



'Together we strive for excellence, inspired by the joy of the Gospel'.

A Message from Mr Craig

The Easter Holiday brings to a close my first year as Headteacher here at St. Mary and St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School, I can hardly believe how fast it's flown by. We've had a wonderful year with school festivals, Christmas fairs, sport celebrations, and delightful residential, all while watching the children shine with happiness and success.

Honestly, the best part of being a headteacher is seeing those bright smiles every morning, witnessing the amazing work our teachers do, and giving our children every chance to grow and flourish.

I'm so lucky to have such a passionate and driven team here at Stella. I know through the hard work we have done in school so far and the commitment to change that we have, we can only go from strength to strength.

Now, you may or may not know that my favourite word is 'Joy', the children and staff will tell you it's something I talk about a lot. Everyday being headteacher at our school brings me so much joy.

I pray that during this Easter holiday you and your family embrace those daily moments of joy in all that you do.

Thank you all for your continued support as we grow together on our Stella journey.

Mr Craig



This week Pope Francis reminds us,

"Let us prepare to celebrate Easter in the joy of God! Christ is risen! Christ is alive!"

"We have full knowledge all at once. We must start by believing."
St Thomas Aquinas - Patron Saint of Pupils & Catholic Schools



Year of Prayer - Wednesday 27th March 2024

We continued this week with our Year of Prayer focus on our school radio station. With a focus Holy Week. A huge thank you to Jose in Year 6 and Georgie in Year 5, Lucas in Year 4 and Amelia Rose in Year 3 for hosting the broadcast along with Miss Wilson. **Please click on the praying hands** to hear it for yourself and take a quiet 5 minutes to reflect.



Holy Week Mass

The whole school took part in Mass led by Father Rose on Tuesday of this week; the Mass was very respectful and reverent. Four of our Year 6 children processed through school carrying a Cross, a Crown of Thorns and other items to represent the suffering Jesus endured for us all. The rest of the school lined the way as we paid respect. This was the perfect opportunity for children to reflect on this coming weekend and the events of Easter time.

Please click on the first image to see the video in full.



Churches Together in Ryton

There will be a walk of witness on Good Friday around Ryton Village.

This will be starting at Ryton Methodist Church at 10 a.m. and ending on the village Green, via the park.

All families will be very welcome.



Pupil School Meal Price increase

We recognise the benefits of children receiving a nutritional and tasty lunch each day at school.

To this end we as a school have been subsidising our pupils' school meals for quite some time.

Sadly, like so many other schools we are feeling the pinch of a very tight school budget and find that we can no longer subsidise the school meals.

Therefore, when returning to school after the Easter holidays, the price of a school meal will increase from £2.85 per meal to £3.00 per meal.

We have tried for a long time not to increase prices, but are no longer able to subsidise meals.

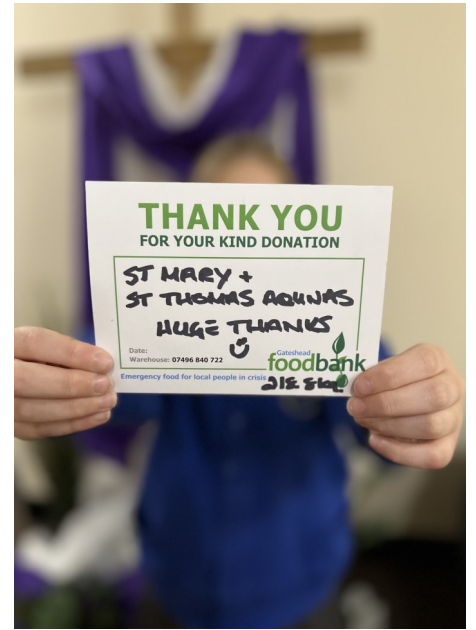
If you feel you may be eligible for free school meals, please click on the image below and it will take you to the relevant section at Gateshead Local Authority.



Gateshead Foodbank

Thank you all so much for the generous donations over this Lenten period. As a community we have collected 631 items ranging from food to toiletries to household cleaning products. Staff at the Gateshead Foodbank were overwhelmed with joy when Miss Wilson delivered all of the items. The total weight of the items came in at 218.8 kg and the staff at the foodbank said that this would help to create 300 meals!

