



SCHOOL UPDATES

LENT 2019:

We will kickstart our Lenten preparations by attending Mass at St Mary's RC Church in observance of Ash Wednesday at 9:30am on Wednesday 6th March. The plan for the remaining weeks is being finalised with the input of our Y6 pupils as part of their work towards achieving the Faith in Action Award; further details of fundraising events etc will be sent out next week, with some information about the charities we will be supporting. Below however, you will find a little taster of what to expect over the coming weeks:



Week	Theme	Activities
1 (wb.4/3/19)	Pledge #forLife	<p>Ash Wednesday 6th March – Whole School Mass (9:30am at St Mary's Church).</p> <p>Reception and Y5 Class Liturgy – 7th March (2:30pm at St Mary's school).</p> <p>'Lenten Pledge' video to be produced (pupils and staff making promises to <i>pray more, give more and be more</i>) – to be shared with via school Twitter feed.</p>
2 (wb.11/3/19)	Stand up #forLife	<p>Year 3 Class Liturgy – 14th March (2:30pm at St Mary's school).</p> <p>Sponsored fundraising events taking place in school (money raised to support projects in Kenya and India in collaboration with the parish Gift for Life group).</p> <p>Cafod 'Give it Up' Day and Comic Relief – 15th March.</p>
3 (wb.18/3/19)	Give #forLife	<p>Year 2 Class Liturgy – 21st March (2:30pm at St Mary's school).</p> <p>Drive to support local community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Cuthbert's Care. • Worswick Welcome/ Gateshead Food Bank.
4 (wb.25/3/19)	Pray #forLife	Creative prayer opportunities planned and delivered by pupils in school.
5 (wb.1/4/19)	Celebrate #forLife	Whole School Mass to celebrate our Lenten journey – 4th March (9:30am at St Mary's Church).

PARENTS' EVENING:

On Monday and Tuesday next week, we will have our Spring Term Parents Evenings. On the night, your child's current attainment and targets in core curriculum areas will be shared as well as a current picture of how they are doing in school. The meetings are designed to be quick updates (approximately 5 minutes); if you feel you have anything more substantial to discuss outside of this meeting, please go through the normal channels by contacting the school office to make an appointment to meet with your child's class teacher or a member of the senior leadership at a mutually convenient time.

Pupils' books – including Years 1 and 3 – will be available to view in the school hall between 3:30pm and 6:30pm each day.

Thank you all once again for following the new procedures for booking appointments via the eschools system. From our perspective, the system has worked brilliantly, but we will also seek your opinions via our termly parental survey.

We look forward to seeing you all over the coming days.

WORLD BOOK DAY:

On Friday 8th March, we will be celebrating World Book Day in school. Children are invited to come in to school dressed as a favourite character from a book, and we will be awarding some prizes for the most innovative and thoughtful costumes as part of a special assembly. We will also be holding a 'book swap' in each class. If your child would like to donate a book – in good condition – to the book swap, they will also be able to bring home and keep a chosen book donated by a classmate. The children will be taking part in a whole range of activities celebrating the joy of reading and books throughout the day, and we will share some snaps to show you what we've been up on our school Twitter feed.

Please note, pupils do not need to donate any money as part of our World Book Day celebrations.

E-SAFETY UPDATE:

You may be aware that there has been quite a lot of media coverage and social media furore caused over the past week or so regarding supposed incidents in which children have accessed frightening and potentially disturbing content online. Advice from charities such as the NSPCC is that the rumours circulated by various news outlets are in fact a hoax, and that it has actually been the misrepresentation of information with children which has caused the most distress.

For your information, though we as a staff have been alert to potential upset or concern among pupils in school, we have had no reported incidents of pupils being distressed by this phenomenon, and we have not discussed or used the 'name' of the character reported to be causing the distress with children (as an internet search of this term does bring up some unsuitable images).

You may wish to read up about the phenomenon so as to be as fully informed as possible – without of course sharing this information openly with your child. The following link is to a *Guardian* news article which may be of interest (<https://tinyurl.com/y3sskk2s>) – **please note the link should not be viewed with children as it contains an image of a character which some may find upsetting.** Advice from charities promoting children's welfare and safe internet use is that this could serve as a perfect opportunity to – rather than addressing the upsetting content or media hyperbole directly – spend time talking to your child about their internet habits, reviewing tips for safer internet use and making sure that you know what your child is viewing and doing online. You can find a wealth of information and links on our school website (<http://www.whickhamstmarys.org.uk/e-safety.html>) and on websites such as <https://www.internetmatters.org/>.

