



## SCHOOL UPDATES

### STEM WEEK:

Next week, pupils will be engaging in our half-termly extended curriculum week, which will be focusing on STEM – or Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (in layman's terms). All pupils will be working with external visitors exploring a theme of 'Journeys' – which may be a physical journey, or change over time. Below is the timetable for the week:

Monday – Years Reception, 1 and 2 (working with Greenshift Educational Services) will be exploring bridges and towers.

Tuesday – Years 3 and 4 (working with Greenshift Educational Services) will be exploring renewable energy. Year 5 (working with paper structures Charlotte Smith) will be exploring megastructures – linked to their History topic.

Wednesday – Year 6 (working with paper structures Charlotte Smith) will be exploring the history of animation.

We will share lots of lovely pictures of the week via the class blogs and our school Twitter feed.

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD SHOEBOX APPEAL:

Thank you to all those families who donated a shoebox filled with gifts for underprivileged children this Christmas. Operation Christmas Child came to collect our shoeboxes on Tuesday, and the School Council were happy to send away 55 boxes from St Mary's.

### TERM DATES 17/18:

Please find below the agreed Term Dates for next academic year. *Please note, Inset Days have not yet been set; information regarding this will be released in due course.*

	START	END	HALF-TERM
<b>AUTUMN</b>	4.9.17	22.12.17	23.10.17 – 27.10.17
<i>INSET</i>	TBC		
<b>SPRING</b>	8.1.18	29.3.18	12.2.18 – 16.2.18
<i>INSET</i>	TBC		
<b>SUMMER</b>	16.4.18	20.7.18	28.5.18 – 1.6.18
<i>INSET</i>	Polling Day (TBC); Bank Holiday 7.5.18		

## SOCIAL MEDIA ADVICE:

Do you know how active your child is on social media?

It has come to our attention that a number of children in school are actively engaged in social media activities, some of which have strict age restrictions for use. Here is some information and sensible advice, with questions to consider in order to ensure your child's safety online.

Did you know?

Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook, Pinterest and most other Social Media outlets have a minimum age restriction of 13; Whatsapp requires verification that the user is 16 years and over, and YouTube requires posters to be 18 (or 13 with parents'/carers' permission). To set up an account with a lot (but not all) of these platforms, dates of birth must be given to verify age and compliance with their terms and conditions.

Some key questions to ask yourself:

Is your child actively using these platforms, and if so, are you aware of this?

Do you monitor the content of what they post, and what they are able to view from other posters?

What 'friends'/'followers'/'subscribers' does your child have - do they know who all of them are personally? Do you and your child follow sensible, best practice when it comes to posting content online, e.g. No personal information, no visible links to where a child may live, go to school or spend regular amounts of time particularly if unsupervised by an adult, not engaging in chats with unknown followers friends etc. Have you considered what information can easily be obtained about your child, and what the potential outcomes of this may be?

All pupils in school learn about e-safety as part of their Computing curriculum. As a school, it is something we take very seriously, and aim to support pupils and parents/carers as best we can. We will be running an information session in the Spring Term, in conjunction with local Safeguarding advisors, to share current information and best practice for parents/carers with regards Social Media and the Internet.

For more information, please explore <http://www.childnet.com/> which has plenty of information and top tips regarding e-safety.

## REMINDERS

### 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.

### 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 16<sup>th</sup> 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.

#### 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.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

##### CHILDREN IN NEED

Own clothes day £1 per child/family on **Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November**.

##### YOUTH SUNDAY:

Please come along to Mass at 9:30am on Sunday to celebrate the Feast of Christ the King. This date also marks Youth Sunday across the world, and the young people of our parish will be helping to lead our worship in a lively and joyous way. All are welcome, at all times – so please come and be active in your faith!

#### THE WEEK AHEAD W/C : 21/11/16

TUESDAY

5:00pm 1<sup>st</sup> Reconciliation Meeting for Y4 parents

WEDNESDAY

Y4 Trip to Arbeia Roman Fort (pupils to come to school as normal and will return before the end of the school day).