



St Mary's R.C. First School

Friday 10th September 2021

Dear Parents, Grandparents & Parishioners,

A warm welcome back to everyone, we hope you've all had a brilliant summer holiday. A huge congratulations must go to our new Reception class children, who completed their half days this week and are already full of confidence. Miss Baird, Mrs Erving and Mrs Davison have been amazed at how calm the children have been. I was also delighted to welcome our Reception parents into school today to view the Early Years Provision. Parents are hoping to fundraise so that we can add to the resources we already have in this area. Prospective and current parents will have an opportunity to visit school and see children working in their classes on Thursday the 30th September and Friday 1st September from 9.30 am. More details to follow.



Can I also welcome all our new families who have joined our school in various year groups this term including Verity and Delilah. The attendance and punctuality of pupils has been on the whole excellent. Can I please ask that children are on our school premises by 8.50am.

Our new Parish Priest Fr Jeff Dodds has already paid us a visit and is looking forward to welcoming everyone in the next week or two.

While schools have more or less returned to the pre COVID pandemic days with pupils enjoying mixed playtimes, lunch periods and assemblies, we are still very cautious with handwashing still very much part of daily routines. Can I thank all parents for again supporting our school and keeping everyone safe particularly during the summer term.



The children have quickly settled into new class routines and I have to say that the behaviour has been exemplary throughout the week - a big well done to everyone.



A new term is never easy for parents, with preparation and financial outlay, so a big thank you from all of us at St Mary's. We again would appreciate it if parents could continue to support us over the next term with any homework support (more information will follow). If you have any pastoral or academic concerns regarding your child could you please email parentcontact@hexhamstmarys.uk and an appointment will be made at a mutually convenient time to discuss with class teachers. Teachers will also be posting updates on social media.

Wrap Around Care:

The quality of wrap around care at SMFS this year is excellent. Parents can book into Kidz Zone from 7.45 am to 8.50 am, to book a place call 07763930244 . **Eligible children at Wrap Around Care may access the morning clubs as part of the provision.** Some parents may be able to access breakfast club for free in certain circumstances. Please contact the school office if you think you may be eligible. Alternatively parents can book after school care from 3pm to 5.45 pm where pupils will receive a warm meal and access an array of fantastic activities. Please see our posters and flyers for Kidz Zone on the school website or facebook. The entrance to Wrap Around Care is via the hall door. Please ring the doorbell that has been fitted and a member of staff will let you in.

Clubs

We have two clubs running before school but we are excited to bring new lunchtime clubs to St Mary's.

Tuesday: Football Y3 and Y4 - 15 places

 Board Games Y1-4 - 10 places

Wednesday: Gardening all year groups - 10 places

Thursday: Art Y1-4 - 10 places

Friday: Mission Team Y3/4 - 8 places

 Lego Club R/Y1 - 10 places

Children will be able to sign up for a club with their class teacher. A rota system will be in place so that all children get a chance to take part.

Kidz-Zone Clubs - before school

Tuesday golf - Reception - Y4 8.20 am at a cost of £1.50 per session - 30 places

Thursday Running Club - Y1 - Y4 8.20 am at a cost of £1.00 per session - 20 places

A form will be sent via ParentMail on Monday to enable you to book your child a place at either Golf or Running club. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.



Children taking part in a morning session should arrive at 8.20am and register at the Wrap Around Care provision. The entrance to Wrap Around Care is via the hall door.

St Mary's Baby and Toddler Group

This morning, we welcomed all our local mums / dads / grandparents, babies and toddlers to our new Toddlers@St Mary's. We were overwhelmed by the response and it was lovely to see everyone together, chatting and getting to know each other after such a long time. The sessions run from 9-11 each Friday, please come along and check it out.

We have great facilities including refreshments for both parents and children. Parents will be welcomed at the hall door at 9 am and a contribution of £1.00 would be appreciated to go towards new resources for our group.

We are still accepting any toys, books, games that are in good condition and they can be brought to the school office.



Parking

Please can I ask that people park with due care and act responsibly. The church car park does not belong to our school. Fr Dodds was blocked in this week and missed a very important meeting. The church car park is currently under review and I ask parents to park and walk to school if possible.

Friends of St Mary's

Please can I welcome any parents and grandparents to a meeting to discuss how we can provide fun events for the children during the course of year and fundraise at the same time. The meeting will be on Monday 10th September at 9 am in the school hall. Apologies if this is not a great time for parents, we can discuss alternative times to suit parents as we progress.

Medication

Any children who require an inhaler for asthma should bring a spare inhaler into school on the first day back and leave it with their class teacher. Any other medication required by children needs to be signed for and handed in at the school office.

