



The Fortnightly!

- Friday 8th December 2023 -

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



Statement to live by: I can work, play, rest and pray each day.

Year 5 Curriculum Celebration Assembly...

This week, Year 5 presented their Curriculum Celebration Assembly to friends and family members. They confidently and eloquently talked about their learning so far in Autumn. They shared all of the wonderful learning happening in their classroom and it was amazing to hear about what skills and knowledge they had retained!



Sporting Event for Year 4...

Yesterday, Year 4 visited Silkworth Sports Centre for a Dodgeball Tournament. Our children represented St. Michael's superbly and demonstrated great perseverance, determination and humility when things weren't going as planned! **Well done!**

Christmas Parties... During the last week of term children will have their Christmas parties (see dates section for details) Children are invited to come into school in appropriate party clothing for the full day. **Sensible and safe footwear is a must- no heels please.**

Children are also invited to bring a named personal party plate of food into school (using a disposable plate covered with foil) on the morning of their party. These will need to contain food which does not require refrigeration. Remember that your child will still have lunch on this day so party plates do not need lots of food.

Party time!



Parental Consultations Autumn 2023... It was amazing being able to welcome so many of our families into school last week for our Parent Consultations. It was lovely being able to share with you all of the successes so far this academic year and some of the areas for development. Thank you also for the amazing feedback (see below) you provided afterwards which has been shared with all staff. We carefully listen to your feedback to ensure the very best for all stakeholders...

'I was made to feel welcome at the Parent Consultations' - 100% agreed

'The Parent Consultations were well organised and my appointment ran smoothly' - 97% agreed (3% neutral)

'I was impressed with the standard and quantity of work in my child's books.' - 100% agreed

'I feel the Parent Consultation was informative and worthwhile.' - 100% agreed

'The information shared by my child's class teacher was useful and I got a real sense of where my child is in their learning journey.' - 100% agreed

'There was an opportunity to ask questions within the Parent Consultation' - 100% agreed



Thank you for your feedback!

Communication: Arbor... We want to say a **HUGE** thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate the changeover from WeDuc to the Arbor App. Like all new things, we anticipated that there were going to be some technical glitches and understand that some families will take time to find their way around this new system. With this in mind, our office staff continue to be at the end of the phone or opposite a desk for any families requiring support or assistance. Fortunately, the changeover seems to have gone smoothly for the vast majority of families.



Having said this, we have organised for John O'Keeffe, Digital Leader from Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust, to attend school on Tuesday 12th December from 8.15am to 9.15am to support any families still having difficulties with the App and its functionality. We hope this is convenient for the vast majority of families as it is the drop-off period. He will be available in the main office.

The Arbor App is a Trust wide system and because of this, it is hoped that it will be seamless for families moving through St. Michael's and into St. Robert's Catholic High School.

Once again, thank you for your patience!

Attendance at school... Please continue to make sure that your child is in school and arrives on time each day.

Class...	Attendance figure...	Class...	Attendance figure...
Reception	96%	Year 3	97%
Year 1	96%	Year 4	92%
Year 2	97%	Year 5	94%
	Year 6	92%	

Christmas Productions... During the last week of term, children across school will be celebrating their Christmas productions (see dates/times below). Apart from the Year 5 and 6 production which will take place in church, all other performances have two identical showings at different times. This is to ensure that we do not have overcrowding in our small school hall. We are therefore not issuing tickets but we do ask that no more than two family members per child attend each production.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!



Christmas Jumper and Lunch Day... On Friday 15th December, children are invited to come into school in their Christmas jumpers (all other uniform must still be worn). We will also have our Christmas lunch on this day! **Exciting!**



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

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!



Baby news!... **HUGE** congratulations to Miss. Fox and her partner who have welcomed their first baby into the world! She has named her little boy Reggie and all are doing well!

We are sure you will join all the staff here at St. Michael's in congratulating Miss. Fox and in sending her and the family best wishes and prayers. I know she is looking forward to bringing Reggie into school to meet the school community.

Many congratulations!



Online Safety...

part of our Social Media & Live Streaming Series

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What you need to know about... MUSIC STREAMING APPS & SITES

Download the App Search Artists

What are they? 'Music Streaming Apps & Sites'

Music streaming apps allow people to listen to music on their devices. It gives users access to millions of songs and artists from around the world. Popular music streaming apps and sites include Spotify, Soundcloud, Apple music, Amazon Prime and Deezer. Music streaming allows children to listen to songs from around the world in a much easier and cheaper way. This enables them to showcase their talent which would have been very hard to do many years back.

Know the Risks

Explicit content [Explicit Content Icon]

Explicit content is everywhere online, including in popular music. Children can easily access songs on Spotify, for example, that may have explicit or inappropriate language not suitable for children. It is also easy to erase searches so you can't see what a child has been listening to.

Adult themed podcasts

Many music streaming apps also offer the ability to listen to podcasts which can vary across any kind of topic, from business and health to comedy and relationships. Again, children could be exposed to content which is more adult themed or contains age-inappropriate language.

Chatting to strangers

Some music apps, like Playlist, want to make music a more social experience by finding others who share the same musical tastes and will allow users to join group chats where they listen to a playlist together in real time. This could open up your child to talking to strangers online.

Safety Tips

Use child friendly apps

Many music streaming services are made just for children. For instance, the Spotify kids app provides parents with control over what their children listen to and all the content is family friendly and fun for children to explore.

18+ Turn off explicit content

Most of the major music streaming apps will provide the option to turn off explicit material to make sure the music is completely clean. Some services even offer an option to lock the content censoring settings with a password, so your child can't switch it back.

Implement privacy controls [Private Icon]

Check the privacy setting of your child's app. Ensure that whichever app or site they choose to stream music, the settings are set to be private. This way they can only share the music they are listening to with friends and family and can't engage in conversation with strangers.

Offering Support

Explore apps yourself [Lightbulb Icon]

If your child insists on wanting to use a music streaming app then be part of the journey with them. Take the time to understand which apps they prefer to use and why they want to use it. Find out how to use the app yourself and understand what they could be exposed to and how to ensure they get the most of it in a safe manner.

Regularly check-in [Checkmark Icon]

Have regular conversations with your child about what they are listening to and how they are feeling. If they do hear explicit music or content that makes them feel uncomfortable, let them know that they can always talk to you and discuss what they've heard and what it means.

Our Expert Parven Kaur

Parven Kaur is social media expert and digital media consultant who is passionate about improving digital literacy for parents and children. She has extensive experience in the social media arena and is the founder of Kids N Clicks; a web resource that helps parents and children thrive in a digital world.

- 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