



The Fortnightly!

- Friday 13th October 2023 -

*'Learning together in faith and love,
we shine as children of God'*



Statement to live by: I can laugh and have fun!

Reading Café... Thank you to the Year 6 and 5 families who were able to join us for the class Reading Cafés. It was wonderful seeing so many in school and sharing books with their children. The positive feedback we received was incredible and we look forward to welcoming all families in for this event over the coming academic year!



Thank you for all of your support and encouragement with reading at home!

Reception September 2024... Do you, your family or friends have a child ready to start Reception in September 2024? Why not join our wonderful, happy school and become a part of the St. Michael's family! You can apply **from 2nd October 2023 until 15th January 2024** through the Sunderland Council Portal ([click here](#)). If you require any more details, advice or support, please contact the school office who will be happy to help. **Thank you!**

School Council Elections 2023... Today we held our School Council elections 2023! We had lots of amazing candidates who wrote some wonderful election speeches and manifestos trying to convince their fellow classmates to choose them to represent their class on the School Council. As part of a fair, democratic process, the children then went into our library where a private and confidential ballot box was waiting.

We are thrilled to announce the following winning candidates...

Year 1 - Havannah **Year 2** - Ethan B

Year 3 - Isabelle M **Year 4** - Lara

Year 5 - Caris **Year 6** - Harry

*Thank you to all who
campaign!*



Watch this space for more news on our School Council and their decision making!

Wow, wow, WOW!... Thank you for all of your amazing donations to our Harvest festival collection. The donated items have now been collected by our local food bank and they wanted to pass on their deepest thanks for your generosity and support for those in most need. We know your kindness will go a VERY long way!



**Our faith
in Action!**

Catholic Life and Mission... Last week we had a special visit from Steve who volunteers for CAFOD. He came into school to talk to us about 'Brightening Up for Harvest!' We were all very inspired by the work of CAFOD and shared with him the food collection work we have done for our local community.



National Poetry Day 2023... Last week the children across St. Michael's celebrated National Poetry Day 2023! Our children explored different types of poetry, learnt about various poets and got to be poets for the day!



Home - School links...

Email:	Address:	Telephone:	Website:	Twitter:
smi@smi.bwcet.com	Durham Rd, Houghton le Spring, DH5 8NF	0191584 0542	stmichaelscatholicsschool.co.uk	@St_MichaelsRC

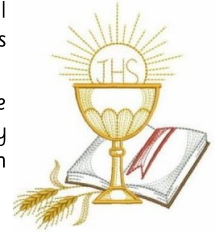
Headteacher: Mr. N.W. Reeson

MacMillan... Thank you for all your generous donations during our recent MacMillan Coffee Morning. We raised a tremendous £167.49. Your generosity will go a long way in supporting this very worthwhile cause!

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT
RIGHT THERE WITH YOU**

First Holy Communion... It was wonderful seeing so many Year 4 families and some Year 5 and 6 families on Tuesday to express their interest in this years Holy Communion sacramental preparation. What a magnificent, special and precious time for our children and their families!

Please remember, there is an expectation that those wishing to be part of this preparation of Holy Communion should commit to attending Mass each week and get their passports stamped. **Thank you.**



Safety first... Can we please remind families that you **should not** be using the staff car park gates and walking across the car park to enter / exit school. This is highly dangerous and is not permitted due to health and safety.

Instead, please use the pedestrian gate which is located just meters away from the car park gates. This is much safer for you and your child.

Thank you for helping keep everyone protected!



Dangerous parking... Yet another reminder that families should be parking safely and considerately when travelling to school by car. We are deeply concerned that one of our children may get harmed should parking not improve.

A **HUGE** thank you to the vast majority of families who act upon this plea and understand the importance of this. We have contacted Sunderland Local Authority to see what can be done about this.



Online Safety...

