

ATTENDANCE

(%) 5th September to 11th May 2017 (Ofsted Above Average Target = 96.1%)

The symbols below show if the class has improved attendance ↑ since the previous newsletter, stayed the same = or decreased ↓.

Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL
95.3	95.0	93.8	95.5	96.7	97.6	96.9	95.9
=	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓	↑	↑

Above national average	Same as national average	Below national average
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TERM DATES 2016—2017

Holiday	Closing Date	Date Re-open For Teaching Purposes
Autumn 2016		Monday 5th September 2016
Autumn half-term 2016	Thursday 20th October 2016	Monday 31st October 2016
Christmas 2016	Friday 16th December 2016	Tuesday 3rd January 2017
Spring half-term 2017	Friday 17th February 2017	Monday 27th February 2017
Easter 2017	Friday 7th April 2017	Tuesday 24th April 2017
May Day 2017	Monday 1st May 2017	Tuesday 2nd May 2017
Summer half-term 2017	Friday 26th May 2017	Monday 5th June 2017
Summer 2016	Friday 21st July 2017	

Staff Training Days

Friday 21st October 2016
Friday 3rd February 2017
Monday 24th April 2017 (please note changed date—was originally Friday 7th April 2017)

First Holy Communion

On Saturday 13th May and Saturday 20th May, at 10.00 am 19 children from Yr 4 and Yr 5 will be making their First Holy Communion. Please remember our children in your prayers. A list of the children and their specific dates will be on display in church and Yr 4 classroom. Please feel free to join them at either mass to support them in this stage of their journey in faith.

SNAG News

Our SNAG group had their first meeting with our new cook, Mrs Wilkinson this week. It went well. The children got the opportunity to try proposed new foods that will be on the menu in September. They wanted the children's opinions first. They tried Crispy coated chicken, beany cheeseburger, a vegetarian option Gardiner's pie and BBQ pizza. These dishes were a great success. Guess they will all be on the new menu!



Mrs Wilkinson has planned a Take Away Food day for our Feast day, the last day of this half term. We are also going to book in a 'Try a new food day' to coincide with our Healthy Eating Week beginning 12th June. Watch this space for the actual date to be confirmed.

ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Newsletter date: Friday 12th May 2017

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

Events

Friday 19th May 2017
Y1 Assembly

Tuesday 23rd May 2017
Primary Athletics (Shildon)

Thursday 25th May 2017
Rec and Y6 Mass

Friday 26th May 2017
Feast Day Mass and Picnic
Race for Life

Friday 26th May 2017
Break up for Half Term

Monday 5th June 2017
Back to School

Tuesday 6th June 2017
Sept 2017—New Starters
Induction (children and parents)

Tuesday 6th June 2017
School Trends in school taking
uniform orders

Thursday 8th June 2017
Y5 & Y1 Mass

Friday 9th June 2017
Y2 Assembly

Tuesday 15th June 2017
School Photographs

Friday 16th June 2017
Y4 Wateraid Assembly

Friday 16th June 2017
Y5 Multi-skills—Woodham

Monday 19th June 2017
Y5 visit to St John's

Tuesday 20th June 2017
Y3 visit to Oriental Museum

Tuesday 20th June 2017
Sept 2017—New Starters
(children only)

Wednesday 21st June 2017
Y5 visit to Woodham

Friday 22nd June 2017
Rec & Y6 Mass

Dear Parents & Carers

Is it May? I think someone has forgotten to tell the sun! With Easter being so late this year it's easy to forget we are in May and almost half way through it at that.

This week was SATS week and I am sure all the parents, not just those who have had to live with Y6 children over the past few weeks, will join us in congratulating them on their efforts and resilience. They deserve it, as they have worked so hard.

Saturday is the first of our First Holy Communion celebrations for the children in Y4. Mass on both Saturdays is at 10.00am at St Mary's Church and it would be lovely if children from the different years could pop down to see the Y4 children either before or just after the mass.

The next few weeks are packed with events both in school and off site for all of the classes. Please check the calendar on the school website as we have added dates to a number of events we had planned but needed confirmation. June is so busy with sports days and educational visits in school and at various local places. Y6 have their transition to their new schools arranged.

In two weeks' time we have the School Feast Day. This year we are really praying for good weather as we have the Race for Life organised by Mr Bowden, with Abi and William the Sports Captains. Four laps of the school field are approximately a mile so it's possible for 99% of us. They have arranged for 'Elite Runners' to go first and then they will be able to help the younger children complete the circuit. Even I have had to get my trainers out and remove the spiders who had taken up residence in them. My legs are still hurting from my first attempt earlier in the week to do a mile!! But I keep thinking I have two weeks. It's the cause and the participation that are important whether it's through actually doing the Run/Walk or sponsoring others. We look forward to seeing as many as possible taking part or shouting others on.

Last Friday we were delighted to appoint Mrs Hargreaves as the substantive Deputy Headteacher.

Thank you for all your support.

Mrs. A. Sowden, Head Teacher

RECEPTION NEWS This term's topic is 'Space'. We have been learning about the planets, we know they are different sizes and all have different names. We also watched the space shuttle launch and we are now labelling the different parts of a rocket. In maths we have been learning about money.