SPORTS UPDATE – BISHOP’S CUP:

Our school football team gave a valiant display of grit, skill and teamwork in the second round of the Bishop’s Cup this week. Despite winning two of their three fixtures – and beating the first place finishers on the night – the team was eliminated from this year’s competition in the most gutting fashion! That being said, the team played some cracking football demonstrating resilience, determination and fair play. We look forward to seeing how the team continue to progress in the Blaydon and District League.

BIKING BEN:

Our mate Ben has been in school delivering some fantastic sessions across KS2 this week. It’s been great to see pupils bringing their bikes and scooters in to school, to observe some of the sessions that the children have been involved in and of course to tick off the first ride for our 2019 C2C team! You can see some photos of the week’s activities on our school Twitter feed (@whickhamstmarys).

ATTENDANCE:

YEAR GROUP	AUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE (%)	OVERALL (%)
RECEPTION	3.7	0	96.3
YEAR 1	0.3	0	99.7
YEAR 2	1.7	0	98.3
YEAR 3	0	0	100
YEAR 4	0	0	100
YEAR 5	0.7	0	99.3
YEAR 6	4.2	0	95.8
AVERAGE	1.2	0	98.8

A huge well done for a great week of attendance at school – especially for Lower Key Stage 2 with Years 3 and 4 maintaining 100% for the second week running!

MOTHER’S DAY SALE FRIDAY 29TH MARCH:

The Friends of St Mary’s are organising a Mother’s Day sale where your child can come along to our *pop-up shop* and buy a gift especially for you. In order to ensure that we have enough stock for our shop, we are asking for your support in providing suitable gifts that you as Mothers would like to receive. In previous years, beauty gift sets/ products, photo frames, potted plants, candles and chocolates have proved very popular (please note, we cannot accept any alcoholic drinks). On the day, gifts will be priced from 50p to £3. Can we please ask that all donations /gifts are handed in to school by Wednesday 27th March. Thank you for your continued support and generosity.

200 CLUB:

Please find below the winners for our Friends of St Mary’s 200 Club draws for January. If you’d like to be involved in the draw, please get in contact with school; numbers are available for £1, and monthly prizes range from £50 - £10. Many thanks!

January 2019

PRIZE	NUMBER	WINNER
£50	6	R. McNeill
£25	181	M. Green
£15	124	M. O’Hara
£10	203	K. Airey

By way of an apology for our ongoing banking issues, Barclays Bank donated a hamper – Hamper Winner is Louise Young No. 119

REMINDERS

SKIPPING ROPES:

Following the success of their skipping workshops, Y2 and 4 have the opportunity to purchase a skipping rope in order to continue developing their skills at home. These can be purchased for £5 each by sending in money in a clearly labelled envelope.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CLASS LITURGIES:

Reception Class and Y5 will be leading us in worship at 2:30pm on Thursday 7th March – all welcome!

Y6 BOOSTER:

Please note, there will be no Maths booster this week due to Parents Evening. The next Maths Booster will be held on Tuesday 12th March.

FRIENDS DATES:

The next meeting of the Friends of St Mary's will be at 9am on 7th March. The Friends will also be holding a Coffee Morning to raise funds for the school's Lenten appeal at 9am on 15th March. All welcome!

DIARY DATES (4.3.19 – 8.3.19)

MONDAY –

Parents Evening 1 of 2 (3:30-6:30pm)

TUESDAY –

Parents Evening 2 of 2 (3:30-6:30pm)

No Y6 Maths Booster

WEDNESDAY –

Whole School Mass (9:30am at St Mary's RC Church – all welcome)

Indoor Athletics (pupils involved will receive a letter)

THURSDAY –

Friends meeting (9am at school – all welcome)

Reception and Y5 Class Liturgy (2:30pm at school – all welcome)

Y5/6 Hockey (pupils involved will receive a letter)

FRIDAY –

World Book Day celebrations in school