SUPPORTING CHILDREN TO DEAL WITH UPSETTING CONTENT

A Guide for Parents and Carers

Raising children in the digital age seems to be getting tougher, with the world currently experiencing so many uncertainties. From climate change to the war in Ukraine and the conflict in Israel, right now children across the globe can scarcely go online without being exposed to unsettling stories, images and ideas. Reassuring a concerned child can be difficult, especially when bad news feels omnipresent. We've put together some advice to help you in discussing upsetting events with young ones.

- 1 FIND OUT WHAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS**
There are many ways that children are exposed to upsetting content in the media, both online and offline. Before swamping your child with information, find out what they know already. Show them you're interested in what they have to say, practice active listening and try to gauge how much your child has been impacted by what they've seen.
- 2 RIGHT TIME, RIGHT PLACE**
Starting a conversation about upsetting content probably isn't the best idea when your child is studying for an exam or about to go to bed. Choose a time when they're relaxed and open to talking, to make sure you have their full attention. Remember, these conversations can become emotional, so choose somewhere your child feels safe and comfortable.
- 3 KEEP IT AGE APPROPRIATE**
With younger children, try and keep the conversation more general and avoid leading questions and complex detail. You can go slightly deeper into the specifics with young teenagers but keep monitoring their emotional response. With older teens, you can be more open about the realities and consequences of what's happening – but again, do stay aware of their emotional state.
- 4 EMPHASISE HOPE**
Upsetting content can make anyone feel angry, scared, sad or overwhelmed. Try to find stories of hope, generosity and strength related to the content you're discussing. Children often feel reassured when they know they can do something to help, so encourage your child's sense of control through activities which make them feel they're positively impacting the events they're concerned about.
- 5 MONITOR REACTIONS**
All children react differently, of course, and young people might not directly say that they're scared, angry, anxious, confused or uncomfortable. Emotional reactions are natural when discussing upsetting topics, so take note of your child's body language and reactions. Allow them to express their feelings in a non-judgmental space and try to stay mindful of how they might be feeling.
- 6 CONSIDER YOUR OWN EMOTIONS**
It's not only young people who find upsetting news difficult to process; adults also have to deal with strong emotions in moments of stress. Children develop coping strategies by mirroring those around them, so staying on top of how you appear to be regulating your emotion on the outside is important for supporting your child through worrying times.
- 7 SET LIMITS**
Managing screen-time and content can be difficult even in normal circumstances, but especially in unusual or stressful periods (at the start of the pandemic, for example). It's virtually impossible to keep children away from upsetting content completely, but it's important to try to limit exposure by using parental controls, talking about the dangers of harmful content and enforcing screen-time limits.
- 8 TAKE THINGS SLOWLY**
Try not to overwhelm your child with information all at once; instead, take the discussion one step at a time. You could make the first conversation a simple introduction to a potentially upsetting subject and then wait until your child is ready to talk again. Opening the door to the conversation and demonstrating that your child can talk to you about this type of issue is a vital first step.
- 9 ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS**
Online, troubling images, posts, videos and stories are shared across multiple platforms, many of which your child might access. Even if the content is actually inappropriate, encourage your child to discuss what they saw instead of being angry at them for seeing it. Children are still learning that not everything online is accurate – you want to be their ultimate source of information, not their device.
- 10 FIND A BALANCE**
There's often a tremendous compulsion to stay right up to date with events. Our phones frequently send us push notifications urging us to read the latest article or view the most recent video on social media. It's essential to remind your child that it's healthy to take regular breaks, and to focus on positive events instead of 'doomscrolling' and risking becoming overwhelmed by bad news.
- 11 BUILD RESILIENCE**
News has never been more accessible. While our instinct may be to shield children from upsetting stories, it's important that they're equipped with the tools to manage this content when they are exposed to it. Talk about upsetting content more generally with your child and emphasise that they can always tell you or a trusted adult if something they see makes them feel uneasy.
- 12 IDENTIFY HELP**
It's hugely important that children know where to find support if they encounter upsetting content online. Encourage them to open up to an adult that they trust, and make sure they're aware of who their trusted adults are. It is essential that children understand that they're not alone, and that help is available if and when they need it.

