



St. Mary's Newsletter

19th July 2024

End of Key Stage 2

The end of year 6 performance "I'm an 11 year old Get me out of here" was a huge success. The children were excellent performers and there are certainly some budding actors amongst them. The year 6 mass yesterday in church was also very heart warming and it was wonderful to see how all of the children present showed maturity and respect. There was even a guest appearance from Catherine Hammil, the headteacher of St Bede's who took the time to chat to the year 6 children at the end of Mass. Today they enjoyed a whole class water fight (outside of course) and did incredibly at avoiding Mr Pryer and Mrs Greener. Unfortunately, Miss Younger didn't escape a soaking. We wish our fabulous year 6 children all of the luck they deserve as they venture into year 7 and beyond.

End of Early Years

It was wonderful to see our Reception families in school last week for our end of Early Years celebration. We were so impressed by their excellent singing and confidence speaking in front of an audience. The children loved sharing how much they have learned and grown over the year - their smiles and enthusiasm really said it all on the day.

End of Key Stage 1

Year 2 put on a great performance on Thursday afternoon for their end of Key Stage 1 celebration assembly. It was lovely to hear about their favourite experiences in year 2. They spoke to the audience with such confidence. Their singing and dancing skills were also 'on point' - as were Mrs Davison's! We wish them lots of luck on their journey into Key Stage 2.

Books Home – Feedback Policy/Live marking

We hope that you have enjoyed receiving your child's workbooks this week to see how much progress they have made from September to July. The way teachers mark children's work has changed a lot since some of us were at school. These changes are based on up to date research, which indicates that the best form of marking and feedback is carried out 'in the moment' often referred to as 'live' feedback. The majority of feedback teachers use at St Mary's is verbal feedback, ideally while learning and work is still being completed. Therefore, you may not see the old fashioned 'ticks' 'crosses' 'corrections' etc in red pen. If this has left you puzzled or concerned or if you feel you would like more information, we would appreciate it if you would contact the school office and request a copy of our feedback policy, before raising your concerns with individual staff.

Complaint from a Highridge resident (estate at back of school) **parents constantly blocking her drive.** Very upset and frustrated. PCSOs to make aware and ask if they can pop out before the end of term.

Stars of the Week

- YR Rosie for thoughtful writing in our RE lesson saying what she loves about the world.
- YR Leo for working hard in his reading lessons and being a sensible reading partner to his friends.
- Y1 Rosie for always being polite, respectful and ready to learn.
- Y1 Albie for a great attitude to learning across all subjects.
- Y2 Ivy for great acting in our English work.
- Y2 Elliott for always having a positive attitude towards all of your work.
- Y3 Leah for trying hard with the Bible quiz.
- Y3 Isabelle for excellent detective work in English.
- Y4 Joe for showing excellent Maths skills in plotting and describing coordinates.
- Y4 Eve for using expressive and emotive language in a diary entry.
- Y5 Callum for excellent engagement and very informative answers at the Wetlands.
- Y5 Miles for his excellent attention to detail across subjects over this last term.
- Y6 All of Year 6. What a wonderful class of children you all are. You have worked so hard and approached your learning enthusiastically. Good luck at secondary school.

Question of the Week

- YR What do you love about our world?
- Y1 How can you be a good global neighbour?
- Y2 How did the Bronze Age change Britain?
- Y3 What is the difference between climate and weather?
- Y4 Who tamed a horse 'Bucephalus'?
- Y5 Which different animals can you remember from our Wetlands visit?
- Y6 What has been your favourite primary school message?

Year 5 Athletics

Y5 children really enjoyed their day at Gateshead Stadium for the Trust Athletics day. The behaviour was impeccable. Well done to our medal winners: **Charlie Forster** and **Kacper Rechenberg** and **Callum Stoddart!**

Parent – Teacher – Friends – Association

The 'Friends of St Mary's' met for the first-time recently. They are very excited to support the school in fundraising and have some great plans for next year! If you'd like to be a part of it, however much or little time you can offer, please contact them on: friendsofstmarysblackhill@gmail.com. Any amount of help will be gratefully received!

The funds we raised at the Christmas and Summer fair were deposited into the PTFA bank account this week. As a result, Jo Spence (Chair of PTFA) used a small amount of this money today to take time out of her day to buy ice lollies for every child at St Mary's. They were gratefully received, especially on such a hot day!



Dates for your diary are on the following page...

St Mary's Mission and Vision

An effective mission and vision should reflect the ambitions of the whole school community and bring the school together by helping everyone move in the right direction, towards the same goals.

We would very much appreciate your thoughts in developing this. If you would like to be part of this process, please scan the QR code to the right and answer 2 very simple questions. Thank you in advance.



End of Year Reports

Thank you so much to those parents who gave us positive feedback about the new format for our end of year reports. Understandably, as with any change, we also received some questions from parents querying why the teacher comments section was slimmed down. Again, understandably, parents want the best for their children, and many of you want to know what you can do to support your children more at home. This was the reason why the old way of writing reports included 'areas for improvement / next steps'. However, the curriculum at St Mary's has changed very quickly, over a short period of time. Staff have received specialised training on how to teach Power Maths; Read Write Inc; Opening Worlds Humanities; HEP Science; Fresh Start Interventions; Read Write Inc. Spelling etc. And for this reason, we have not included a target for each child in every curriculum area as it would be incredibly unfair to expect parents to teach their children at home. In some cases, this can lead to children unintentionally being taught the wrong things. The most effective and powerful way parents can support their child's progress at home is to encourage a love of reading by making sure they listen to their child read every day (even in Key Stage 2) and support them to develop basic skills in number fluency, e.g. number bonds; times-tables; number bonds to 10, 20, 100 etc. This is one of many reasons why we made the decision to change the homework at the beginning of the Summer term.

Event	Date	Time	Details
Fri 19 July break up for Summer holidays			
INSET day	Mon 2 Sept	All day	School closed to children
INSET day	Tue 3 Sept	All day	School closed to children
Wed 4 Sept return after Summer break			
Year 6 Youth Village Retreat	Wed 11th - Fri 13th Sept		Preliminary dates based on parental reponse
Individual and sibling photographs	Wed 15th Oct	All day	Tempest photography