

Attendance: What Zone Are You?



Under 90%

91-95%

Above 96%



Above 96%

Green = Safety Zone

Did you know? If you are in the Green Zone you are more likely to:

- ◆ Achieve in school and in exams
- ◆ Have better friendships
- ◆ Have a better job in the future
- ◆ Be more successful
- ◆ Earn Dojo points for your good attendance



91%-95%

Amber = At Risk

Did you know? If you are in the Amber Zone you are at risk of

- ◆ Underachieving due to your attendance
- ◆ Amber students miss up to 85 lessons per year
- ◆ The Government expects all students to have 95% attendance
- ◆ By missing 10 days per year you may move from Green to Amber Zone

If your child's attendance is in this bracket, you may receive a letter raising concerns about their attendance.



Under 90%

Red = Danger

Did you know? Local research showed that students who attend 90% or less are more likely to:

- ◆ Struggle with their learning
- ◆ Underachieve at school and in exams
- ◆ Miss out on opportunities
- ◆ Have problems making friends
- ◆ Are more likely to get into trouble outside of school.

If your child's attendance is in this bracket, you may receive a letter raising concerns about your child's attendance, you may receive a visit from the Education Welfare Officer or if unauthorised attendance you may receive a fine.

ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Newsletter date: 27th November 2015

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

Events

Parental Reading Survey
To be returned by
4th December 2015

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

Friday 3rd December 2015
Year 3 Assembly

Tuesday 15th December 2015
KS1 Christmas Performance
(9.30am)

Wednesday 16th December 2015
KS1 Christmas Performance
(1.30pm)

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

Sunday 20th December 2015
Parish Children's Christmas
Party (2-4pm)



Dear Parents & Carers

It's hard to decide where to start with the newsletter this week we have been so busy.

Christmas preparations started last week with the Christmas Fayre. Thank you so much to all who came and spent money. We have not finalised the total raised yet but fair to say (no pun intended) it is going to be a large sum. I must say a huge thank you to the small team of volunteers and staff who worked tirelessly throughout the week leading up to the day and then during the fayre itself.

The Grotto was superb – in fact was possibly better than some of the large department stores. Miss Wise, Miss Shaughnessy and Mrs McMenamin did an amazing job setting it up and we were so lucky that Santa was able to spare us a few hours.

The Christmas Babysitting Night was a real success. The children were very well behaved which made it enjoyable for the staff. Again I must say a big thank you to the staff who stayed to help with the crafts, cooking the tea and setting up the films.

A 'thank you' also goes out to Mrs Haywood for running the Children in Need Yoga/ Relaxation Sessions that we put on for you to attend with your child. Those parents who came and took part found it both challenging and relaxing at the same time!!!! Mrs Haywood managed to raise over £50.

Last week a small number of parents attended a workshop run by Mrs Pauline Stewart from County on keeping children safe on the internet, in particular the more popular social media sites. Those who heard Mrs Stewart said they had found the session extremely enlightening and remarked how much they had learned about what in fact the children are able to do on these sites. Please check our E-Safety Pages on the school website for information and sites you as parents and carers can visit to get advice.

We will be running the Secret Santa Shop again next Thursday between 3.15-4.00pm, for children to buy a small gift for the Mum, Dad, Nana, or Grandad and have it wrapped up for Christmas. The gifts are no more than £2 in price. We have had a number of iPad and Tablet Covers donated. If you would like to purchase one for £1.50 please let Miss Wise know.

Over the next week the children will be taking part in a survey on reading. Over the past year we have had a push on reading and we would like to know what impact it has had and how we can help more children 'get into' reading. We are sending a survey home for you as parents and carers to complete so we can plan in workshops to help with reading at home. Please can you complete these and return them by Friday 4th December.

Again thank you for your continued support for the staff and the school and we hope to see you at some of the Christmas events over the next three weeks.

Annette Sca

Mrs. A. Sowden, Head Teacher

RECEPTION NEWS In Reception we are just starting to get ready for Christmas. We have read and talked about The First Christmas Story and have just started practising for our Nativity. Please keep an eye out for our Christmas Tesco display we are about to design it and hope to have it finished by next week.

YEAR 1 NEWS Year 1 are very excited getting ready for Advent and Christmas. We have had a wonderful pastoral day with the other children in our houses and we are working very hard to learn our songs and words for our Christmas play.