Roald Dahl Day

On Monday 13th September, St Mary's will be celebrating Roald Dahl Day. To celebrate the marvellous stories by Roald Dahl we would like to invite children to come to school in non-uniform dressed as a character from one of his many books. It would be fantastic to see a variety of both popular and more unusual characters, so really use your imaginations. Dressing up ideas can be found at www.roalddahl.com/dress-up. We will be raising money for our school library and would appreciate a donation of £1 to dress up.

Friends of St Mary's

PTA Meeting

Monday 13th September 2021 at 9am

Parents and Grandparents welcome



Let's support Hexham's Best First
School Together



KS2 only

Roald Dahl Day is on Monday 13th September. Please can we ask that for this day only that KS2 come to school dressed as their favourite Roald Dahl character (please refrain from using face paint or hair dye), bringing both their school P.E. kit and swimming things with them so they can change into their P.E. kit at school before their afternoon P.E. session.

We will also be holding a book sale after school from Tuesday 14th until Friday 17th September at 3.00pm outside our main hall. Children will also be able to buy books throughout the week during lunchtime. We have been updating our reading books and have lots of fantastic surplus books available. You will be able to choose five books for £1. All money raised will be going towards our school library.

KS2

Commencing from Monday 13th September all year 3 and 4 children will attend Wentworth Leisure Centre for weekly afternoon sessions of P.E. During this time the children will participate in a swimming lesson as well as a session in the gymnasium. Please can we ask that all KS2 children come to school in their school P.E. kit **every** Monday. As the children are walking to and from the Wentworth Leisure Centre it is advisable that they wear their P.E. hoodie and long P.E. jogging trousers in inclement weather. Please could you ensure your child brings a coat to school too. Children will also need to bring their swimming costume, towel and swimming goggles.

P.E. Kit

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can bring their P.E. kit into school on a Monday and take it home each Friday.

Children in years 3 & 4 should come to school dressed in their school P.E. kit each Monday (also bring their swimming things) and they will also need to bring their P.E. kit with them when they come into school on Tuesday.

Pupils will not be allowed to take part in swimming or core PE with Jewellery items on. Can I ask that all studs are taken out of ears.

Homework and Reading Books

We aim to start sending out homework including children's reading books from next Friday 17th September. More information is to follow regarding this next week.

If you have any school reading books from last year please bring them in as soon as possible.

MacMillan Cancer Care

After school on Friday 24th September we will be holding a cake stall outside the hall fire door from 2:50pm in aid of MacMillan Cancer Care. Any delicious baked donations would be much appreciated to help us support this amazing charity. Please drop off any donated cakes and biscuits on the morning of Friday 24th (or send them in with your child) and we look forward to seeing you there!

A note from Father Chris

Dear friends,

I wanted to take the opportunity to write to you all and say thank you. Thank you for ten happy years as your Parish Priest; thank you for your witness of faith and kindness, thank you for your friendship and support. I have learnt so much and received so much from the Lord during the past decade. First in Hexham and later as



a partnership of parishes, Jesus has blessed us and I thank God for that. The relationship between a priest and his people is a privileged one; through the ups and downs of life we seek to serve God in communion with the whole Church. It is around the Altar where we have heard the Word and received the Eucharist together, we go out to change the world in love. We have enjoyed great celebrations in Church (and afterwards!); sought the Lord and together tried to become more truly missionary disciples. Looking back I want to ask forgiveness for any occasions when I have let anyone down. Looking forward, I know that you are blessed with two new priests. I will take each of you and your new priests with me in prayer, please pray for me too. Finally, I would like to say thank you to everyone who has supported me and the mission of the parishes during the last decade. On a more personal note, thanks for the generous gifts, cards and prayers. As I celebrated my final Mass at Hexham on the Assumption I was struck by the faith of Our Lady and I know she is very close to us. Her acceptance and courageous response to God stands as a reminder to us that when we put God first, everything else falls into its proper place.

You are in my prayers.

With every good wish,

Father Christopher Warren

Covid-19 Updates: Can I remind parents that our school risk assessment procedures are on our school website. We will continue to update if government guidance changes.

Contents of Packed Lunches: Could I take this opportunity to remind parents that as an accredited Healthy School, packed lunch boxes must be nutritionally balanced and should not include fizzy drinks, chocolate or high fat crisps. By the same token, please try to increase the amount of fruit, yoghurt, brown bread, vegetables and unflavoured water, wherever you can. Nuts or foods containing nuts are not allowed. This is because of the number of children who have quite severe allergic reactions, often life-threatening. Obviously these children avoid consuming nuts themselves but they can react in the same way if simply in a room where nuts can be found in another child's lunch box. I am sure you will understand that we have to be very careful and I appreciate your support.

