



**Statement to live by**

I try to forgive people when they hurt me.

**Welcome Back...** As this is the first Fortnightly newsletter since our return from the Easter holidays, the staff and I would like to say 'Welcome Back' and we hope that you had a wonderful break! You should all be immensely proud of the way in which your children have settled back into school life. We can tell this is going to be a great Summer term!



#LearningTogether

**Parent Consultations...** Thank you to all parents and carers who were able to join us for our Parent Consultations this week. It was wonderful to welcome so many families into school to celebrate and discuss their child's hard work and achievements. We hope that you were pleased to hear about the incredible progress your children continue to make. **Thank you for the support you give us**

**Parking...** We have ongoing concerns about inconsiderate and, at times, dangerous parking outside school, particularly at drop-off and pick-up times. This puts children, families and staff at risk. We ask everyone to park considerately and safely, showing respect for our neighbours and for one another. This situation **MUST** improve to ensure the safety of our whole school community. **Safety first!**



**Upcoming: Year 6 SATs...** Our wonderful Year 6 children have been working extremely hard in readiness for their Year 6 SATs which will take place from Monday 11th to Thursday 14th May. In readiness for these assessments, we kindly ask that your children get lots of rest during this important time and arrive to school on time as they always do.

**Thank you for your cooperation**

**Free School Meal Eligibility Checker...** Following a successful pilot with 7 of our Trust schools, we are delighted to inform you of a new service we have available to families of all pupils in our Trust.

We are now able to offer you the facility to check your eligibility to receive **Free School Meals (FSM)** directly via the school website. We would like to encourage all families to take a moment to check whether they may be eligible.

Even if your child currently receives Universal Infant Free School Meals (from Reception to Year 2), it is still important to complete this check. If eligible, our school will receive additional funding through the Pupil Premium grant, which directly supports teaching, resources, and wider opportunities for pupils. And even if your child prefers to bring a packed lunch into school each day we would be grateful if you would complete an application – the additional funding will be paid whether or not your child takes a meal. Checking eligibility is quick and confidential. Please use the link below...



[Free School Meal Eligibility Checker](#)



**Are you entitled?**

**Thank you for your support**

**Sacrament of Reconciliation...** On Friday last week, our Year 4 children took a very special step on their faith journey as they made their Sacrament of Reconciliation. This was a calm, prayerful and reflective occasion, giving the children time to think about God's love, forgiveness and the importance of making things right. They approached the sacrament with great maturity, reverence and respect, and we were incredibly proud of them.



We would like to thank Fr. Marc, staff and families for their support in helping to prepare the children for this important sacrament. Please keep our Year 4 children in your prayers as they continue to grow in faith and prepare to make their First Holy Communion.

**Well done Year 4!**

**Bank Holiday...** Please remember that it is a three-day weekend for some, and school will be closed on Monday 4th May. We will therefore see everyone back in school on Tuesday 5th May from 8.35am.

**Enjoy your extended weekend!**



**Pope Leo's quote of the week...**

*"May the Lord help you to become a society in which everyone, each according to their respective responsibilities, works ever more fully to serve the common good rather than private interests, bridging the gap between the privileged and the disadvantaged."*



**Attendance at school for the past two weeks...**

**Reception:** 94%    **Year 1:** 95%    **Year 2:** 96%    **Year 3:** 98%    **Year 4:** 98.5%    **Year 5:** 97%    **Year 6:** 98%

**WELL DONE TO YEAR 4!**

**Home-School Links**

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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about IMAGE-ALTERING FILTERS

From playful puppy ears on Snapchat to 'beauty mode' on TikTok, image-altering filters are now a routine part of how young people communicate online. While many are harmless, others subtly reshape people's faces and bodies. This can blur the line between reality and edited content, potentially influencing how children and young people see themselves and others.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### ALTERED BEAUTY STANDARDS

Many 'beauty' filters smooth skin, reshape facial features, or adjust body proportions. Over time, repeated exposure to these filters can shift a child's idea of what is 'normal' or attractive, creating unrealistic expectations about their own and others' appearances.

### PRESSURE TO LOOK PERFECT

Filtered images can often attract more 'likes' and positive comments. This can encourage children and young people to rely on editing tools to gain others' approval, rather than feeling confident in their natural appearance.

### LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Regularly viewing heavily filtered content can lead to comparisons with unrealistic images. This is linked to body dissatisfaction and reduced self-esteem, particularly among children and teenagers.

### HIDDEN ADVERTISING

Some filters are linked to beauty products or trends, subtly promoting third-party brands. Children and young people may not recognise this as advertising, while also sharing personal data – such as facial images and usage habits – with apps and third parties.

### BLURRED REALITY

As filters become more advanced and natural-looking, it can be difficult for children and young people to distinguish edited content from real life, especially when filters are used in everyday photos and videos.

