



St Mary's Catholic First School Newsletter –
Thursday 28th March 2024

We love, we learn, we live.



Dear Parents and Carers,

The final week of the Spring Term has been jam-packed! The children participated in the Lenten Journey to the Cross Service and the Easter Fair on Wednesday. It was lovely to see such a good turnout for the Easter Fair, a huge thank you to the PTA, staff & St. Mary's families for organising and supporting this event.

Name the Teddy Winners

Sparky the Dog- Isabel M
Flossie the Bunny- Florence M
Chester the Teddy- Freddie H



This morning, despite the weather we brought our own ray of sunshine into school with our Easter Bonnet & Big Lent Walk parade. The children loved being able to show off their fantastic bonnet creations in front of their families. A huge thank you to everyone who donated money to CAFODs 'Big Lent Walk', we have raised £285 which will go towards fighting poverty globally in countries like Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan.

The children at St Mary's are an absolute joy to teach and as a staff we would like to thank you as parents & carers for all for your continued support. Finally, to each family, on behalf of all the staff and governors we would like to wish you 'Happy Easter!' We look forward to meeting again on Monday 15th April.



Have a fantastic Easter break,

Mrs. Oakes

Attendance Achievers!

Courtesy of the PTA, all the children of St. Mary's are coming home with a chocolate Easter egg as a reward for all their hard work in school this term.

Attending school regularly, prevents children developing gaps in their learning which impacts their academic progress. Absence also affects children's social interactions with their peers, which can impact upon friendships too. Pupils who attend well have the best chances of success academically and socially.



All children who scored 100% attendance this term have received some additional treats and a '100% attendance' golden wristband. These children also took part in the termly Attendance tea-party this afternoon to celebrate their achievement-well done everyone!

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://St.MarysFirstSchoolHexhamPartoftheBishopWilkinsonCatholicEducationTrusthexhamstmarys.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.



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>

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	Ella-May	Elsie	Erin
Year 1	Dexter	Jenson	Olivia C
Year 2	Riley	Phoebe	Luca
Year 3	Olivia	Oli	Erin
Year 4	Kaylin	Alex	Archie

St. Mary's Class Attendance	
This Week's Winners: Year – Reception!	
<u>Reception</u>	98.53%
<u>Year 1</u>	97.73%
<u>Year 2</u>	98.28%
<u>Year 3</u>	96.59%
<u>Year 4</u>	94.32%



Attendance Ladder



Diary Dates

Last day of Spring Term	Thursday 28 th March
Easter holidays	Friday 29 th March-12 th April
Start of Summer Term	Monday 15 th April 8:40am
Y4 Moor House Trip 9th & 10th May	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 th April. Please ensure all outstanding payments are made on Arbor by Friday 26th April 24 . Many thanks.

Safeguarding

Important message prepared with NCC comms in partnership with the police

On Friday, March 22, communication was shared about a report of a group on a social media messaging app containing inappropriate content aimed at young people.

Although this messaging was shared in good faith, some of the details had at that point not been verified.

We would therefore ask you to please not reference this, including on social media.

As always, we would also ask that you continue to take an interest in your children's use of social media and if you do have concerns that you report these to the police.

Officers take matters such as this extremely seriously and are investigating the report of the social media group.

St. Mary's Safeguarding

This month our E-safety theme is 'Managing Online information'. The children discuss how not all information online may not be real or true.

Please take a look at the following information and advice for parents and carers on supporting your child in discussing 'Managing Online Information': [Educational Resources - UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

Pupil Support & Safeguarding

Designated safeguarding Lead- Mrs. Oakes

Deputy safeguarding Lead-Miss. Baird & Mrs. Stansfield

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 (parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com)

Family Hubs

Jan 2024: fresh start **Free**

Learn together at home

Family Hubs now offer group guidance in the comfort of your own home. So busy dads, mums and carers don't miss out on learning life and self-help skills.

"I feel like have more confidence, it was really well delivered by the lovely family hub staff, I logged on at home in my PJ'S. I enjoyed listening to other points of view. I was reassured that I am not alone."

henry
Nurturing Spaces, Regular Events

HENRY 5 - 12 years.
Time for parents and carers to concentrate on yourselves and create a healthier lifestyle. Receive a free toolkit. 1.5 hours x 8 weeks

9:30 - 11:00
23rd January

HENRY 0-5
Become confident parents, learn about physical activity, what we eat, lifestyle habits and enjoying life as a family. Receive a free toolkit. 1.5 hours x 8 weeks

15th January, 13:00 - 14:30

The Incredible 1st Years
For parents who want support - to meet the needs of their children aged 1-6 years. The group provides a supporting and nurturing space for parents to meet other parents and carers, discuss concerns and learn new skills. 1 hour x 10 weeks
7pm - 8pm
17th January

oneplusone
Relationship workshop for parents who are together or separated. Manage stress and communicate better. Help your relationship and your children. (You do not attend the same group as your partner or Ex) 1 hour x 3 weeks
7:30 - 8:30pm
17 & 18th January

Dadtalk
For soon-to-be Dad's Partners welcome. Find out the skills you'll need as a new dad. Practical, honest sessions giving advice, tips and celebrating dads. Text 07728 080 263 your name and email to be invited to the online workshop. 6:30-8pm weekdays or Saturdays

REGISTER NOW

- GO TO: www.familyhubsnorthumberland.co.uk/register
- Complete membership form with your details
- Add 'learn from home & name of course' in the comments
- A Family Hub worker will contact you

nland.cc/familyhubs

#NlandFamilyHubs

Family Hubs
Here for everyone

2024 **oneplusone** **Healthy Relationships**

Do you want to get on better?