YEAR 2 NEWS In Year 2, we have had a great time inventing our own fairy tale characters and settings. This week, we are thinking about 'Little Red Riding Hood' from the wolf's point of view! We had a fantastic time at Woodham Academy on Tuesday. The activities were fun and we used lots of different skills.

YEAR 3 NEWS We have been busy learning about life in the Stone Age. Our newspaper report for the Newton News should be in this week's edition. For our homework the previous week we had to plan our 'Thank you' letters to Durham University. Mrs. Brown asked us to think about what we enjoyed most about the day and we printed out some photographs to go with the letters. We are investigating Skarae Brae this week. We have now successfully passed our Road Safety training and we will be soon getting our certificates. Our instructors commented on our good listening skills and manners and Mrs. Brown has told us we have got a free pencil and activity book to bring home and share with our parents. Advent is nearly upon us! This Sunday is the first Sunday in Advent which means it is our class assembly a week on Friday, 4th of December. We have already started to prepare for this.

YEAR 4 NEWS Year 4 have been continuing to work hard on our class novel Treasure Island and we have collated some lovely writing. In Geography, we are currently focusing on European countries and identifying their famous flags. We discussed some of our dream destinations and the languages spoken in these countries. Over the past two weeks we have completed our ice hands investigation, which had some very interesting results.



YEAR 5 NEWS We had a great time at the Science Life Centre in Newcastle, rounding the afternoon off perfectly with a spot of ice - skating, which caused great excitement. Some of us, including staff, demonstrated a new talent, and I hear Torvill and Dean are shivering in their ice skating boots. During literacy lessons we looked at reviews of the Life Centre on TripAdvisor, and then compared them to our own experience. We wrote our own reviews and used them to compile a class review which we submitted to TripAdvisor. We were amazed when the staff responded and thanked us for our positive comments. Check out our review under 'Funpacked and educational too!'



YEAR 6 NEWS We have now started on a new class text - The Wizard of Oz. Expect tales of courage and bravery.

We also welcome Mrs Sheard to our class. She returns to school after her maternity leave in a few weeks and will join our team in Y6. She will be visiting over the next few weeks to get to know the children and life in Y6.



Operation Christmas Child

We have had an excellent response to the Operation Christmas Child appeal this year. Just over 60 boxes were collected this week from our school. Thank you to everyone who donated.



Cookery Club

Our Cookery Club is part funded by the Children's Food Trust—Tesco Eat Happy Project and is going well. The children are all enjoying it and are trying new foods that they haven't tried before. It is great to see their enthusiasm and sharing their learning with parents. A few have already started to cook more at home. So far we have made pasta salad, pizza and fruit crumble. We have another 3 weeks left and then a new group will start after Christmas.



Admissions to Reception—September 2016

Do you have a child who will be 5 on or between 1st September 2016 and 31st August 2017? If yes, please read the following.

The deadline for applications for children to start school in September 2016 is midnight on 15th January 2016. We have been asked by Durham County Council to remind parents of this deadline as there are still around 2000 families who have not submitted their application. If you would like more information please contact the School Admissions and Transport Team on 03000 265896 or apply online by

[visiting www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions)

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 off on 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.



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.



Mini Vinnies

Already this half term we have had a couple of meetings. Mrs Brown and Mrs. Hargreaves have been doing some work with us on leading prayer and liturgy sessions in our classes. We will be working on this in the next few weeks.

Next week we will be busy planning to start our Christmas card making for the housebound parishioners in our parish. We are also planning to help at the parish Christmas party on 14th of the December.



After School Clubs

We hope the children are enjoying the after school clubs this half term. Another list of clubs will be issued in December to start in January, so keep checking children's bags for a letter. We have had a few problems with children not paying each week for clubs. Therefore from January we are asking that any chargeable clubs are paid for at the beginning of the term, not weekly, so that we can purchase the materials. If we do not receive payment your child will not be able to attend.

Christmas Fayre

The PTA would like to thank everyone who came to the Christmas Fayre. We raised about £700. Special thanks to those parents who gave up their time and money to make this a special event. We have also had a message from Santa, who was very happy at how well behaved our children were when they visited him and he is looking forward to visiting us again next year.



Charity Donations

We are still collecting toiletry donations in school, which are being sent to refugees in the region. We are also collecting for the St Cuthbert's Care 5p Bus—all donations of hats, gloves and scarves will be greatly appreciated.