



The Fortnightly!

- Friday 10th November 2023 -

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



Statement to live by: I know what to do if I see anyone being hurt.

Welcome back... We sincerely hope that our families had a happy and peaceful half term break with your nearest and dearest! It is wonderful having our children back in school and they have settled in beautifully and are ready to learn!

As you will see on our diary dates page, this is going to be a **very** busy half term leading up to one of the most special times, the birth of Jesus! Please keep up to date with events inside and outside of school by reading our newsletters, following us on 'X', visiting our school website and checking WeDuc regularly.

Thank you!

Lest we forget!

Today, Friday 10th November, the children and staff at St. Michael's Catholic Primary School paid tribute to the courageous servicemen and women who not only gave their lives in the two World Wars but also in subsequent conflicts. Each class across school commemorated this event by carrying out different activities and lessons. We also held a two-minute silence to pay our respects and the children used Collective Worship time outside to offer their thoughts and prayers.



We will not forget!

Parish links... As part of their learning in Religious Education, Year 6 had a very special visitor this week. Fr. Marc came into school to talk to the children about priestly vocations. He talked about his commitment of service to the priesthood and his day to day life within the parish. The children got the opportunity to ask questions about his vocation and the children were very interested in the many different things he does.

Thank you Fr. Marc!



Attendance at school... As you are all aware, good attendance at school is vitally important for the wellbeing and academic success of your child. Please continue to make sure that your child is in school and arrives on time each day.

Thank you!

Class...	Attendance figure...	Class...	Attendance figure...
Reception	95%	Year 3	98%
Year 1	97%	Year 4	99%
Year 2	97%	Year 5	96%
Year 6	96%		

Learning about other faiths... In RE we have been learning about Judaism. We were fortunate enough to welcome Deanna into school to talk to us about her religion. She kindly brought some Seder plates into school and told us about the Torah.

Thank you Deanna !



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!**

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

Year 4 Reading Café... Thank you to the families who were able to join us for the Year 4 Reading Café on Tuesday. It was wonderful seeing so many in school and sharing books with their children.

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



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!



Parking... This week we had a really productive meeting with Sunderland City Council about parking outside of school. Our aim, as always, is to keep our families as safe as possible! In the coming weeks we will be issuing families with a helpful parking information leaflet bespoke to our school and we discussed more regular visits to school from parking enforcement officers. Our School Council are also going to be creating a Parking Code of Conduct. Once again, we understand this is the minority and that the vast majority adhere to this plea.



Thank you!

Celebration of the Word... Year 3 will be celebrating their Celebration of the Word on Thursday 16th November at 3.00pm.

All Year 3 parents/carers are warmly invited.



Upcoming Parental Consultations... We will be holding face-to-face Parent Consultations during the week beginning 27th November. You will soon receive a WeDuc message which will contain all of the information about how to sign-up for these consultations. The meetings will be held in classrooms allowing you to see your child's wonderful learning environment and their English, Maths, Science and RE books will be available to view. If you have any questions about the sign-up process, please speak to the Main Office.

We're looking forward to seeing you there!

Children in Need...

On Friday 17th November children are invited to come into school dressed in spots or in Children in Need merchandise. All donations are greatly received for this fantastic charity!

Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity!



Anti-Bullying Odd Socks Day... Odd Socks Day is being held on Monday 13th November this year. All you need to do is wear odd socks! It's a great way to celebrate what makes us all unique during national Anti-Bullying Week! During their PSHE lessons, children will learn and talk about bullying, its different forms and how to deal with it should it ever take place.



Book Fair... This week we have had the Book Fair visit our school. As you know, reading and fostering a love of reading is vitally important. Thank you to all the families who supported this event!



By supporting our Book Fair, you raised £309.76 to spend on books for school! WOW!

Educational visit to Gibside...

As part of their learning about weather and seasonal changes, Reception had an amazing time visiting Gibside. They looked for and identified changes in the seasons and collected different items to bring back to school. We were super proud of how well they behaved out and about!

Well done Reception!



Musical talent...

Congratulations to this young lady who has successfully completed her Grade 1 Violin practical. We are so proud of you - well done!



#Shining as children of God!

Hot chocolate with the Headteacher... Last week we held our very first Hot Chocolate with the Headteacher. This will take place every Friday and children will be chosen from each class to join Mr. Reeson for hot chocolate and biscuits / cake. Children will be chosen by staff when they demonstrate they have 'shone as children of God' (linked to our school vision). Needless to say, lots of children do this day in day out and therefore it's often difficult to choose but we are hopeful everyone will have their chance!

#Shining as children of God!



What Parents & Carers Need to Know about



In October 2022, the enormously popular social media network Twitter was purchased by tech tycoon Elon Musk. That sparked a host of changes to the platform – not all which have been received positively by its fans. The alterations have continued with each passing month, many of them raising online safety concerns among the 530 million users of Twitter (now rebranded as simply X). With further adjustments reportedly in the pipeline, X has attracted more than its usual share of controversy and caution in recent times.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

A BLOCK ON BLOCKING

X has announced plans to remove its blocking feature. Previously, this stopped other users from viewing your profile or sending you direct messages, while also hiding their posts from your feed. Only this latter function will now remain. The decision has been criticised by some members, who feel that blocking (in its current form) protects them from X users who promote denial and hatred.

LIMITED REPORTING FEATURES

X offers a premium membership, with some functionality (such as controlling who can view and reply to your posts) increasingly being made exclusive to those who pay the subscription fee. Several commentators have speculated that X could one day become an exclusively paid-for service, with access to accounts being revoked for anyone unwilling or unable to take out a subscription.