Quotes from parents

I really did not think this would help. This course is life skills! Wish we did this sooner, really enjoyed the videos.
- dad

We are now communicating a lot better, we can talk about feelings rather than ignoring them. I can see my child is happier too
- mum

Listen to others, watch videos with a relationship support worker. Relaxed 3 week virtual sessions, 1 hour a week in the comfort of your own home.

Me, You and Baby Too

for soon-to-be & new parents

May 2024
Call to confirm times

Getting it Right for Children

for separated Parents

Group 1
Monday 6th May
19:30 - 20:30

Group 2
Wednesday 8th May
19:30 - 20:30

Arguing Better

For parents who are together

Group 1
Wednesday 17th April
19:30 - 20:30

Group 2
Thursday 18th April
19:30 - 20:30 pm

Free

Contact: vicki.collins@northumberland.gov.uk or call 07955 310 917

If you are unable to join virtual sessions, additional advice and support is available

Family Hubs
Here for everyone

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about CLICKBAIT

Clickbait is a controversial online marketing strategy which uses sensationalist (and frequently misleading) headlines to encourage engagement with an article, image or video - often playing on users' emotions and curiosity, while much of the actual content is of questionable accuracy. Clickbait is also sometimes used to disguise scams, phishing sites and malware.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

HARMFUL MISINFORMATION
Clickbait tends to play fair and loose with the truth, opting for eye-catching content over objectivity. This is particularly dangerous for younger internet users, who are generally more susceptible to that type of material. A child could be presented with fake news, misleading articles and - in some cases - outright lies without fully understanding what they're viewing and why it's harmful.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT
Due to the misleading nature of many examples of clickbait, what may seem to be innocuous and child-friendly could actually contain age-inappropriate material such as extremist political views or violent, pornographic or sexually explicit content. This is clearly of concern for young people, who could be upset, disturbed or influenced by exposure to such subject matter.

HIDDEN MALWARE
While most clickbait is simply trying to promote engagement to earn companies additional revenue, some of it does redirect to dubious sites with the potential to infect devices with viruses or malware. This could put a child's sensitive data - such as their name, their location and their date of birth - at risk of being accessed and exploited by malicious hackers.

PRIVACY PROBLEMS
Some clickbait leads to sites which could coak a child into volunteering their personal data - using pop-ups to ask them for their email address and phone number, for example, in exchange for accessing additional content or subscribing to various services. Normally, this harmless information is then sold to third parties, who often utilize it for targeted adverts and other sales schemes.

A DRAINING DISTRACTION
Clickbait encourages spiralling consumption of online content which could easily result in a young person spending hours scrolling aimlessly instead of doing something productive or interacting with family and friends. This can leave them tired, excited and lacking focus - and, in the long term, can negatively impact their social skills, education and mental wellbeing.

IMPACT ON BEHAVIOUR
Depending on the type of clickbait a child is interacting with, you might notice negative changes in their behaviour. Weight loss scams, for example, are common among clickbait and have the potential to influence eating habits and body image - while deliberately unimpressive 'rag-bait' articles can leave impressionable young people feeling intimidated, insecure or embarrassed.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START A CONVERSATION
The sheer volume of clickbait can make protecting children against it quite challenging. It's vital to talk to young people regularly about the types of content they encounter online, so that they understand the risks of engaging with clickbait. If you're still concerned, it may also be wise to keep an eye on a child's online activity to ensure they're not being targeted by clickbait headlines.

PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING
Encouraging children to question the legitimacy of sensational headlines and 'too-good-to-be-true' promises will help them to become savvy online - and far less likely to be drawn in by clickbait content. These critical thinking skills will also serve to protect them in other areas of the digital world where misinformation is becoming increasingly common.

SPOT THE TELLTALE SIGNS
There are certain common elements in clickbait, including headlines and images that use shock and outrage to grab people's attention - as well as numbered lists, such as '8 Facts You Won't Believe Are True'. Some clickbait combines several of these tactics to snag users' interest. Learn to recognise these techniques for yourself so you can teach children to notice them as well.

TAKE CONTROL
Many parents opt to place limits on how long their children can spend online each day, which obviously reduces the chance of exposure to clickbait. Alternatively, most internet-enabled devices have built-in controls that allow parents to manage what sort of online content their child can access - including filtering by age, which can screen out a percentage of inappropriate material.

Meet Our Expert
Carly Hogg is an experienced technology writer with more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech website The Inquirer, she is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant who writes for Forbes, TechRadar and Wired, among others.

Wake Up Wednesday
The National College

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