

ATTENDANCE (%) 2nd September to 26th February 2016 (National Average = 96.1%)

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL
95.3	93.5	96.7	97.7	96.6	96.2	96.5	96.1

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

Home School Link Worker

Feeling rushed in the morning?

Try one of these handy tips to speed up your morning routine

1. **Have a checklist of things to do to get out the door.** Colour code who is responsible for each thing on the list. Hang it on the fridge door, bedroom door or bathroom door.

What can be done the night before?

What can the children take responsibility for?

2. **Get dressed before breakfast.** A hungry tummy is a good motivator to get dressed!

3. **Get uniforms ready the night before.** Encourage the children to find all the items they need for the next day including socks, underwear and lay them next to their bed ready for the morning. Don't forget shoes lined up at the door!

This week I have enjoyed getting to know and supporting some of the families of the St Mary's school community. I am available to meet Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday for any matter no matter how big or small. You can email me at a.pratt300@durhamlearning.net, contact me through the front office or find me in the playground at the start of school.



ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Newsletter date: 26th February 2016

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

Events

Wednesday 2nd March 2016
Mother's Day lunch

Friday 4th March 2016
Y2 Assembly

W/C 7th March
Parents' Evenings

Wednesday 9th March 2016
Y4 trip to Segedunum

Friday 11th March 2016
Reception Assembly

Wednesday 16th March 2016
Y1 trip to Low Barnes

Thursday 17th March 2016
Y1 Assembly (please note change of day)

Thursday 17th March 2016
Y6 trip to Heugh Battery

Tuesday 22nd March 2016
Spare Chair Afternoon

Wednesday 23rd March 2016
Lenten Market

Thursday 24th March 2016
Lenten Service

Thursday 24th March 2016
Break up for Easter

Monday 11th April 2016
Back to school

Dear Parents & Carers

Hello and welcome back for the half term leading up to Easter. I think that with Easter being so early this year we are feeling as if we have so little time to fit in everything we have planned.

We finished last half term with the children doing a fantastic job in the Spoken Poetry Event at Woodham Academy. I had set the children and the staff the challenge of learning by heart a poem and then performing it in front of an audience in the large hall at Woodham Academy. The staff thought I was cruel saying the children had to learn it by heart but they proved all their teachers wrong by doing such a fabulous job. It was a fully inclusive event and we saw some children really excel when on the stage and we are so proud of them. One of our Governors was there and she recorded what the children had to say about the event:

'I was scared but I loved it'
'I want to do it again'
'That was fantastic'
'I didn't want to do it but I am glad I did'
'I am very proud of myself'

Children and staff are already thinking about their class poem for next year. There was such a variety in the poems chosen, ranging from 'I'm going down the garden to eat worms' by Reception through to 'If' by Rudyard Kipling performed by Y6.

This term's challenge for the children and staff is to study Newton Aycliffe and photograph the parts of the town they like and those they don't and to decide what would make the town nicer. The aim being that we then invite the Mayor in to show our findings. The children are really pushing themselves to complete the challenges and this perseverance is paying off in their work.

Last half term saw Miss Owen leave and return as Mrs Salmond. I am sure you will join us in wishing her the very best as she starts her married life. She returned on Wednesday to be greeted by some very excited children and staff who wanted to see her 'sparkly ring' (a description overheard) and the photographs.

For the next two Monday afternoons, Mrs Mason and I are holding workshops for parents on our new Singapore Maths scheme and how to help your child with maths at home. Parents/ Carers/ and Grandparents of children in Key stage 1 are invited in on Monday 29th, whilst Key Stage 2's Parents/ Carers and Grandparents are invited in on Monday 7th March. They are fun activity based sessions and if we get our fractions and division right we should all be able to have some cake! It would be really good to see as many parents as possible attending.

Please keep checking the diary dates down the side of the page for our upcoming events.

Ametha Sood

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



RECEPTION NEWS Last term, we thoroughly enjoyed our Topic of Toys and our trip to Preston Park, getting to stroll through a Victorian street, play with and learn about old toys and enjoy a tour through the museum.

We are now getting very excited about our new topic Growth and Change where we are hoping to hatch chicks, butterflies and tadpoles. Please let us know if frogspawn appears in your garden as we will be eagerly on the lookout ourselves!

YEAR 1 NEWS We were very pleased to perform our poem in front of such a big audience. It was very exciting to perform on a proper stage, in such a large hall. We are now looking forward to our visit to Low Barnes Nature Reserve and to our class assembly. It is a very busy time for us. We are also trying hard to keep our Lenten promises - we have had a few slip-ups, but we are determined to keep going!