### SEXUALISED EDITS

Certain tools can make users appear older or more sexualised. This may attract unwanted attention, increase the risk of images being shared without consent, and expose young people to unsafe interactions.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### START OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Talk regularly about filters, such as how they work and why people use them. Ask the children and young people in your care how filtered images make them feel and encourage honest discussion without judgement.

### CHALLENGE 'PERFECT' POSTS

When viewing content together, gently point out the signs of editing, filters, or posing techniques. This builds critical thinking and helps children and young people question unrealistic images.

### REINFORCE WHAT'S REAL

Help children and young people understand that filtered images are digitally altered and are not an accurate reflection of real life. Emphasise that they don't need to meet these artificial standards.

### PROMOTE OFFLINE CONFIDENCE

Encourage activities that build self-worth beyond appearance, such as sports, hobbies, friendships, and creative interests, so that confidence isn't tied solely to online validation.

### Meet Our Expert

Parven Kaur is a digital parenting expert and founder of Kids N Clicks, a platform dedicated to helping parents navigate the online world alongside their children. She is an expert contributor for Internet Matters, offering practical guidance on emerging online safety issues. Her insights have been featured by the BBC, The Telegraph, TalkTV, and other major media outlets, supporting families across the UK.



The National College®

**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!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>Review &amp; Development Clinic</b> 10 - 11.30am</p> <p><b>Super Communicators</b> 10 - 10.45am Referral only</p> <p><b>Daisy Chain Drop In</b> 20th &amp; 27th April, 11th &amp; 18th May 10am - 12noon</p> <p><b>Sensory Room - Bookable</b> 9.30-10am 10.15-10.45am 11-11.30am</p> <p><b>Young Mams 'n' Dads</b> 14 - 22 years) 1.30 - 2.30pm Drop In</p> <p><b>Sleep Workshop</b> 11th &amp; 18th May 12.45 - 2.45pm</p> <p><b>Sensory Room Bookable</b> 2.45 - 3.15pm 3.30 - 4pm 4.15 - 4.45pm</p>	<p><b>Baby Messy Play/Sensory Drop in</b> (0 - 12 months) 9.30 - 10.15am</p> <p><b>Tobacco Dependency Service</b> 9am - 4pm Referral only</p> <p><b>Busy Bodies - Drop in</b> (Walkers - 5 years) 11 - 11.45am</p> <p><b>Sensory Room - Bookable</b> (0-5 years) 9.30 - 10am 10.15 - 10.45am 11 - 11.30am</p> <p><b>Play Space &amp; Sensory Room Drop in</b> (0 - 5 years) 1 - 2.30pm</p> <p><b>GroBrain</b> 12.45 - 2.45pm Bookable</p> <p><b>Sensory Room - Bookable</b> (0-25 years with parents/carers) 3.30 - 4pm 4.15 - 4.45pm</p>	<p><b>Birth Registrations</b> - Bookable via Sunderland Council website</p> <p><b>Childminder Network</b> Fortnightly</p> <p><b>Daisy Chain Drop In</b> 6th May - 10am - 12noon</p> <p><b>Daisy Chain Multi-Agency Drop In</b> 22nd April &amp; 13th May 10am - 12pm</p> <p><b>Sensory Room - Bookable</b> 9.30 - 10, 10.15 - 10.45, 11 - 11.30am 1.15 - 1.45pm, 2 - 2.30 2.45 - 3.15, 3.30 - 4, 4.15 - 4.45pm</p> <p><b>Time for Rhyme</b> (Birth- pre crawling) Excluding 29th April &amp; 13th May 1.45 - 2.30pm</p> <p><b>Little Adventurers</b> 1 - 2.30pm Referral Only</p> <p><b>Baby Massage</b> at Houghton Library 1 - 2pm - To book email space4hub@gmail.com</p> <p><b>Introduction to Solids</b> 29th April - 1 - 2pm To book please call 0300 0031552</p>	<p><b>Play Space &amp; Sensory Room Drop in</b> (0 - 5 years) 9.30 - 11.30am</p> <p><b>Stop Smoking Support Drop in</b> 9.30 - 11.30am</p> <p><b>Breastfeeding Support Drop in</b> 10am - 12noon</p> <p><b>Welfare Rights - Referral</b> 9am - 12noon</p> <p><b>Stay &amp; Play</b> (0 - 5 years) 1.30 - 2.30pm</p> <p><b>Ante Natal Programme Bookable</b> 3.45 - 5.45pm To book please call 0300 0031552</p>	<p><b>Play Space &amp; Sensory Room Drop in</b> (0 - 5 years) 9.30 - 11.30am</p> <p><b>Growing Healthy Drop In</b> 10 - 11.30am</p> <p><b>Family Voice</b> 24th April &amp; 22nd May 10.45am - 12.15pm</p> <p><b>Baby Massage</b> 1.30 - 2.30pm (Excluding 1st May) Bookable</p> <p><b>Buggy Walk</b> 1 - 2pm then PlaySpace</p> <p><b>Sensory Room - Bookable</b> (0-25 years with parents/carers) 1.15 - 1.45pm 2-2.30pm 2.45 - 3.15pm</p>



