



The Fortnightly!

- Friday 2nd February 2024 -

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



Statement to live by: I know it is Ok for me to make mistakes.

Year 4 Curriculum Celebration Assembly... This week, Year 4 presented their Curriculum Celebration Assembly to friends and family members. They confidently and eloquently talked about their learning so far this year. 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!



Yr 4 Family Voice Feedback

- 100% enjoy our Curriculum Celebration Assemblies
- 100% feel that these events give them an understanding of the curriculum coverage at St. Michael's
- 100% believe that their child receives a broad and balanced curriculum at St. Michael's

Things for us to think about... using a microphone to help the audience hear a little better, children sharing some of their actual books and allowing the children time to see their parents.
Thank you for taking the time to feedback to us!

Year 1 Celebration of the Word... Thank you Year 1 for your amazing Celebration of the Word and thank you to friends and families for joining us. It was a beautiful, prayerful, respectful and reflective occasion. **Well done!**

National Safer Internet Day 2024... On Tuesday 6th February 2024 we will celebrate Safer Internet Day in School.

Safer Internet Day is a great opportunity to focus on online safety. This year's theme is all about change and influence online 'Inspiring change? Making a difference, managing influence and navigating change online'.

Throughout the day children across school will participate in e-safety activities, in an age-appropriate way, to help them understand how to stay safe online.

We will also be joined by Together for Children on this day who will deliver an E-Safety assembly to children from Years 3 – 6. Following this, our Year 3 children will have a workshop delivered by the team.

In addition to the above, we would like to invite parents/carers into school for an E-Safety Workshop on Tuesday 6th February 3.30 - 4.00pm in the Year 5 Classroom.



Church links and Religious Education enrichment... Thank you to Deacon Richard for enhancing our RE learning. Year 2 enjoyed listening to Deacon Richard's role in proclaiming the Word of God and had lots of great questions.



Thank you, Deacon Richard!

Early Years Maths Workshop... Thank you to the families who were able to join us for our Early Years Maths Workshop. The feedback received was amazing with 100% of parents/carers saying that the information that was shared was 'useful' and would 'help them support their children at home'.
Thank you for your support!



Year 3 Reading Café... Thank you to the families who were able to join us for the Year 3 Reading Café. It was wonderful seeing so many in school and sharing books with their children.
Thank you for all of your support with reading at home!

Pupil Safeguarding Survey– Spring 2024... This week, our children took part in our Pupil Safeguarding Survey and we are delighted to report the following...

- 95% of children enjoy coming to school
- 92% of children feel safe in school
- 98% of children say behaviour is good in school
- 99% of children said they know who to talk to if they are worried
- 94% of children said staff help them if they have a problem
- 96% of children said they enjoy playtime and lunchtimes
- 88% of children said they know how to stay safe online

We will be looking at the areas for development and will feedback any actions we intend on taking.
#ImportanceofSafeguarding

Attendance at school...

| Class... | Attendance figure... | Class... | Attendance figure... |
|-----------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|
| Reception | 96% | Year 3 | 97% |
| Year 1 | 97% | Year 4 | 97% |
| Year 2 | 96% | Year 5 | 95% |
| | Year 6 | 93% | |

Congratulations Years 1, 3 and 4!

St. Michael's, a worshipping community... We have had several Celebrations of the Word's recently to which families have been invited and we wanted to gain some feedback from you about these. Please see the outcomes below...

- 100% said that they enjoy attending
- 100% believe that these events are important for children's spiritual development
- 100% agreed that all children were able to participate
- 71% agreed that these celebrations supported their own spirituality
- 100% agreed that the celebrations were **prayerful, respectful and reflective**
- 100% said that they believe these events show how Celebration of the Word is delivered in school

We received some great constructive feedback suggesting the use of a microphone and possibly looking at the timings. We will certainly look at these suggestions– thank you!

Reading Café... Year 2 will be hosting their Reading Café in the School Hall on Tuesday 6th February at 9.00am. Parent/Carers are welcome!



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

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about PERSUASIVE DESIGN ONLINE

'Persuasive design' refers to the techniques that companies employ to influence our thoughts and behaviours when we're on the internet. These approaches can be spotted on websites, in apps and even as part of some video games. Persuasive design means that this content has been deliberately presented in a way that's intended to encourage you to spend your time or money (or both). These methods often prove highly effective at keeping people engaged and invested for longer than we might expect.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

POTENTIAL ADDICTION

In the digital world, persuasive design can make certain activities more addictive and harder to walk away from: some people may begin to feel anxious or irritated without access to their device or their favourite app, for example. It can also often leave users feeling isolated, as - if they spend most of their time on social media - they may start to find it difficult to talk to other people in real life.

MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Scrolling online or gaming without regular breaks is proven to be harmful to our mental health. The constant bombardment of news stories (many of them negative), images and influencers' posts can create sensations of unease, uncertainty and FOMO (fear of missing out). Young people can get so immersed in this environment that they become less likely to spot misleading posts.

PROLONGED SCROLLING

Social media can draw any of us - regardless of age - into a continuous pattern of refreshing our screen, following posts and links down rabbit holes or reading countless comments made by others. This aimless scrolling can eat up time which could have been spent on more productive activities. It could also lead younger users into areas of the online world which aren't age appropriate.

SENSORY OVERLOAD

Repetitively scrolling, clicking on links or playing games can create an unending stream of new information and visual stimuli. Put it this way: social media isn't exactly renowned as a carefree, chilled-out environment. Such overstimulation can become too much for young people to handle, resulting in sensory overload and causing them to feel stressed, overwhelmed and exhausted.