This is a testament to a community coming together to support all. Well done Team Stella



Year 3/4 Tag Rugby

The children in Year 3 and 4 had a fantastic time taking part in the tag rugby festival at St Thomas More yesterday. The children showcased some fantastic skills, winning both of their games. What a fantastic achievement.



Easter Holidays

School will break up for the Easter Holidays on Thursday 28th March at 3.15 p.m. We will re-open on Monday 15th April.



Safeguarding Reminder

Safeguarding the children in our care is one of the school's main responsibilities, one that St Mary and St Thomas Aquinas take very seriously.

As you are already aware from previous updates, our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Craig. You can speak to him by phone, make an appointment via the school office, or catch him when he's outside greeting/saying goodbye to children, if you ever have a concern. We have three Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in school these are Miss Hudson (Deputy Headteacher/Year 2 class teacher), Mrs Bennison (Assistant Headteacher, currently on maternity leave) and Mrs Costello (School Business Manager). If you are unable to speak to Mr Craig, you can speak to these members of staff or any other member of staff about your concern(s).

The school has an updated Safeguarding policy, that can be found on the school website, or paper copies can be requested from the school office.

All staff receive annual safeguarding refresher training, as well as other training throughout the year on key areas, including record keeping and reporting. Our school also has a termly visit from our Safeguarding Consultant, who completes an audit of the school's safeguarding and identifies any future improvements or training needs.

Why do parents need to know this information?

- To reassure you that we take keeping our children safe in school very seriously at St. Mary and St. Thomas Aquinas.
- It's good to remind parents/carers of the key members of staff, in case new parents did not know who they were.
- To highlight the continual work that the school puts into keeping our children safe in school.

Additional information can be found on our website:

Please click [here](#) to access the page.

Attendance

During celebration assembly on Thursday, we have been celebrating whole class attendance and each week the class with the highest attendance will receive our Attendance Trophy, well done to **Year 2 & Year 3** who will share the trophy this week.

Week beginning: 27th March 2024	
Year group	Attendance percentage
Reception	91.60
Year 1	98.66
Year 2	100
Year 3	100
Year 4	98.57
Year 5	93.33
Year 6	92.12

All Stars Cricket - Ryton Cricket Club

Nominations are now open for children aged between **5 and 9** to join the All-Stars cricket programme for 2024. Junior summer group coaching sessions are held each Friday evening.

Parents can watch in comfort from either the lounge or the balcony over-looking the training area.

All under 9 equipment is provided by the club, however, personal items of protective equipment is best provided by parents.

Session Dates:

Friday 10th May to Friday 19th July. 5 p.m. until 6 p.m.

Contact:

Ben Perry at 07583265818

or by email: benperry981@gmail.com

Sign up today at - allstarscricket.co.uk



Northumbria Police Assemblies and Workshop

On Monday 15th and Tuesday 16th April PC Stephen Bowman will be in school working with all children throughout school. We look forward to welcoming him and his team into school.

Year 4 Adventure Day

Year 4 children will take part in a survival outdoor adventure day in school on Thursday 18th April. All children must come into school in suitable outdoor clothing and footwear. Please keep an eye on the forecast as the children will be outside all day regardless of the weather.

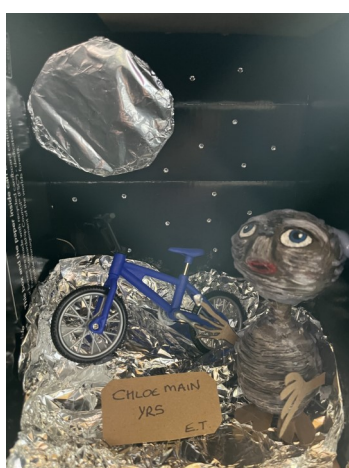
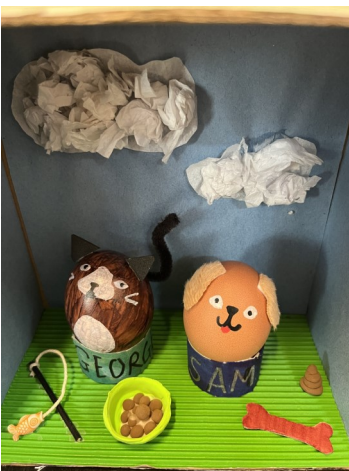
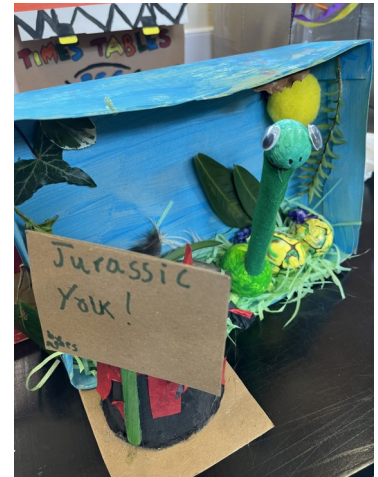
Year 4 Swimming