Find out more at [www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk/familyhubs](http://www.linksforlifesunderland.co.uk/familyhubs)



**Social media**  
Follow Sunderland Family Hubs on Facebook and Instagram.

**Midwife Booking In Appointments.** As soon as you find out you are pregnant, contact a GP or Midwife and they will help you book your first appointment. Your first Midwife appointment (also called the booking appointment) should happen before you are 10 weeks pregnant. This is because you'll be offered some tests that should be done before 10 weeks.

**Antenatal Parent Programme** - A five week course for parents to be, and can book from 26 weeks gestation by calling 03000 031 552.

**Birth Registrations** - Please book via Sunderland City Council website. Register a birth, a new born baby must be registered within 42 days of the date of birth. The baby should be registered in the district where it was born.

**Review and Development Clinic** - please book through your Health Visitor. Call 03000 031552.

**Sensory Room (from birth)** sensory lights and equipment to help develop your child's senses. Also for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25 years. 30 minute exclusive slots are available.

**Breastfeeding Support** to share experiences and advice about your breastfeeding journey with other parents. There is no need to book simply drop into any of the sessions.

**Growing Healthy Drop In**  
Come along to meet others and learn some useful tips and advice. There will be scales available to weigh your baby.

**Gro Brain Baby Course** is for parents of babies pre-birth to 12 months. It focusses on bonding and brain development, and the vital part parents and carers play in 'wiring up' the connections in their baby's brain in the first 1001 critical days of life. This 'brain wiring' lays the foundation for emotional wellbeing and the way emotions will be handled in later life.

**Baby Messy Play/Sensory Play.** This is a session that allows children to explore different materials encouraging creativity using their hands and feet. Often involving messy ingredients such as paint, sand, water, cereal or pasta, it is geared toward exploring feelings and imagination through textures and colours.

**Time for Rhyme (birth - crawling)** is an interactive session for babies and their parents / carers. Sessions are based around sharing nursery rhymes, action songs, musical instruments and books.

**Move to Rhyme (Crawling to pre-walking)** an interactive session for babies and their parents/ carers to share nursery rhymes, action songs, musical instruments and books.

**Busy Bodies** - walkers - 5 years. A music and movement session to work on physical skills, experience free movement to support growth and development.

**Stay and Play(0-5 years)** have fun with your little one whilst socialising with parents. Each week we will have a themed activity such as books, messy play and everyday opportunities.

**Introduction to Solid Food** - Support to wean your baby on to solid food, understanding baby's cues, healthy key messages and food tasting. Your baby should be around 6 months old to attend the class. Please contact Health Visiting Service on 03000 031 552 to book.

**Stop Smoking Support** - Are you worried about how smoking is affecting your health and your families? Are you thinking of stopping smoking? Join us for our free stop smoking drop in sessions. An appointment can also be made on a one - one basis at a time to suit you, contact your hub to find out more and arrange.

**Play Space (0-5 years)** a parent led session, where parents are encouraged to play and interact with your child/ren in a friendly environment.

**Young Mams n Dads** is a dedicated friendly group for parents aged between 14 & 22 years old, to have fun and socialise. Includes sensory, messy play, crafts, cooking and much more for the children.

**FISCUS** is an independent charity based in Hendon, we offer benefits and debt advice, food parcel, baby bank, adult clothes bank and we have an energy team who also offer fuel vouchers, warm packs, home energy visits and warm home solutions. The advice is friendly, professional and confidential'.

**Mams' Minds Matter (Maternal Mental Health Week)**

A gentle wellbeing walk, a cuppa and refreshments, optional well-being activities, information, support and advice, and opportunities for mams to support one another. These sessions are suitable for Mams and children under 1 year old, due to the sensitive nature of discussions.

**Registering**

Please complete a registration form using the QR code or visit any of our Family Hubs to register. After registering, remember to sign in each time you visit any hub. Everything is completely FREE!



**Breast Pump Loan Scheme**

Can be loaned on a 4 weekly basis. Each pack comes with information on how to use and a guide on how to clean. Call 03000 031552 to find out more.

**\*New\* School Social Media Platforms..** On Monday 2nd February 2026, our school stopped using X as our official school social media platform and moved to Facebook and Instagram. As with X, families can sign up for free Facebook and Instagram accounts if you are not already using these platforms.

