



St Mary's Catholic First School Newsletter –  
Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024

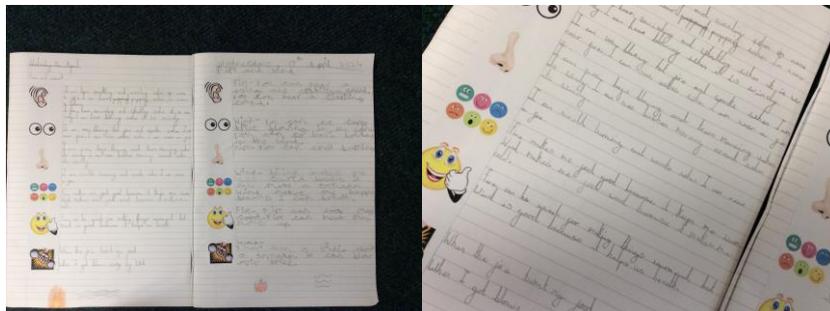
*We love, we learn, we live.*



Dear Parents and Carers,

Hope you all had a wonderful Easter break. The children have made the most of the start to the summer term and have settled back into school life with ease.

We were delighted to receive our Catholic School Inspection report this week, following our inspection on 14<sup>th</sup> March. The inspectors recognised that St. Mary's is a very warm and welcoming school, whose mission shines a light on everything. The feedback from the inspection team was extremely positive, they recognised that St. Mary's Catholic First School is at the heart of the local community with the development of the whole child being a priority for everyone in school. Pupils are given a variety of opportunities to live out the Church's mission in their everyday lives and the pastoral care provided by the school highlights the nurturing and caring environment.



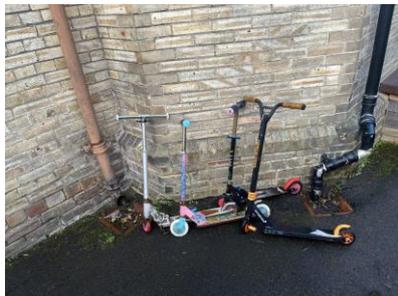
We are thrilled with this latest report. The children at St. Mary's are an absolute joy to teach, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you as parents/carers for your ongoing support.

Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs. Oakes

### **Unclaimed scooters**

We have a number of unclaimed scooters that have been left in the scooter rack for some time now. If you recognise any of these scooters, please can you claim them by Fri 26<sup>th</sup> April before they are removed. Thank you.



### **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 Meals**

If you would like to take a look at the new Summer Garden Kitchen menu, please use the following link- <https://www.hexhamstmarys.uk/parents/school-meals/>

### **Hexham Bookfest**

The pupils in year 3 & 4 will be attending Hexham Bookfest next Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> April. This event will take place in the Queen's Hall Theatre from 1.30pm-2.30pm. Queen's Hall are thrilled to have broadcaster and animal lover **Clare Balding** visiting the book festival this year. Clare will talk about her new book **Animal All-Stars**, a hilarious and fact-packed non-fiction book exploring the greatest record breakers in the animal world.

Please can the payment of £2 be made via the Arbor app by Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April.

Pupils can pre-order books at a discounted price of £8 from the festival bookseller Opt Indie Books. Please see the link below to pre-order:

<https://www.optindiebooks.co.uk/clarebalding.html#/>

Pre-order your copy of Animal All-Stars for £8. When you order, please include your child's name and school. Books will be available for collection on the day. We have been asked that all orders are placed by Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April to give your book time to arrive for the event.

**Extra-curricular clubs** - Clubs will begin week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Summer 1 clubs are:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Fitness club</b>     | <b>Tuesday lunch Y2-4</b>   |
| <b>Singing club</b>     | <b>Tuesday lunch Y1-4</b>   |
| <b>Running club</b>     | <b>Wednesday Morning 8.15-8.40 Y2-4</b>   |
| <b>Eco-club</b>         | <b>Wednesday lunch</b>  |
| <b>Times table club</b> | <b>Thursday lunch – Y4 only.</b>  |
| <b>Mini Vinnies –</b>   | <b>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April (3.15-4.30pm) &amp; Monday &amp; Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May (3.15-4.30pm)</b> |

Class teachers will ask children to sign up for the clubs they wish to join. If your child would like to join running club, please inform the office to sign up.

### Year 3 & 4 Swimming

The Summer swimming payment is now available on the Arbor app, (under Clubs). Please ensure these payments are paid before Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July.



### 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 | Isabel  | Alfie L   | Jay   |
| Year 1    | Beauden   | Evie  | Rafferty  |
| Year 2    | Miya  | Charlotte   | Ollie   |
| Year 3    | Marcus  | Zayn  | Gabriel   |
| Year 4    | Freddie H   | Alfie   | Grace   |

| St. Mary's Class Attendance  |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| This Week's Winners: Year 3! |        |
| <u>Reception</u>             | 97.65% |
| <u>Year 1</u>                | 99.52% |
| <u>Year 2</u>                | 90.97% |
| <u>Year 3</u>                | 100%   |
| <u>Year 4</u>                | 96.36% |



