



SCHOOL UPDATES

TWITTER:

As you will be aware, the school's Twitter account is up and running, and we already have over 20 followers! You can follow our feed via Twitter (@whickhamstmarys), or on the front page of the school website (www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk).

Please remember, as an addition to the 'Use of Children's Images' database we store in school, if you do not wish your child to appear on the school Twitter feed, please return the reply slip from last week's newsletter to the school office asap.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY:

This week, the School Council have been selling poppies (and other related paraphernalia) to raise funds for The British Legion. Two pupils from Year 6 will be representing the school at the annual Remembrance Day service in Whickham, and many others will also be in attendance with cubs, brownies, scouts and guides groups. Please feel free to come and pay your respects for those who have lost their lives to protect liberty around the world, and join with us as we pray for a world free from war, violence and segregation. The procession along Whickham Front Street will begin at School Street (next to the old Whickham Front Street school building) at 10:30am, and there will be a service of Remembrance at the Cenotaph at 10:45am.

FRIENDS CHRISTMAS RAFFLE:

Thank you to all those friends and family of the school who have supported the Friends of St Mary's in providing some wonderful special prizes for our Christmas raffle. The Friends of St Mary's are now on the look-out for some appropriate small gifts to be made in to hampers also to be raffled off following our whole school Mass on the last day of term.

REMINDERS

PARENTS' EVENING:

You will have now received an appointment for Parents' Evening. Please remember that the purpose of the 5 minute appointment is to discuss curriculum progress and targets. If you feel as though there are other issues you would like to discuss with your child's class teacher, please get in contact to make an alternative appointment at a mutually convenient time. As you are aware, we will be organising Parents' Evening slightly differently this year. This time, all classes will be in use (unlike previous years, where we split classes over two days); as such, the corridors will be a little more busy than usual. Therefore, we would ask that parents/carers follow the following plan as best as possible:

- Parents/carers to arrive at school approximately 20-30minutes prior to their appointment slot and make their way to the school hall, where the children's books will be available to look through.
- Parents/carers to make their way to child's classroom no more than 5 minutes prior to the arranged appointment time (some seating available outside classrooms).
- Consultation to last approximately 5 minutes.
- Mr Wheatley will be available for any urgent needs, or to schedule a meeting for discussions which do not relate to curriculum progress/will go over the allotted 5 minute slot.

Obviously, as staff, we will endeavor to keep to agreed appointment times, and we would ask that parents and carers support us (and one another) in this aim; we would, however, apologise in advance for any delays in appointment times, and will act as swiftly as possible to rectify this.

CHRISTMAS CARDS:

The absolute final day to order your child's Christmas card is Monday 14.11.16. Any orders received after this date (even if they magically appear in a blue bag!) cannot be accepted. Thank you.

WINTER UNIFORM:

With Autumn well and truly upon us, we've been experiencing some colder days this week. As such, please could we ask that all children have their winter coats in school each day. Hats, gloves and scarves are also a good idea, but please ensure that each item of clothing is clearly labelled with your child's name. It is permissible for pupils to have a change of footwear (e.g. Winter boots) before/after school and at playtimes, but pupils must bring school shoes to change in to when in school.

SNOW:

A polite reminder: in the event of snow or icy conditions, School will remain open unless you are advised otherwise.

In the very unlikely event of a school closure, a text message will be sent out via the school text messaging service (please ensure school have your up-to-date mobile phone number), there will be a note on the front page of the school website and local radio stations will be informed.

In the more likely event that snow may affect your journey to school, please take sensible precautions: if it is possible to walk, please do, and set off in plenty of time; keep school informed of your whereabouts - particularly if you are likely to be late; ensure that your child is prepared for the elements, with changes of shoes (and clothes if necessary) brought in to school with them.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX APPEAL:

Please note that all completed shoeboxes must be in school, wrapped, labelled, and ideally with an elastic band around them, by the morning of Friday 11th November. Please also remember, if possible, to include a cheque for postage (as explained in the leaflet provided). Thank you.

MINI-VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL:

The Mini-Vinnies is a group of pupils in Year 5, linked to the St Vincent De Paul society, who meet regularly in school to plan and undertake acts of charity, good will and prayer in our local community. This year, the Mini-Vinnies are planning an afternoon tea (with performances from our school choir and musicians) for elderly parishioners and members of our local community on Friday 16th December (1:30pm in school). If you know of anybody who would be keen to be involved in the event, please could you get in contact with school and let us know; we would also be keen to hear if there are any individuals who would require transport to the event, as this could be arranged. We would love this to be an opportunity for the pupils at St Mary's to do something special for the more senior members of our community, so please ask around and see who would be interested.

UPCOMING EVENTS

BIKING BEN SCOOTER SKILLS IN YEARS 2 AND 3:

All pupils in Years 2 and 3 are invited to bring their scooter (and helmet) in to school on Monday 14th November for a scooter session with Biking Ben. Pupils to come in to school in own clothes (warm appropriate clothing), with their school uniform to change in to in a bag.

CHILDREN IN NEED:

Children may come in to school in their own clothes (the Children in Need theme is Spots) on Friday 18th November. There is a suggested donation of £1 per child/family – but please feel free to donate as generously as you are able.

YOUTH SUNDAY:

On Sunday 20th November, the Church celebrates the Feast of Christ the King. This day, the last Sunday before Advent, is celebrated as Youth Sunday the world over. As such, at St Mary's, there will be a wonderful celebration of the Mass which the young people of our parish will help to lead us in. Mrs Salmon and Mrs Skrobot (parents of Patrick and Maja in Year 3) will be helping to prepare the children with some craft activities after 9:30am Mass at St Mary's this Sunday (13.11.16). All children, and parents/carers, are most welcome to attend.

DENTAL HEALTH CHECK:

Public Health England are conducting an oral health survey of five year old children, 2016-17. All pupils in Reception and Year 1 will receive a letter this week outlining the programme, with a consent form attached. As you will read in the letter, the survey will only be done on children who are 5 years of age on 13.1.17; we were, however, instructed to send letters to all Reception class pupils – so please be aware that even if you received a letter, your child may not be part of the programme. Please can all consent forms be returned to school by **Monday 14th November**.

ST THOMAS MORE FRENCH DAY:

A reminder for those children who have already returned their reply slip, the French Day at St. Thomas More begins at 10:00 with a French breakfast and will finish at 2:30 p.m. Please bring a packed lunch.

THE WEEK AHEAD W/C : 14/11/16

MONDAY 9:30 – 12:00 Ben Tweedie – Scooter Skills – Y2 & Y3

THURSDAY 9:30 Mass for Years 2, 3 and 4 (all welcome)