School Meals: School lunches at St Mary's are both tasty and nutritionally balanced under the banner of The Garden Kitchen. If you would like your child to enjoy a hot meal at lunch time, please speak to Mrs Forster in our school office. As the lunches are prepared and cooked on the premises each day, our cook Mrs Berges can easily accommodate changes to the numbers. The cost of school meals is again not increasing from £2.25 a day (NCC schools average cost is £2.50).

Pick up Arrangements: Can I remind parents of our picking up arrangements in order to prevent children going missing. We do not send children to parents at sight. Parents need to walk towards the staff member in turn to collect their child. Children not collected will go to the back of the line until all children are collected. Children not collected will be taken to the front of school for 5 minutes. Parents need to take responsibility for their children as soon as they are collected as the school cannot take any responsibility for accidents and incidents after collection. A staff member will always be present on the gate until the final class has been released.

Reception 2022 Admissions:

If your child was born between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018, your child is due to start reception class in September 2022. You can apply online for a school place from 1 November 2021 until 15 January 2022. <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

Middle School Admissions:



If your child was born between 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013. Your child is due to start Y5 in September 2022. Online Admissions Portal for middle, high and secondary schools will open on the 12th of September 2021 the closing date is 31st October 2021.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

High School Admissions:

If your child was born between 1 September 2008 and 31 August 2009. Your child is due to start Y9 in September 2022. Online Admissions Portal for middle, high and secondary schools will open on the 12th of September 2021 the closing date is 31st October 2021.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

St Mary's Open Days

Give your child the best start in life...

Visit one of our Open Days on Thursday 30th September or Friday 1st October.

Or visit throughout September by appointment only.

To arrange a visit please call 01434 603791 or email admin@hexhamstmarys.uk

We Love, We Learn, We Live.

GIVE YOUR CHILD THE BEST START IN LIFE

Visit one of our Open Days on Thursday 30th September or Friday 1st October
Or visit throughout September by appointment only

To arrange a visit please call 01434 603791 or email admin@hexhamstmarys.uk

 Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in Partnership

 admin@hexhamstmarys.uk
www.hexhamstmarys.uk
01434603791

 Ofsted
Good School
2019

St Mary's Catholic First School,
Hencotes,
Hexham,
NE462EE

Driving notice: Please can we remind parents to drive slowly at all times. Some parents are driving too fast, particularly around the church car park. For safeguarding reasons, can parents use the church car park for drop off and pick up and not the staff car park.

Parents should also be aware of taxis dropping children off in the morning. Please take extra care and attention. Thank you.

Morning gate: All classes assemble on the yard after parents drop at the two gate areas - can I ask parents not to arrive earlier than specified. Teachers will be as prompt as possible especially in the event of bad weather. A member of the senior leadership team is available in the morning to pass on messages to staff members.



Smart Appearance:

How lovely to see all the children dressed so smartly in their beautiful school uniform. Please remember that school shoes must be black, flat soled and polishable – not trainers. No jewellery other than watches should be worn in school. Necklaces are permitted but we are not responsible for any damage caused. If ears are pierced, this should be done at the start of the summer holidays so that studs can be replaced by plastic earrings - Children will not take part in PE with studs in ears unless they can be removed. We respectfully request that extreme haircuts are avoided for example shaved heads, short haircuts including sculptured patterns and logos and dyed hair. If your child has long hair please ensure that it is tied back; this really helps to prevent the spread of head lice but is clearly also important for safety in PE. Can I also remind parents that hair products such as hair gel is not allowed. Thank you.

Finally, our fortnightly newsletter is a really important way of staying in touch. Please do take the time to read and digest it. Newsletters are sent home via ParentMail every fortnight. Each newsletter is also published on the school website under the 'Parent' section (then click on 'Newsletters') on the bar of the home page. We look forward to a happy and positive year ahead and working once again in partnership with you all.

Gospel:

Jesus and his disciples left for the villages round Caesarea Philippi. On the way Jesus put this question to his disciples, "Who do people say I am?" And they told him. "John the Baptist," they said; "others Elijah; others again, one of the prophets." "But you," he asked, "who do you say I am?" Peter spoke up and said to him, "You are the Christ." And he gave them strict orders not to tell anyone about him. And he began to teach them that the Son of Man was destined to suffer grievously, to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again.

Adapted from Mark 8:27-35

The 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year B

May I wish you all a lovely weekend

Mr P Naughton