## Attendance Ladder



## Diary Dates

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Hexham Bookfest<br/>Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April</b>            | Hexham Queens Hall 1.30-2.30pm.<br>(Year 3 & 4)  |
| <b>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April</b>                                | Mini Vinnie's 3.15-4.30pm  |
| <b>Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May</b>                                | Reception class-Celebration of the Word in hall 9.30am-<br>Parents/carers invited  |
| <b>Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May</b>                                   | Bank Holiday Monday-School closed  |
| <b>Y4 Moor House Trip 9<sup>th</sup> &amp; 10<sup>th</sup> May</b> | 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. |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Thursday 16th May</b>             | Pentecost Pupil celebrations of the Word-in class.<br>Parents invited into classes.<br>Rec: 2:10-2:20 /Y1: 2:20-2:30pm<br>Y2:2:30-2:40pm/Y312:40-2:50pm/Y4 2:50-3:00pm |
| <b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May</b>    | Mini Vinnie's 3.15-4.30pm  |
| <b>Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June</b> | Years 3 & 4 Celebration of the Word in hall 9.30am-<br>World Environment Day-Parents/carers invited.   |
| <b>Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> July</b> | Years 1 & 2 Celebration of the Word in hall 9.30am-<br>Aspirations-Parents/carers invited.   |
| <b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July</b>   | Hexham Partnership Transfer Day  |

## **Safeguarding**

### **St. Mary's Safeguarding**

This month our E-safety theme is 'Privacy & Security'. The children will discuss the importance of privacy settings on the networks, devices, apps and sites they use.

Please take a look at the following information and advice for parents and carers on supporting your child in discussing 'Privacy & security': [Parental controls & privacy settings guides | Internet Matters](#)

### **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](mailto:parentcontact@smfs.bwcet.com))

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](http://nationalcollege.com).

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ENERGY DRINKS

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Energy drinks are highly caffeinated beverages often consumed for a quick energy boost. However, excessive intake can lead to health risks like increased heart rate and sleep disturbances. Statistics underline these products' popularity among young people – many of whom consume them regularly. Here's our expert's advice on addressing the concerns surrounding energy drink consumption in adolescents.

### HIGH CAFFEINE CONTENT

Most energy drinks contain high levels of caffeine: often much more than a typical cup of coffee or fizzy drink. Excessive caffeine consumption can lead to increased heart rate, high blood pressure, anxiety, insomnia, digestive issues and – in extreme cases – even more severe conditions. For children and adolescents, whose bodies are still developing, excessive caffeine intake can be particularly harmful.

### INCREASED RISK OF HEART PROBLEMS

The combination of high caffeine levels and the other stimulants found in energy drinks can put extra strain on the cardiovascular system. Potentially, this could lead to irregular heart rhythms, palpitations and increased future risk of heart attack – especially in individuals who have an underlying heart condition.

### IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

The significant levels of caffeine and sugar in energy drinks can exacerbate anxiety, nervousness and even – in susceptible individuals – contribute to panic attacks. Additionally, the crash that often follows the initial energy boost can actually make mood swings worse and possibly lead to feelings of depression and irritability.

### DISRUPTED SLEEP PATTERNS

Consuming energy drinks, especially during the afternoon or evening, can disrupt normal sleep patterns. The stimulating effects of caffeine can make it difficult for children and young adults to fall asleep – leading to insufficient rest and its associated health risks, including impaired cognitive function, mood disturbances and decreased academic performance.

### LINKS TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Some research has suggested a correlation between energy drink consumption and higher rates of alcohol and drug use among young adults. Young people may mix energy drinks with alcohol, mistakenly believing that the energy drinks' stimulant effects will counteract the sedative nature of alcohol. This combination, however, can be dangerous and increase the risk of accidents, injuries and alcohol poisoning.

### POTENTIAL FOR DEPENDENCY

Frequent consumption of energy drinks can lead to tolerance – meaning that individuals may need to consume increasing amounts to continue achieving the desired effects. This can potentially lead to dependency and addiction, especially in younger individuals who may be more vulnerable to addictive behaviours.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### LIMIT CONSUMPTION

It's wise to educate young people about the potential risks related to energy drinks, emphasising the consequences of excessive caffeine consumption. Encourage healthier alternatives like water, herbal teas or natural fruit juices. You can model healthy behaviours by restricting your own consumption of energy drinks and creating a supportive environment for informed choices.

### ADVOCATE FOR REGULATION

If this is something you're particularly passionate about, you could work with local health organisations and policymakers to advocate for regulations on energy drink sales to children and young people. Raise awareness among parents, educators and community members about the potential health risks associated with energy drinks and support initiatives promoting healthier options in schools and communities.

### PROMOTE HEALTHIER HABITS

Schools can help with this issue by including discussions about the possible dangers of energy drink consumption into their health education curriculum. Encourage children and young adults to critically evaluate the marketing messages they see and make informed choices about their health. Teachers could also provide resources and support for children to identify healthier alternatives.

### SET A POSITIVE EXAMPLE

Adults can model healthy behaviours by visibly choosing alternative beverages instead of energy drinks. Maintain open communication with children and young adults about the reasons for limiting energy drink consumption – underlining the importance of balanced nutrition, adequate hydration and sufficient sleep for overall wellbeing and academic success.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Jason O'Rourke, Headteacher of Washingborough Academy, champions food education and sustainability – and his school holds the Soil Association's prestigious Gold Catering Mark. Jason has spoken about food education at Westminster briefings and overseas. A member of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on School Food, he co-founded TastEd, a sensory food education charity.



Source: See full reference list on guide page at [nationalcollege.com/guides/energy-drinks](http://nationalcollege.com/guides/energy-drinks)

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