversity and individuality that makes each child special.

Every child at St. Mary's has begun the Sunflower Challenge by planting their own sunflowers, watching with excitement as their sunflowers grow and flourish over the next few weeks. On the 21<sup>st</sup> March, we will be asking the children to come to school wearing a yellow item (to represent their sunflower).and donating £2 to Down syndrome UK. The children will be able to bring home their 3-week-old sunflower plant on the 21<sup>st</sup> March.

## Easter Bonnet Parade & Big Lent Walk

As previously mentioned, during the last week of the Spring Term, the whole of St. Mary's school will conclude the Big Lent Walk Challenge by walking several laps around Sele Park. The children will get the opportunity to make their Easter bonnets during school the week before the parade (week beginning 18<sup>th</sup> March) so that they can wear their bonnets as they complete The Big Lent Walk. Parents and parishioners will be invited to join us on our walk, which will take place on the morning of the last day of the Spring Term (Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March)

**Please can we ask parents/carers to send Easter Bonnet making materials in with their child in a named bag in readiness for their bonnet making session during the week of the 18<sup>th</sup> March.**

### **Phonics Workshop for Y1 Parents**

Parents of all children in Y1 are invited to a quick workshop after school 3.30pm on the 26<sup>th</sup> March. We will refresh you on what Phonics looks like in Y1 and the Statutory Phonics Screening Check that all children will be taking in June. Strategies to help your child read confidently and fluently will unlock learning in the whole of the curriculum and make academic life easier and more engaging, we look forward to seeing you there.

### **Winning With Numbers**

Letters went out before half term regarding our new approach to maths homework - 'Winning with Numbers'. Children have been using this in school since the start of this academic year and are very familiar with the programme. Winning With Numbers (WWN) is described as the 'phonics of number' as it focuses on number - the most important parts of mathematics. Many parents joined us before half term, for the 'Winning with Numbers' Parent Sessions where we launched this with parents. Instead of weekly maths homework sheets, moving forward children's maths homework will now be centred on WWN. On a regular basis (daily is possible), children should log on and complete at least 10 questions for number which their teacher will have set for them. There are short teaching videos to accompany the questions, making it easier for parents to support children in their learning. The daily WWN bitesize maths should be quick, and the children should increase in their automaticity as they progress.

**To accommodate any parents who were unable to make the previous two sessions we are delivering a third online session on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March at 5:00pm. Please let the office know if you would like to receive a link for this parent session.**

### **Mini Vinnies**




The next Mini Vinnie's meetings will take place **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March**. Our meeting will finish at 4:30pm.

### **Parent information evening – Moorehouse**

On Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March, at 3:30pm, Miss Carr will be holding an information evening for parents of children who are attending Moorehouse residential. This meeting will provide you with essential information and forms needed prior to the residential trip.

**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	Elsie	Aanika	Felix
Year 1	Noah	Nyla	Dexter
Year 2	Miya	Kohan	Kaciey
Year 3	Gabriel	Bao	Archie
Year 4	Alfie	Daniel	Tyler

St. Mary's Class Attendance	
This Week's Winners: Year - 2!	
<u>Reception</u>	94.12%
<u>Year 1</u>	96.36%
<u>Year 2</u>	99.31%
<u>Year 3</u>	93.64%
<u>Year 4</u>	91.82%



#### Diary Dates

<b>Year 1-Celebration of the Word</b> <b>9.30am in school hall</b> <b>(All parents/carers invited to attend)</b>	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>WWN Parent Workshop-Virtual-5:00pm</b> <b>Please let office know if you would like a link to attend this virtual session.</b>	Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Year 1 &amp; 2 Mass at St. Mary's Church</b> <b>9:30am-Parents/carers welcome to join us.</b>	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Send in child with Easter bonnet making materials to make Easter bonnets.</b>	Week beginning 18 <sup>th</sup> March (or before)
<b>Y4 Moorhouse Parents information evening</b>	Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> March
<b>Parents to look at Books 3:20-4pm</b>	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> March

 <p>Children to come to school wearing a yellow item (to represent their sunflower) and donating £2 to Down syndrome UK.</p>	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> March
<p><b>'Blast Off With Books' Breakfast Session- School Hall 8.15-8:40am</b></p>	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March
<p><b>Mini Vinnies 3:20-4.30pm</b></p>	Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> March
<p><b>Phonics Parent Workshop for Y1 parents</b></p>	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March
<p><b>Whole school Lenten Journey to the Cross Celebration-St. Mary's Church 11am-Parents/carers welcome to attend.</b></p>	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
<p><b>Easter Fair after school-School hall</b></p>	Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
<p><b>The Big Lent Walk-whole school-Sele Park &amp; Easter Bonnet Parade 9.30am</b></p>	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March
<p><b>Last day of Spring Term</b></p>	Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> March
<p><b>Easter holidays</b></p>	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> March-12 <sup>th</sup> April
<p><b>Start of Summer Term</b></p>	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> April 8:40am
<p><b>Y4 Moor House Trip 9<sup>th</sup> &amp; 10<sup>th</sup> May</b></p>	<p>The final payment balance of £103.87 for the Moor House Adventure trip is now on Arbor. Regular payments can be made to clear the balance up until 26<sup>th</sup> April. Please ensure all outstanding payments are made on Arbor <b>by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 24</b>. Many thanks.</p>



