



The Fortnightly!

- Friday 24th May 2024 -

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



Statement to live by: I understand what trust means!

End of yet another busy half term... Can you believe that we are at the end of Summer 1 and ready to begin our half term holiday? It feels like time is truly flying by! We are immensely proud of all the hard work our children have been carrying out in their lessons. As Headteacher, I would like to thank our supportive and dedicated families for all of your encouragement throughout the half term. As Headteacher, I would like to thank our wonderful staff who work tirelessly to deliver a tremendous education for your children each and every day and keep them safe whilst in school. Our school breaks up for the May holiday this afternoon and we will welcome our children and their families back on Monday 3rd June at 8.35am.

Have a WONDERFUL break!

Parish news... Bishop Stephen will be celebrating the masses at St. Michael's on Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th May. It would be wonderful to pack out our church and for as many of our school families to attend as possible especially our Year 4 children who are making their First Holy Communion this year.

See you there!



Well done Year 6... A **HUGE** well done to our Year 6 class. They finished their SAT's last week and gave it their all! Well done to each and every one of our children for showing such commitment and hard work over the years and to staff who have guided them on their path.

Year 2 Curriculum Celebration Assembly... Thank you to our Year 2 children for presenting their Curriculum Celebration Assembly on Tuesday. They did an amazing job of showcasing their learning and all the memories they have made during the year. It was wonderful to see so many Year 2 families and friends there to share in this celebration.

Super proud Year 2!



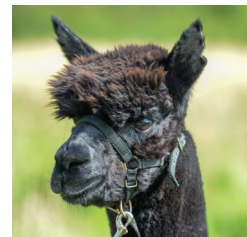
Amazing work Year 6!

Curriculum Enrichment... Yesterday, our Year 5 children visited the Centre for Life in Newcastle to support their learning in Science about Space.



Year 3 Class Mass... Thank you to our Year 3 pupils who led our Parish Mass today and to friends and families who were able to join us. Wonderful, clear reading, amazing singing and respectful behaviour.

Well done!



Today, our Reception children visited Hetton Lake to meet some alpacas! This is linked to their current topic, 'Our Wonderful World'.

Broad and balanced curriculum!

Attendance at school...

Class...	Attendance figure...	Class...	Attendance figure...
Reception	95%	Year 3	94%
Year 1	93.5%	Year 4	94%
Year 2	96%	Year 5	96%
	Year 6	93%	

Congratulations to Years 2 and 5!

Calling all families... On Friday 14th June we will be celebrating 'Careers and Enterprise Day' in school. More details are to follow in a letter, but we are giving early notice of this event as we are asking for **your help and support!**

Do you have a career that you are passionate about and would like to share? Do you have an unusual career which you feel our children would like to know more about? Do you work for a company that would be interested in visiting school to talk about careers? Do you work in a career which is trying to raise the profile to different people, e.g. more females in engineering? If the answer to any of these questions is 'yes' or feel you can support, we would LOVE to hear from you! Please send expressions of interest into smi@smi.bwcet.com.

This event will rely on your support so please do get in touch. **Thank you!**

Home - School links...

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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 & Educators Need to Know about SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



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

Year 5 Class Charity work... As a part of our Catholic Life and Mission, Year 5 will be raising money for their chosen charity, St. Cuthbert's Hospice.

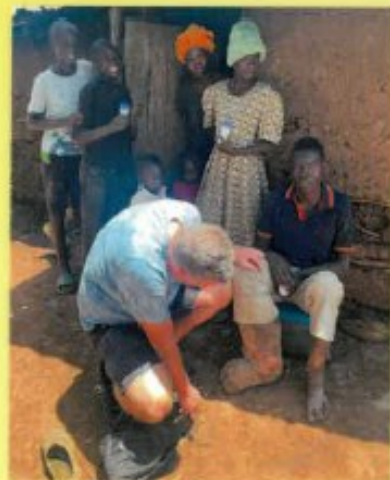
On the 3rd June 2024 (Mrs O'Neill's birthday) we invite all children to come into school **wearing bright colours**. If you are in a position to donate, please bring this into school on Monday 3rd June where there will be donation buckets.

We will also be having a whole school talk regarding what the Hospice is and the work they do. This will be delivered by a member of the Hospice team.





Asante Sana



St Michael's Houghton-le -Spring
You raised £200
Thank you for your generosity.

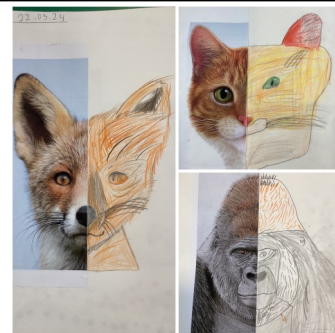
Catholic Mission... Last week we were fortunate to welcome Fr. David Smith to St. Michael's to talk to us about his Kenyan Mission. He talked to us about all of the good work being done in this country because of the support from schools and people across the Diocese.



Artists in the making...

We have been blown away by the amazing artwork in Year 2 this week!

Take a look at just some of these examples...



- Important Dates -

Date	Class	Event
Monday 3 rd June 2024.	Whole School.	Back to School.
Monday 3 rd June – Friday 14 th June 2024.	Year 4.	Multiplication Check will take place during this period.
Monday 3 rd June – Thursday 6 th June 2024.	Year 6.	Bikeability. Cycling proficiency.
Monday 3 rd June 2024.	Whole School.	Wear bright Colours Day to raise money for St Cuthberts Hospice in memory of Mrs O'Neill.
Thursday 6 th June 2024.	Year 3.	Educational visit to Shipley Art Gallery.
Friday 7 th June 2024.	Year 2.	Year 2 Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Saturday 8 th June 2024.	Year 4.	Year 4 First Holy Communion Mass at 10am in St. Michael's Church.
Monday 10 th June – Friday 14 th June 2024.	Year 1.	Phonics Screening Check Week.
Wednesday 12 th June 2024.	Year 6.	Visit to Safety Works.
Thursday 13 th June 2024.	Year 2.	Visit to Beamish.
Friday 14 th June 2024.	Whole School.	Careers / Enterprise Day.
Monday 17 th June 2024.	Year 6.	Nexus bus induction.
Thursday 20 th June 2024.	Year 5.	Celebration of the word led by Year 5 at 3pm in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Friday 21 st June 2024.	Reception & Year 1.	Reception & Year 1 Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Monday 24 th June 2024.	Year 6.	Primary Festival at the Youth Village.
Tuesday 25 th June – Thursday 27 th June 2024.	Year 6.	St Roberts Transition Days.
Thursday 27 th June 2024.	Year 4.	Celebration of the word led by Year 4 at 3pm in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Friday 28 th June 2024.	Inset Day.	School closed to pupils on this day.
Monday 1 st July – Friday 5 th July 2024.	Whole School.	Sports Week.
Tuesday 2 nd July 2024.	Year 1.	Curriculum Celebration Assembly 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Friday 5 th July 2024.	Whole School.	Sports Day – School field from 1pm.
Tuesday 9 th July 2024.	Reception.	Curriculum Celebration Assembly 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Wednesday 10 th July 2024.	Year 6.	Colour Run at Hetton Lyons Country Park.
Friday 12 th July 2024.	Year 4.	Year 4 Class Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.
Monday 15 th July 2024.	Year 5.	Year 5 visit to Gateshead Stadium.
Thursday 18 th July 2024.	Year 6.	Leavers Assembly, 2pm in the School Hall.
Friday 19 th July 2024.	Whole School.	Whole School End of Year Mass at 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome to join us.

Summer 2

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 18 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