



## SCHOOL UPDATES

### HAPPY NEW YEAR:

A very happy, belated, New Year, and welcome back to the new school term! It has been wonderful to have the children back in school this past week; the tales they have shared from their Christmas break, and their palpable excitement and enthusiasm to be back at school, have lit up some rather dreary early January days, and made settling back in to the routines of school an absolute pleasure!

2017 is shaping up to be just as exciting and successful a year as the last, and we look forward to sharing our daily learning and living with you all, as members of the St Mary's family. Over the coming twelve weeks, our pupils will engage in many wonderful learning opportunities, continue to grow as members of our faith community and hopefully have a little fun along the way! In the coming Term, we will be kick-starting an exciting shared project with our partner schools (St Anthony's and Catholic Parochial School) in Kenya, there will be more critical thinking and problem solving opportunities for pupils to get stuck in to in Mathematics and our outdoor learning opportunities will continue to flourish with the planting and upkeep of our brand new school allotment; all pupils will have opportunities to extend learning outside of the classroom, will take part in school trips and enjoy sessions from educational visitors, to provide real learning experiences; our string orchestra will continue to develop, children will benefit from an array of extra-curricular opportunities and the team taking part in our Coast to Coast challenge will begin their cycling training in earnest; and by no means least, as we journey from the season of Christmas, towards Easter, we will continue to grow in faith, and enjoy a challenging and invigorating Lent, in which we will renew our Mission as a Christian family. All of this promises to make St Mary's a vibrant and dynamic place to be, and I know that each one of our pupils will benefit massively from these opportunities afforded them in their living and learning.

Please keep an eye on the school News Bulletin, website ([www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk](http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk)) and school Twitter feed (@whickhamstmarys) to keep up to date with all the goings on at St Mary's, and please do get in touch if there is any way you feel you could support the school with your time or talents in the coming months.

Thank you, as ever, for supporting us in ensuring the highest possible standards in your child's attitude to school, behaviour, appearance, punctuality and attendance; I trust that over the coming year there will be much to celebrate regarding your child's ongoing progress and growth, and I look forward to sharing these successes with you.

Yours in faith,

Mr J Wheatley  
Headteacher

## REMINDERS

### SCHOOL UNIFORM:

A reminder, at the start of a new year, about the high standards we have for school uniform. Please ensure that all children are coming to school with: appropriate footwear (black shoes – no trainers); no jewellery apart from a watch (absolutely no earrings or necklaces); appropriate hairstyles (any hair at shoulder length must be tied back; no braids – even if tied up; no die or ‘extreme’ styles such as lines shaved in to heads or ultra-short hair). I would also ask that all make-up and nail varnish is removed in full before the start of a school day – even after parties or events outside of school.

Our full school dress-code is available to view on the ‘School Documents’ area of the school website ([www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk](http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk)).

### PE:

Please ensure that all pupils are prepared for every Physical Education lesson of the week with a full school PE kit (coloured t-shirt, royal blue shorts and trainers). Pupils are expected to take responsibility for their kit in school, and will not be allowed to waste lesson time searching for missing kit. If, for whatever reason, a full PE kit will not be in school (ie. No trainers, different shorts and t-shirt), we would ask that a letter is sent in to school to be handed to the class teacher.

### SWIMMING:

A reminder that pupils are not permitted to be ‘excused’ from swimming for illness; if a child is well enough to be in school, there is an expectation that they will attend their swimming lesson. If a child has sustained a serious injury, and doctors advise that a child should refrain from swimming, we would ask that a note is written to the class teacher, and the pupil will remain in lessons at school.

### LUNCH MONEY:

Please ensure that all lunch money is paid in advance for the week ahead. If you are experiencing any difficulties with the online payment system, please contact Mrs Noble asap in the school office. In instances of arrears, letters will be sent from the school office as a reminder to pay off an outstanding balance, and endeavour to pay monies in advance of the school week. If there is ever an issue in clearing an outstanding balance, please must contact Mr Wheatley, who will be happy to speak to you in confidence.

### AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS - APOLOGY:

Just a quick note to apologise for a mix-up on the News Bulletin regarding the first choir session of the New Year. Due to a change of commitments, Mrs Sanderson was in fact able to deliver a session on Wednesday – a week ahead of the date given in the final News Bulletin before Christmas – however this was not communicated with all parents. This was an error on our behalf, and apologise if this disrupted anyone’s weekly plans; in future, if there is ever confusion regarding conflicting information, please just ring the school office for clarification.

### GRASSROOTS MULTI-SKILLS CLUB:

There are still places available for the multi-sports club, run by Grassroots, taking place this Half-Term. The club will take place for the next five Wednesdays from 3:15pm – 4:15pm, and sessions are £2.50 per week. The club is open to Years 1-4; if your child would like to take part in the club, please speak to Mrs Noble in the School Office.

*Pupils already in Choir will not be considered for a place at the Grassroots club.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### FOREST SCHOOL:

Our school Forest School sessions will be starting up again from next week. A reminder that all pupils in Reception Class will have a Forest School session each week, whereas pupils in Y1 – 6 will have a session once a half term. Pupils in Y1 – 6 should come in to school in appropriate clothing for the session – which will take place whatever the weather – ensuring that they have a change of footwear and clothing and appropriate bag space to get everything home in! Waterproof trousers and jackets, and wellies are an essential, and can be purchased relatively inexpensively; we can however, provide some outdoor kit, if we are made aware prior to the session, for families who are struggling to purchase these items. There will be a reminder in the weekly News Bulletin the week before a session is due to take place, as dates of sessions may change.

Years 1 and 2 will be having their first Forest School session of the Term on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January.

### THE WEEK AHEAD W/C : 16.1.17

TUESDAY – Year 4 Rugby League session 2 – full PE kit (including trainers) required.

WEDNESDAY – Early Years multi-skills (pupils involved will receive a separate letter with arrangements for this event).

Grassroots multi-skills session 2 in Years 2 and 6 – full PE kit (including trainers) required.

THURSDAY – Whole school Mass (9:30am St Mary's RC Church) – all welcome.

Y1 Forest School session (am).

Y2 Forest School session (pm).