We have also been doing lots of other fun things such as making planets with papier-mâché, making ourselves look like aliens by making masks. We are going to be making rockets using the instructions we have been writing. We also going to have fun looking at times of the day and seasons, we may even learn a seasons song to help us.

YEAR 1 NEWS We have spent this week looking at 'The Pig in the Pond' by Martin Waddell. We have ordered the story, described the characters and setting, and have begun to write our own version of the story. Later we are going to create our own collage farm animals and pond.

YEAR 2 NEWS We would like to welcome Miss Wise to the class. KS1 SATs will be starting the week beginning 15th May and should be finished by the end of the following week. We are treating this like normal working practice and the children will be completing their assessments in class. I will provide refreshments on a daily basis to keep up their strength! Please let us know if there are any allergies we are unaware of.

Please could we have all PE kits in school, especially PE shoes, as we may be taking lessons outside if the weather is fine? Please can we have homework folders in by Thursdays so we can mark it ready for returning on Fridays? If your child needs new reading books please remember to bring them back to school and make a note in their reading record.

YEAR 3 NEWS We are already into week 3 of the summer term, the time is going too fast! We have been having great fun in Maths exploring fractions, we got the chance to explore equal parts using chocolate. We could eat it at the end of the lesson. Our times tables skills are improving too, every week we do a test, working on beating the clock, to see if we can get quicker and more confident in recalling facts. In our RE we are enjoying retelling the Pentecost story, explaining why the Holy Spirit was important to the disciples. We are enjoying our work in French and are becoming more confident in talking in sentences.

YEAR 4 NEWS This week children have been creating their own invention and through explanation text they have been able to explain their own cracking contraptions. In Science we had fantastic investigation and questioning from children regarding how our digestive system worked. We even made poo....

Children are enjoying learning the haka dance in PE and everyone has some good dance routine moves for the haka.

YEAR 5 NEWS Year 5 have been working together to create an assembly that celebrates all the fantastic information they have found out about keeping safe. I set them the task of creating a small group presentation, incorporating an aspect of safety from our Junior Ed visits, run by Durham Constabulary. It needed to be no longer than 3 minutes, contain a piece of scripture that is related to their topic, write a bidding prayer and most importantly successfully manage to get the main safety message

YEAR 6 NEWS Well SATs are over for Y6. They all worked really hard even if some did find it some of the questions a challenge. They spent Thursday afternoon planting seedlings around the Prayer Garden.

The children have discussed their Leavers Play which will take place not here at St. Mary's but we will use the facilities and stage at Woodham School- with sound and light watch this space for more information. Work has not finished their writing still needs to be levelled and moderated so they will be back into a normal routine next week.

Uniform

Thank you for sending your children back to school looking as smart as ever. It is always fantastic when leading assemblies on a Monday and Friday mornings to see them sitting there looking so very smart. I think it really does contribute to maintaining our high standards.

In the summer our girls are very welcome to wear blue checked summer dresses and cardigans. Please continue to support us in not allowing your child/children to wear trainers or jewellery to school or the large hair bows.



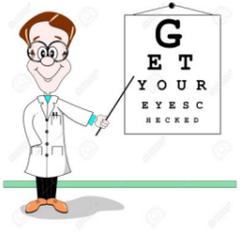
Fidget Spinners

Over the past few weeks the aid for children with attention problems: Fidget Spinners, has become a national if not global craze. At the moment we have so many children with them in class they are becoming a distraction for everyone. If you have a letter from your GP, CAMHS, an Educational Psychologist or an Occupational Therapist stating your child would benefit academically from using a 'Fidget toy' then your child may have one in class otherwise we ask that they are not brought into school please.



Eye Tests

This week I picked up my new glasses, oh the ability to see both far and near again is great. As happens the Optician asked about my occupation and we started talking about children and eye tests. Apparently the VISION test children have in Reception is not an eye test as such. It tests whether they have a lazy eye. He mentioned that eye tests for children are free. If you notice your child is struggling watching the TV or using a screen, or is not interested in reading, please consider taking them for a test. Some children are so young they think 'blurred vision' is normal.



Operation Encompass

St Mary's is now part of a new project called Operation Encompass, which aims to support children affected in any way by domestic abuse. Witnessing domestic abuse is really distressing for a young person. They can often see the abuse, hear it from another room, see a parent's injuries and distress afterwards, or be physically hurt themselves.



If you would like to speak to someone about the project or require further information, or need individual support please do not hesitate to contact the designated staff which are:

Mrs Sowden, Head Teacher
Mrs Hargreaves, Deputy Head
Mrs Kengyelics, Parent Support Advisor

Feast Day Celebrations

Letters were sent out yesterday via Ping about the Feast Day Celebrations. Everyone is welcome to join us in church at 11am for Mass, followed by our Feast Day Picnic at about 12noon. Children can have fish and chips in a cone, followed by biscuit or fruit. If your child is on packed lunch and would like fish and chips, please let us know by Thursday 18th May—we are unable to accept any requests after this date. If you are providing your child with a packed lunch on this day, again, please let us know by completing the bottom of the letter, writing a note or emailing school. We look forward to seeing everyone.