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Many of X's less age-appropriate posts can feature anything from extreme political views to pornography. While accounts marked as 18+ are restricted from non-members, it's still fairly easy to stumble across this material accidentally. X's new 'For You' page also shows content from accounts that a user doesn't already follow – meaning that almost anything could end up on a child's feed.

VERIFICATION FOR SALE

Historically, Twitter's moderators granted account verification: certifying someone as authentic by placing a blue tick next to their username. One of X's earliest changes was to place verification behind a paywall; this caused the number of celebrity impersonators to rise and left no way to distinguish, say, a legitimate influencer from a copycat fake account seeking to exploit other users.

BLUE TICK SALE

Advice for Parents & Carers

PROTECT PRIVACY

Unsavory characters may try to gain access to a young person's X account – either to view their posts and gather information on them, or to completely take control of it. To minimise risk, ensure the account has a strong password and enable the 'Protect Your Posts' feature (via the account settings), so that strangers can't view your child's posts without first being approved as a follower.

DON'T RISE TO THE BAIT

To gain more views and followers, some X users post deliberately inflammatory comments on sensitive topics such as race, sexual orientation and gender issues. Many young people could find this upsetting. Emphasise that, if your child encounters someone spreading hate on X, it's best not to give them what they want: an argument. Ignore them, mute their account and move on.

STAY ALERT FOR IMPOSTERS

Make sure your child understands that X's blue ticks no longer guarantee the identity of anyone on the platform. While it might be exciting if a celebrity liked your child's post, it could just as easily be an imposter with malicious intentions. If your child's not 100% sure that an X user actually is who they claim to be, advise them to err on the side of caution and avoid interacting with that account.

ONLY FOLLOW TRUSTED ACCOUNTS

Using the 'Following' tab on X helps to ensure that the only content your child sees has come from accounts they've chosen to follow; this should reduce the chance of them inadvertently being exposed to harmful, violent or explicit content. Show your child how to report another user's account if, say, they're behaving inappropriately by spreading misinformation or offensive opinions.

BE READY TO TAKE ACTION

If your child suffers harassment on the platform or becomes the target of a hack, you could consider deactivating their account entirely. Recently, X's safety features have been criticised for allegedly failing to protect users' wellbeing – so if your child is being subjected to abusive messages or similar mistreatment on the platform, it might be prudent to remove them from X altogether.

Safeguarding leads at St Michael's...



Mr N Reeson
Headteacher



Miss E Foster
Assistant
Headteacher



Mrs K Bajrami
Assistant
Headteacher

Mr Kemp
Safeguarding Governor

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please speak to a member of staff



Healthy School... As a healthy school we love learning about keeping ourselves fit and well in different subjects across our curriculum. As a result, we can gently remind families that water bottles should contain water only.

Thank you for your understanding and support with this.



- Important Dates -

Date	Class	Event
Monday 30 th October 2023.	Whole School.	Back to School.
Wednesday 1 st November 2023.	Year 4.	Home Fire Safety Assembly by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service.
Thursday 2 nd November – Tuesday 7 th November 2023.	Whole School.	Scholastics Book Fair in the School Hall. Please call in and support our School.
Tuesday 7 th November 2023.	Year 4.	Reading Café from 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Friday 10 th November 2023.	Reception	Educational Visit to Gibside.
Monday 13 th – Friday 17 th November 2023.	Whole School.	Anti-Bullying week.
Tuesday 14 th November 2023.	Year 6.	Science Transition visit to St. Roberts
Thursday 16 th November 2023.	Year 3.	Liturgical Prayer lead by Year 3 at 3pm in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Friday 17 th November 2023.	Whole School.	Children In Need. Children are invited to come to school wearing Pudsey merchandise and/or spotty clothing.
Tuesday 21 st November 2023.	Year 5.	PE leadership workshop.
Friday 24 th November 2023.	Year 1.	Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Monday 27 th & Tuesday 28 th November 2023.	Whole School.	Parents Consultations. Appointment booking information to follow.
Friday 1 st December 2023.	Year 2 & 3.	Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Tuesday 5 th December 2023.	Year 5.	Curriculum Celebration Assembly 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Friday 8 th December 2023.	Reception & Year 6.	Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Wednesday 13 th December 2023.	Year 2.	Snow tubing PE visit—Silksworth Ski Slope
Friday 15 th December 2023.	Whole School.	Christmas Lunch / Jumper Day. Children are invited to come to school wearing their Christmas jumper instead of their school jumper.
Friday 15 th December 2023.	Whole School.	Christmas Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Monday 18 th December 2023.	Reception.	Christmas Crafts at 9am in the School Hall.
Monday 18 th December 2023.	Year 5 & 6.	Carol Service at 2pm in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Tuesday 19 th December 2023.	Reception.	Christmas Nativity at 9:30am & 2:30pm in the School Hall.
Tuesday 19 th December 2023.	Year 1 - 6.	Robin Hood Pantomime - Rainton Arena
Wednesday 20 th December 2023.	Year 1 & 2.	Nativity at 9:30am & 2:30pm in the School Hall.
Thursday 21 st December 2023.	Year 3 & 4.	Nativity at 9:30am & 2:30pm in the School Hall.
Friday 22 nd December 2023.	Reception, Year 1 & 2.	Christmas Party 1:30-3pm.
Friday 22 nd December 2023.	KS2.	Christmas Party 9:30-11am.
Friday 22nd December 2023.	Whole School.	School breaks up for Christmas Holidays at 3.15pm.

Autumn 2

Christmas Holidays

Monday 25th December – Monday 8th January 2024

Monday 8th January is an INSET day and therefore children will return to school on Tuesday 9th January 2024.

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