COSTLY ADDITIONS

Video games sometimes display offers for downloadable content or loot boxes which can be bought with real money. While these 'microtransactions' temptingly promise to improve a player's gaming experience, most of the time they are money sinks. Young people in particular, excited by the chance of enhancing their game, could spend quite a sizeable sum very quickly indeed.

PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES

Hours spent sitting and scrolling means far less time moving around and getting exercise: hardly ideal for a young person's physical health. Additionally, prolonged exposure to the light given off by a phone's screen can lead to eye fatigue and discomfort, especially if viewing it in the dark. Extended phone use before bed can also impact on sleep quality, affecting mood and energy levels over the following days.

KEEP SCROLLING

WIN TO WIN

27 new posts

Advice for Parents & Carers

ESTABLISH LIMITS

Talk to your child about setting some time limits on how long they can use their phone, tablet or console in the evenings or at weekends - or perhaps how often they can go on a specific app, game or website. You could also decide to involve the whole family in creating this shared screen time agreement, making things fair (and healthier) for everyone.

NIX NOTIFICATIONS

Stop knee-jerk responses at the source by turning off push notifications and alerts. Whether it's a gaming notification or a social media update, these not-so-gentle reminders are designed to catch our attention and lure us back to our device. Switching them off - or even deleting any particularly intrusive apps - can help prevent your child from being reeled back into the online world.

ENCOURAGE MINDFULNESS

Acknowledging any addiction is key in overcoming it - and compulsive scrolling is no different. If anything mentioned in this guide sounds familiar, it could help to have an honest, open chat with your child about how much time they spend online. Get them to think about how often they scroll through social media aimlessly or habitually open it up whenever they have a spare moment.

MAKE A CHECKLIST

Considering a list of relevant questions can be an effective way of helping children figure out why they're scrolling on certain sites or consuming particular pieces of content. A checklist can prompt young people to ask themselves if they're learning anything or benefiting from this activity - or if they're wasting their time. Taking a step back can sometimes help us to see things more clearly.

Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings has more than 20 years' experience in the field of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). As well as delivering workshops and training for young people, parents and schools, she is also a subject matter expert on RSHE for the Department of Education.



The National College

NOS National Online Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

Use of Social Media outside of school... A gentle reminder that most popular social media platforms (e.g. WhatsApp, Snapchat, Messenger etc.) are for pupils 13 years and over and therefore our children should not be using them. However, if your child does access Social Media, we ask for your utmost vigilance. Just like their interactions in person, online interactions require supervision and support. What is right will vary from family to family but some strategies that are known to be successful include...

- Monitoring their phones for the apps that are downloaded
- Enacting parental controls on phones and consoles
- Reviewing the messages they send on platforms and apps - making monitoring part of a daily or weekly routine
- Setting expectations about what space (preferably communal) and times they have access to devices
- Encouraging them to share or discuss with you what they are doing.



Stay alert and vigilant!

Year 6 Celebration of the Word... Year 6 did a brilliant job of leading our Celebration of the Word last week. It was wonderful welcoming lots of families into school for this prayerful and thought-provoking celebration!



Thank you!

February Half Term... A reminder that our school will close next week, Friday 9th February at 3.15pm, for our February half term holiday. We will reopen on Monday 19th February from 8.35am



Have a wonderful holiday!

Reception Curriculum Enrichment—People Who Help Us... Reception have been very lucky to have had visits from some real life superheroes over the last few weeks. We started with a police officer, then a nurse, a dentist, a lifeguard and many more! Thank you to all who came into school to make our children's learning come alive!



#CurriculumEnrichment

- Important Dates -

| | Date | Class | Event |
|--|---|---|--|
| Spring 1 | Tuesday 6 th February 2024. | Whole School. | Safer Internet Day (<i>more details to follow</i>). |
| | Tuesday 6 th February 2024. | All families | E-Safety Workshop at 3.30-4.00 in Year 5 classroom. All invited. |
| | Tuesday 6 th February 2024. | Year 2. | Reading Café from 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us. |
| | Having to be rearranged—TBC | Year 4. | Year 4 Class Mass. 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us. |
| HALF TERM | | | |
| Monday 12th February – Friday 16th February 2024. | | | |
| Spring 2 | Monday 19 th February 2024. | Whole School. | Back to School. |
| | Friday 23 rd February 2024. | Year 3. | Year 3 Class Mass. 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us. |
| | Tuesday 5 th March 2024. | Year 1. | Reading Café from 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us. |
| | Thursday 7 th March 2024. | Whole School. | World Book Day (<i>more details to follow</i>). |
| | Friday 8 th March 2024. | Year 2. | Year 2 Class Mass. 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us. |
| | Monday 11 th March – Friday 15 th March 2024. | Whole School. | British Science Week (<i>more details to follow</i>). |
| | Thursday 14 th March 2024. | Reception. | Celebration of the Word led by Reception at 3pm in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.. |
| | Monday 18 th March 2024. | Whole School. | Parent Consultations. |
| | Tuesday 19 th March 2024. | Whole School. | Parent Consultations. |
| | Thursday 21 st March 2024. | Whole School. | World Maths Day (<i>more details to follow</i>). |
| | Friday 22 nd March 2024. | Year 1. | Year 1 Class Mass. 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us. |
| | Tuesday 26 th March 2024. | Year 6. | Curriculum Celebration Assembly 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us. |
| | Tuesday 26 th March 2024. | Whole School. | Whole School Mass in St Michael's Church at 2pm. |
| | Thursday 28 th March 2024. | Whole School. | School breaks up for Easter Holidays at 3:15pm.. |
| Friday 29 th March 2024. | Whole School. | Bank Holiday. School will be closed to pupils on this day. | |

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