

ATTENDANCE (%) 2nd September to 12th November 2015 (National Average = 96.1%)

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL
96.8	94.4	96.4	98.9	97.3	97.2	97.1	96.9

Above national average	Same as national average	Below national average
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TERM DATES 2015—2016

<u>Holiday</u>	<u>Closing Date</u>	<u>Date Re-open For Teaching Purposes</u>
Autumn 2015		
Autumn half-term 2015	Friday 23 October 2015	Monday 2 November 2015
Christmas 2015	Friday 18 December 2015	Tuesday 5 January 2016
Spring half-term 2016	Friday 12 February 2016	Monday 22 February 2016
Easter 2016	Thursday 24 March 2016	Monday 11 April 2016
May Day 2016	Monday 2 May 2016	Tuesday 3 May 2016
Summer half-term 2016	Friday 27 May 2016	Monday 6 June 2016
Summer 2016	Friday 15 July 2016	

Staff Training Days

Monday 4th January 2016
Monday 18th—Wednesday 20th July 2016

Please note the day we break up for Summer 2016.
It is earlier than most schools, as we have used the 3 days at the end of term as Staff Training Days

Attendance at school is important but we understand that there may be unavoidable or genuine reasons for your child's absence. Please remember that you must contact the school on the first day of your child's absence to provide a reason. If your child has a medical or dental appointment, we ask that you bring the appointment letter/card to school so that this can be recorded.



STARS OF THE WEEK



	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Stars of the Week							

Look Smart		Act Smart		Be Smart	
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	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Speaker							
Listener							
Writer							
Handwriter							
Reader							
Maths							
Scientist							
Artist							
Sports							

ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Newsletter date: 13th November 2015

WEBSITE: <http://st-marysrc.schooljotter2.com/>

Events

Wednesday 18th November 2015
Y5 Centre for Life

Friday 20th November 2015
Christmas Fayre

Thursday 26th November 2015
Christmas Babysitting evening

Tuesday 1st December 2015
KS1 Choir at Tesco (1pm)

Friday 3rd December 2015
Year 3 Assembly

Tuesday 15th December 2015
KS1 Christmas Performance

Wednesday 16th December 2015
KS1 Christmas Performance

Thursday 17th December 2015
Christmas Lunch
Christmas Party

Friday 18th December 2015
Christmas Sweater Day

Friday 18th December 2015
Carol Service in church (2pm)

Friday 18th December 2015
Break up for Christmas



Dear Parents & Carers

I would like to start the newsletter this week by congratulating all the pupils on their attendance last half term. Our school attendance for the first half term was 96.8% and we had 120 pupils with full attendance, which is 18 more than this time last year. A special well done to Mrs Brown's class, with 99.01% attendance for the first half of the autumn term.

The first half term always seems to last a lifetime as we welcome new members to the school family and we move up to new classes however this half term moves at Mach 2 speed. Already we have had a very busy fortnight. This is the first day this week that all classes have been in school. Y6 have been on their residential to Kingswood (in this weather as well!), Y4 have been on their Retreat to St John's with the Y4 children from St Joseph's in preparation for their journey towards their First Holy Communion. Y3 didn't go off-site but had a fantastic 'Stone Age Day' in school with an 'expert' from Durham University.

We have been really lucky this week to host Ms Natalia Prokofeva, a head teacher from Russia. She has had a lovely time working with all the classes throughout the school. Y5 children did a fantastic job of learning a Russian song and surprised Ms Prokofeva in her farewell assembly. Mrs Minns is working hard to get this filmed and put on the school website.

Mrs Hargreaves, Mrs Machin and Mr Kemp had a great if not tiring time at Kingswood with the Y6 pupils. They were very impressed with and proud of the children. Every one of them pushed themselves to do something outside their comfort zone. We are also proud of our teachers, who did things they had never had to do for years – settle children down at 2.00am in the morning! I hope the children agree that nothing beats the feeling you get when you have had a go and achieved what you didn't think you could. Keep it up Y6.

Next week it is Anti- Bullying Week. This year we are concentrating on Cyber bullying with the older children and how to keep yourself safe on the internet. There will be a parent's workshop on setting parental controls and learning about the various social media sites that children are accessing on Friday 20th November at 10.00am. All parents are invited to this.

Friday 20th November we are holding our Christmas Fayre at 3.30pm Thank you for the donations so far, please keep them coming in.

Mrs. A. Sowden, **Head Teacher**

RECEPTION NEWS

This week, in Reception, children have been busy making poppies for Remembrance Day, enjoyed a story with the author Rob Lewis, welcomed the Russian teacher Miss Natalia and enjoyed hearing how to count in Russian and tell the story of the Enormous Turnip! We have started our new topic Magical Me and are enjoying all the fantasy stories.



YEAR 1 NEWS

Year 1 have had a very exciting week. We were visited by Rob Lewis, a children's author. He read some of his books to us, answered lots of questions and was very funny. On Thursday, we were very excited to have some of our parents join us for our relaxation session!



YEAR 2 NEWS

In Year 2, we have been learning about fairy tales. We have thought about our favourite tales and the characters in them. We are going to be writing our own Fairy Tales to include princes, princesses, witches, knights and dragons!