Meet Our Expert

Coyley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa, which is a reporting system that is currently being used by schools and companies to fight bullying around the world. FaceUp helps give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up and get the help they not only want but need.

NOS
National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

Holiday time...

A reminder that we will break up for our October half term on Friday 20th October and school will reopen on Monday 30th October.

Wishing all our families a happy holiday when they arrive!



St. Michaels' Football Team...

Yesterday, Team B played the following games...

Barmwell 4 - 0 St. Michaels

Shiny Row 5 - 0 St. Michaels

Well done to our team who played very well and demonstrated great resilience and respect!



Attendance at school... We want every child here at St. Michael's to have the best education possible, but to do this, they need to be attending and arriving on time, when they are well enough to do so of course. We actively encourage all pupils to aim for 97% attendance at the VERY LEAST, as every day and every lesson counts. Colds, sore throats and other bugs are commonplace as we move towards Autumn and we have always maintained that if your child feels well enough, they can still attend school.

We are hugely appreciative of those families who make every effort to attend school on time and we thank you for your continued support in enabling your child to **shine as children of God!**

Class...	Attendance figure...	Class...	Attendance figure...
Reception	96%	Year 3	98%
Year 1	95%	Year 4	96%
Year 2	99%	Year 5	99%
	Year 6	98%	

- Important Dates -

	Date	Class	Event
Autumn 1	Monday 25 th September 2023.	Reception, Year 1 & Year 2.	Curriculum Evening 4:30-5:30pm. In your child's classroom.
	Tuesday 26 th September 2023.	Year 3 & Year 4.	Curriculum Evening 4:30-5:30pm. In your child's classroom.
	Wednesday 27 th September 2023.	Year 5 & Year 6.	Curriculum Evening 4:30-5:30pm. In your child's classroom.
	Friday 29 th September 2023.	Whole School.	Coffee Morning in the School Hall from 9-9:45am. Donations to MacMillan.
	Friday 29 th September 2023.	Years 1 – 6.	School Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church to celebrate St Michael's feast day. All are welcome to join us.
	Tuesday 3 rd October 2023.	Year 6.	Reading Café from 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
	Thursday 5 th October 2023.	Whole School.	National Poetry Day.
	Friday 6 th October 2023.	Year 5.	Class Mass 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
	Tuesday 10 th October 2023.	Year 5.	Reading Café from 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
	Wednesday 11 th October 2023.	Whole School.	Flu Vaccinations.
	Monday 16 th October – Friday 20 th October 2023.	Year 6.	Derwent Hill Residential.
	Friday 20 th October 2023.	Year 4.	Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
HALF TERM Monday 23rd October – Friday 27th October 2023.			

Assemblies and Collective Worship – Parents Invited				
Class	Curriculum Celebration Assemblies		Celebration of the Word	
Reception	Tues 9 th July 24	9.00am	Thurs 14 th March 24	3.00pm
Year 1	Tues 2 nd July 24	9.00am	Thurs 1 st Feb 24	3.00pm
Year 2	Tues 21 st May 24	9.00am	Thurs 18 th Jan 24	3.00pm
Year 3	Tues 23 rd April 24	9.00am	Thurs 16 th Nov 23	3.00pm
Year 4	Tues 30 th Jan 24	9.00am	Thurs 27 th June 24	3.00pm
Year 5	Tues 5 th Dec 23	9.00am	Thurs 20 th June 24	3.00pm
Year 6	Tues 26 th Mar 24	9.00am	Thurs 25 th Jan 24	3.00pm
Year 6 Leavers Assembly	Thursday 17 th July 2024		2.00pm	
Year 6 Leavers Mass	TBC		TBC	

Important Information: From time to time, due to unforeseen circumstances, the dates/events mentioned in the Fortnightly may have to be changed /cancelled. If a change/cancellation does occur, you will be notified as early as possible.

Thank you in advance for your understanding.

Proud to be apart of..



Bishop Wilkinson
Catholic Education Trust
Through Christ, in Partnership