



## SCHOOL UPDATES

### A JAM-PACKED HALF TERM:

Thank you once again for all your efforts in what has been a rather jam-packed first half term of the new calendar year. Our pupils have settled wonderfully well in 2017, and school has – as always – been alive with learning and laughter, and we've had abundance of success to celebrate in all aspects of school life. Thanks to your help and support, our attendance across school for the year so far is above our target of 97% (at 97.4%) – in spite of winter coughs and colds – and we need to make sure that pupils continue to get in to school on time and ready to learn, so that we are able to carry on making the progress to which we have been accustomed this year.

In the coming Spring 2 half term, there's plenty more to look forward to; we have a wonderful array of activities linking to our Lenten preparations, which will help us all to ready ourselves for the joyous celebration of Easter in a real and meaningful way, as well as many exciting learning opportunities, both in and outside the classroom, for all our pupils. We look forward to sharing these experiences with you, as we always do, via the weekly bulletin, school website ([www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk](http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk)) and Twitter account (@whickhamstmarys) – which now has over 100 followers!

As ever, we're here for you and your family, so if there's ever anything you wish to discuss, please don't hesitate to get in contact.

Wishing you all a restful – and hopefully bright – half term break,

Mr J Wheatley  
Headteacher

### LENT 2017 – “We are God's Microphone”:

This year, we will be in school for the full six weeks of Lent, which provides us with the perfect opportunity to ready ourselves for Easter through action, reflection and prayer. Please find attached our Lenten plan, and make sure to look out for weekly updates via our News Bulletin.

This year we will be raising funds for: The Home for Hope project for 'streetboys', Kasarani (Kenya) and St Cuthbert's Care, as well as supporting the Worswick Welcome project at St Andrew's RC Church, Newcastle.

### “WE'RE OFF TO LINCOLN CITY”:

A huge well done to the school football team, who triumphed at a local competition run by the National Football League, and as such, will be representing Gateshead FC at the regional finals, to be held at the home of Lincoln City at the end of March! We'll keep you posted of their continued success in the competition.

#### FILM NIGHT:

Thank you to all those children who attended our Film Nights last week. We raised a total of £422 which will go to support the school fund. We will be hosting another KS1 and 2 Film Night in the Summer Term.

#### SCHOOL DIRECT:

As you will be aware, we currently work in conjunction with the Gateshead Teaching Schools Alliance to support trainee students in to teaching through the School Direct teacher training programme. The Alliance is offering a 'Back to School' day for anyone who is at all interested in pursuing a career in teaching on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. A flyer has been attached with the News Bulletin for anyone interested, with the relevant contact information you will need. Equally, if you would like to discuss the process – or your own personal circumstances – please feel free to get in contact with Mr Wheatley for a chat.

#### C2C:

Following Ben's session in school this week, there are a few changes to C2C dates which were sent home last week. An updated list has been sent home to parents, and we would ask all parents to re-submit the form to school as soon as practicable. Thanks!

#### MOTHER'S DAY SALE:

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March. After the success of our Mother's Day Sale last year we are asking for your support in providing suitable donations that you as mothers would like to receive from your child. Please bring your donations to the school office. Prices will range from 50p to £3 for a gift.

#### TERM DATES 2016-17:

As our school is used as a polling station, we are obliged to retain a date in May for local elections each year; we have been informed that there will be no elections in May this year, as such we will be taking this occasional day on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

*This date is the first day of the Y5 C2C challenge (this will not affect the planning of the ride).*

#### REMINDERS

##### SPRING 2 DATES:

A reminder that pupils will be back to school on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February, and will finish for Easter on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April.

##### HAIR:

A polite reminder about school policy regarding hair – in particular for our young gentlemen. There is an expectation, as part of our 'no extreme' short styles policy, that boys should not have hair clipped to anything shorter than a grade 3. I would also request that there are no shaved lines in hair – even at a 'parting'. Thank you as ever for supporting the high standards for presentation we have at school.

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

##### WORLD BOOK DAY:

We will be celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. We would like to invite all pupils to come in to school dressed as a character from a favourite book (please find loads of great, simple ideas at [www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com)). We would ask the pupils to donate £1, which will go towards our Lenten Fundraising appeal.

#### COMIC RELIEF:

We will be celebrating Comic Relief on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March with an own-clothes day and school-wide, Twitter enabled joke competition – more information to follow after half-term! A suggested donation of £1 per family will go to the Comic Relief appeal.

#### FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S:

The next meeting for the Friends of St Mary's will be Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March, 9:30am at School All welcome. If you are unable to make the meetings, you will be able to keep up-to-date with the goings on of the group by reading the 'Friends Blog' which can be found on the school website.

#### ADULT CHOIR:

All adults welcome, the next rehearsals are:

1<sup>st</sup> March

15<sup>th</sup> March

29<sup>th</sup> March

#### THE WEEK AHEAD W/C : 27.2.17

MONDAY – C2C after-school ride (3:13pm – 5pm).

WEDNESDAY – Ash Wednesday; whole-school Mass (9:30am, St Mary's RC Church).  
Y6 Booster (after school).  
Y6 Netball Final (pupils involved have already received a letter).  
Adult Choir (6-7pm, all welcome).

THURSDAY – World Book Day; suggested donation of £1 for our Lenten appeal.

SUNDAY – 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion preparation Liturgy: 'Rite of Election for Holy Communion' (9:30am, St Mary's RC Church).

**Parent's Evening Spring Term 2016-17**

*Please tick more than one box, if possible, so that we have the best chance of meeting the needs of all our parents/carers.*

I can attend on the following date(s):

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017

I can attend at the following time(s):

3:30pm – 5pm

5 – 6:30pm

I am unable to make either time and will contact school to discuss this

My child will require more than one appointment

Child Name:

Class:

Parent Name:

Signed:

Date:

*Please return to school by Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017*