YEAR 2 NEWS In Year 2 we are designing our own zoo. To get some ideas we are studying Edinburgh Zoo and we have been watching their Panda and Penguin cam. So cute!



YEAR 3 NEWS Our first week got off to a great start, as we went on our class trip to the Seven Stories museum in Newcastle. We had an amazing day; we got the chance to illustrate our own nursery rhyme. Also we explored different exhibitions including Rhyme Across the World, the work of the illustrator, Michael Foreman and some pictures of the new Harry Potter book. We are looking forward to doing more work on poetry and illustration work in the next few weeks.



We have also started our work in preparing for our Lent market by learning some sewing skills.

YEAR 4 NEWS In year 4 this half term we are continuing with our topic on the Romans. In Design and Technology we are looking at creating a Roman Chariot. Also this week we are loving learning about journalistic writing and are hoping to receive a visit from a local journalist very soon.



In PE this week children are learning the new sport of cricket and thoroughly enjoying learning it. Please could children bring in warm clothes as next week this will be taking place outdoors (jogging bottoms, leggings, jumpers, sensible trainers or outdoor footwear).

YEAR 5 NEWS This week we have continued to find out about the Vikings, including learning about the Viking raid of Lindisfarne in 793 AD and have started to look at Viking sagas, including the Creation Story. We will be using these as inspiration to create our own Viking Saga, complete with Ice Giants, fearless Norsemen, amazing lands and Viking gods.



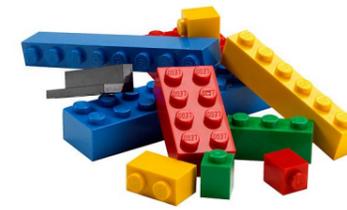
YEAR 6 NEWS Y6 now start that busy time preparing for the SATs. There will be a talk for the parents about the changes to the SATs at 3:30 Monday 29th February.

Y6 are planning to create some lovely items to sell at the Lenten market so donations of any clean glass bottles and jars will be gratefully received - it isn't all hard work!

Lego Day

Do you have any unused Lego lurking in a cupboard or loft? If so, please can we have some?

We are hoping to hold a Lego Day during Science Week in March and are looking for donations of Lego. Unfortunately, we will not be able to return the Lego after the event. Donations can be left at the office. Thank you in anticipation.



Scrabble Tiles

If you have any Scrabble games or just some Scrabble tiles lurking in the back of a cupboard or drawer, please donate them to Year 4.



World Book Day (3rd March 2016)

To celebrate World Book Day the children will be allowed to dress up as a character from a book (not from a film) or bring a favourite book to school.



World Book Day tokens will be distributed to classes next week. These tokens can be used at the book fair we are holding on the day. Usborne Books will be in school from about 3pm on the day.



SNAG Update

Our Chinese New Year day menu went really well. Photos are included too. Remember our Mother's Day lunch next Wednesday, 2nd March and our Italian lunch on the 14th March. Details to follow later this week about times for the Mother's Day lunch.



For SNAG members our next meeting is Monday, 29th February at 12.40 in year 3. We are going to do some research to find out parent and pupil opinions about school meals.



Mini Vinnies

We will be holding our next meeting on Friday, 4th March. Our plans for the Lent craft market will be discussed, together with a plan for starting to design our Easter cards for the elderly and housebound members of our parish.



Maths Workshops

Letters have been sent out this week inviting parents to a workshop on helping your child with maths. Mrs Mason and Mrs Sowden will explain the new maths scheme in school and how it works. They will provide you with ideas to help your child with maths and activities you can do with your children that will improve their maths and their confidence without them realising they are even doing any maths. So please come along to a non-threatening 'fun' afternoon of maths.

Parents/ Carers/ Grandparents of children in
Key Stage 1—Monday 29th February
2:00pm – 3:15pm
Key Stage 2—Monday 7th March
2:00pm – 3:15pm

School Library

We are planning on doing 2 library sessions per week for KS2 pupils to borrow books. Students will be allowed to borrow up to 2 books to read over 4 weeks. The date they are due to return the books will be stamped in the front of the book.



Library timetable (Week 4 is starting 29th Feb):

Weeks	Tuesday	Thursday
1	Yr 5	Yr 3
2	Yr 5	Yr 3
3	Yr 4	Yr 6
4	Yr 4	Yr 6

Cultivate 4 Life

Number 354 (AA38 YG4Z) was the winning ticket from the Cultivate 4 Life raffle held before half term. The prize is the Body Massage at Trimmers. Thank you for your contribution and £15 has been donated to the PTA from the sale of tickets.



Year of Mercy

'When I needed a neighbour, where you there?'
 In the month of March, we pray for those without clean water.