Please follow us by searching..

**Facebook:** stmichaelsoughton

**Instagram:** st\_michaelcatholicschool



Please join us on this journey!

## - Important Dates -

	Date	Class	Event
Summer 1	<b>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026.</b>	<b>Whole School.</b>	<b>Back to School.</b>
	Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> April 2026.	Year 4.	First Holy Communion Preparation.
	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2026.	Whole School.	Parent Consultations.
	Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2026.	Whole School.	Parent Consultations.
	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2026.	Year 2.	Year 2 Class Mass at St. Michael's Church. All are welcome.
	<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026.</b>	<b>Whole School.</b>	<b>Bank Holiday. School closed to pupils on this day.</b>
	Wednesday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Year 3.	Educational Visit to the Synagogue.
	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Year 4.	First Holy Communion Preparation.
	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Year 4.	Parent Meeting for Residential at Youth Village at 4:30pm.
	Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Whole School.	Whole School Individual Photographs.
	Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2026 – Thursday 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Year 6.	SATs
	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Year 6.	Trip to the Cinema.
	Saturday 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Year 4.	Sacrament of First Holy Communion - 10am in St Michael's Church. All are welcome.
	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2026.	Reception.	Reception Reading Cafe 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2026.	Year 1.	Celebration of the Word at 3pm in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2026.	Reception.	Reception Class Mass at St. Michael's Church. All are welcome.	
<b>HALF TERM</b>			
<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2026</b>			
Summer 2	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2026.	Whole School.	Back to School.
	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2026 – Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 4.	Multiplication Tables Check.
	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2026.	Year 6.	Nexus Bus Induction as part of transition to Secondary School.
	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Reception.	Celebration of the Word at 3pm in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 3.	Year 3 Class Mass at St. Michael's Church. All are welcome.
	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 – Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 1.	Phonics Screening Tests.
	Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Reception.	Educational Visit to Beamish Museum.
	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> June – Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 4.	Residential at Youth Village.
	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 – Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 6.	Bikeability – Cycling proficiency.
	Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 1.	Curriculum celebration assembly 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
	Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 4.	Celebration of the Word at 3pm in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Whole School.	Careers / Enterprise Day (Date may change due to availability of volunteers)
	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 5.	Year 5 Class Mass at St. Michael's Church. All are welcome.
	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> June – Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Year 6.	Residential at Derwent Hill.
	Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2026.	Reception.	Curriculum celebration assembly 9am in the School Hall. All are welcome to join us.
	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.	Whole School.	Inset Day. School closed to pupils on this day.
	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> June 2026	Year 6.	Primary Festival at the Youth Village.
	Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 – Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2026.	Year 6.	Transition days at St Roberts.
	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2026.	Reception.	Litter Pick at the Beach.
	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2026.	Year 5.	Celebration of Sport at Gateshead Stadium.
	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2026.	Years 1 & 4.	Years 1 & 4 Class Mass at St. Michael's Church. All are welcome.
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2026 – Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2026.	Whole School.	Healthy Week.	
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2026.	Whole School.	Sports Day at 1pm on the School Field.	
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2026.	Year 6.	Leavers Assembly at 2pm. All are welcome to join us.	
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2026.	Whole School.	Whole School / Year 6 Leavers Mass at St. Michael's Church. All are welcome.	
<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2026.</b>	<b>Whole School.</b>	<b>School breaks up for Summer Holidays at 3:15pm.</b>	
<b>Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026.</b>	<b>Whole School.</b>	<b>Back to School.</b>	

### Assemblies and Collective Worship – Parents Invited

Class	Curriculum Celebration Assemblies		Celebration of the Word	
Reception	Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup> June 26	9.00am	Thurs 4 <sup>th</sup> June 26	3.00pm
Year 1	Tues 16 <sup>th</sup> June 26	9.00am	Thurs 21 <sup>st</sup> May 26	3.00pm
Year 2	Tues 31 <sup>st</sup> March 26	9.00am	Thurs 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jan 26	3.00pm
Year 3	Tues 10 <sup>th</sup> March 26	9.00am	Thurs 13 <sup>th</sup> Nov 25	3.00pm
Year 4	Tues 17 <sup>th</sup> Feb 26	9.00am	Thurs 18 <sup>th</sup> June 26	3.00pm
Year 5	Tues 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb 26	9.00am	Thurs 27 <sup>th</sup> Nov 25	3.00pm
Year 6	Tues 27 <sup>th</sup> Jan 26	9.00am	Thurs 6 <sup>th</sup> Nov 25	3.00pm
<b>Year 6 Leavers Assembly</b>	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2026		2.00pm	

**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 part of...



**Bishop Wilkinson**  
Catholic Education Trust  
Through Christ, in Partnership