YEAR 3 NEWS

We have already had an exciting start to this half term. We have been writing our versions of George's Marvellous Medicine. We have been sharing the facts we learnt about the Stone Age for our half term homework. We had a great day with Durham University showing us artefacts and giving us information about Stone Age life. We will be sharing our learning that day with you, as we are planning to write a report for the Newton News. We have started our new "Inspire Maths" programme and we are enjoying exploring and investigating number and playing some Numeracy games too. Our Road Safety training has started this week too, and we are looking forward in the next few weeks to learn how we can cross roads more safely.

YEAR 4 NEWS

Year 4 have had a lovely start to the rest of this term. We are currently working in Literacy on the novel Treasure Island and we have produced some lovely setting descriptions and treasure maps. Children have used some of their talented artistic skills to create authentic Treasure Maps. On Wednesday 11th November we really enjoyed our retreat day joined with St Joseph's Year 4 children at St John's. We worked in teams and understand why time work matters, we made lots of new friends and shared special items during our special liturgy. We also create wish jars which children have taken home to keep and use when children are needing to reflect or spend some alone time.

YEAR 5 NEWS

In Year 5 we have been inspired by the visit from Natalia, a head teacher from Russia, who has spent the week in our school. Last week we found her home town of Sharya, near Kostroma, in an atlas and used the internet to find out facts about Kostroma and how it compares to Newton Ayclife. In maths we compared the average highest/lowest temperatures between Newton Ayclife and Kostroma, as well as wet days and precipitation and displayed this data using line graphs. This week we have continued the Russian theme, in honour of Natalia, and have tried Russian multiplication method, using our halves and doubles, matched Roubles to equivalent £ sterling, and even used the Cyrillic number system used in ancient Russia to solve addition and subtraction facts.

YEAR 6 NEWS

The children in Y6 have had a busy week. A trip to Kingswood, late nights, outdoor activities and only one child had a shower. They brought back lots of dirty washing. Then yesterday there was the Safety Carousel. Y6 now know what to do in the event of a fire at home, a road traffic accident as well as staying safe on the internet which will be a focus in class next week.



Can I say that on both trips the children behaved really well and were good ambassadors for St. Mary's so much so I am going to try and book a theatre trip before Christmas. Don't worry the tickets will be very cheap.



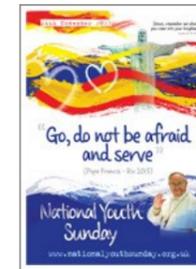
Internet Safety

On Friday 20th November, Year 6 will be leading the assembly which will be about internet safety. This will be followed by a talk from a representative from Durham County Council to help parents to stay vigilant whilst their children are on the internet. All parents are welcome to attend.



National Youth Sunday

On Friday 20th November, there will be a special assembly to celebrate Youth Friday, in readiness for National Youth Sunday on 24th November. The assembly will be led by some of Year 4, who are preparing to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion, and other pupils from each class.



The theme is 'Love Undeserved' and in his World Youth Day letter, Pope Francis challenges us to reflect on how much we are worth in the eyes of God and how much we are loved—then to see others as God sees them.

Our Russian Visitor

We have been very honoured to have Natalia Prokofeva, a Russian head teacher, visit our school this week. She has worked enthusiastically with all the classes, teaching them how to count in Russian, say hello, goodbye, thank you etc. She has retold the Russian version of the Enormous Turnip, which the children acted out and also shared photos, videos and letters from the children in her school in Sharya, near Kostroma, 300 km from Moscow. Year 5 were lucky enough to receive the letters and have replied using their very best handwriting. This was trickier than usual because they couldn't use a joined up writing style as this is not used in Russia. The children and staff from both schools have expressed a wish to continue to build links with each other and will plan future projects to develop the communication between St Mary's and our new friends from Russia. We wish Natalia and her colleagues a safe journey home.

До свидания , пока мы не встретимся снова. (Do svidaniya , пока мы не vstretimsya снова. Goodbye, until we meet again)

Wellbeing for Life



Wellbeing for Life is a FREE service supporting people who live in County Durham. It provides support with: healthy eating, stopping smoking, physical activity, practical cooking, weight loss and mental wellbeing. Contact the service on 0800 8766887, email: cdda-tr.WBFL@nhs.net or website: www.wellbeingforlife.net.

SNAG Update

We had our first meeting last Thursday and we met a lady called Tracy Chappell, who works for Taylor Shaw, the company who plan and cook our school menus. She reminded us that our school now has a new cycle of menus, (which parents can see on the school website). Feedback so far has been very positive, with children enjoying some of the new foods on offer. One of our first jobs will be to help with a survey for parents and children, asking their opinions about school meals. With the winter approaching, we would like more children to be eating a hot lunchtime meal. Watch this space, as we hope to have the questionnaires out to you before Christmas.

St. Mary's SNAG Group (School, Nutrition Action Group)

Parent and Child Yoga (Children in Need)

Thank you to everyone who supported our Parent and Child Yoga sessions yesterday. From your generous donations we raised £50 for Children in Need. Beth (Yoga lady) would also like to thank everyone for their contribution to the day and to the children for showing their parents how to do it.

Christmas Trees

This Christmas, we are doing a very different fund raiser. Each class will be given a tree to decorate, using a theme, and these will be raffled out during the last day of term. If you feel you could donate either a real or artificial tree, or know a company that might be able to help, we would be very grateful if you could inform us.

Money

Please can we remind parents/carers, that any money coming into school, no matter how small, MUST be in an envelope with the child's name, amount and what it is for (trip, lunch, etc) clearly recorded on the front. Mrs Hall may refuse to take money if it is not in