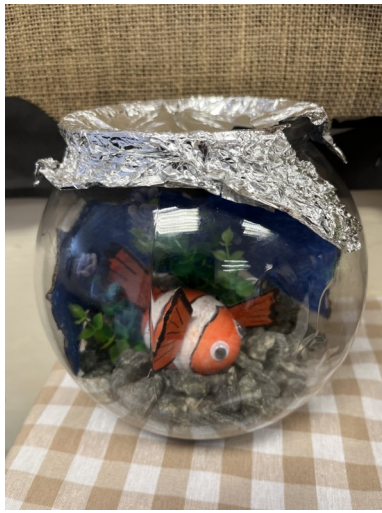
Just a little reminder to Year 4 parents that swimming lessons will resume on the first day back after the Easter Break. Please ensure that you child brings their swimming kit into school.

Easter Egg Homework Creations

Thank you to all of the children who took part in our Egg Homework over the last week. The entries into school were egg-cellent!

Please see some of the wonderful creations below.





Spotlight Celebration



Well done to Emily in Year 4 who was successful in gaining a yellow belt in her Karate Gradings last week. Congratulations.



This week Jenson in Year 5 won player of the week for his outstanding ability. His big carries, gaining the space allowed for his team mates to then go on to score the tries.



Huge congratulations to Kourtney in Year 6. Kourtney and her team won the U11 Celil Championships in Glasgow on Monday.

Congratulations to everyone.

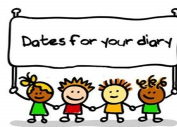
Don't forget to send your images to Miss Green at hgreen@smtb.bwcet.com

Dates for your diary

Monday 15th April	Parents Evening
Tuesday 16th April	Parents Evening
Friday 19th April	Year 6 Liturgy 2.30 p.m. in the school hall Year 6 coffee and chat in school
Thursday 25th April	Year 3 Assembly 9.10 a.m. in the school hall
Friday 26th April	Reception Liturgy 2.30 p.m. in the school hall Reception coffee and chat in school
Thursday 2nd May	School will be closed to children for the local Elections
Thursday 9th May	Year 4 Assembly 9.10 a.m. in the school hall
Friday 10th May	Year 1 Liturgy 2.30 p.m. in the school hall Year 1 coffee and chat in school
13th-16th May	Year 6 SATs week
Thursday 16th May	Year 5 Assembly 9.10 a.m. in the school hall
20th -22nd May	Year 6 Bikeability for those who have signed up
Thursday 23rd May	Year 2 Assembly 9.10 a.m. in the school hall
Friday 24th May	Year 4 Fun Run at Saltwell Park
Friday 24th May - Children will break up at 3.15 p.m. for the half term break	
Saturday 8th June	First Holy Communions
Wednesday 12th June	Whole school class photographs
Thursday 13th June	Year 6 Assembly 9.10 a.m. in the school hall
Thursday 13th June	Year 5 visiting St Marys' Wickham - French Penpals
Friday 14th June	Year 4 Liturgy 2.30 p.m. in the school hall Year 4 coffee and chat in school
19th-21st June	Year 6 visiting SVP camp on Holy Island
26th-28th June	Year 6 visiting Newburn Activity Centre
Thursday 20th June	Year 1 Assembly 9.10 a.m. in the school hall
Friday 21st June	Year 3 Liturgy 2.30 p.m. in the school hall Year 3 coffee and chat in school
Thursday 27th June	Reception Assembly 9.10 a.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 2nd July	Nursery Parents Evening for children starting September 2024
Wednesday 3rd July	Reception Parents Evening for Children starting September 2024
Friday 5th July	Year 2 Liturgy 2.30 p.m. in the school hall Year 2 coffee and chat in school
Friday 12th July	Year 5 Liturgy 2.30 p.m. in the school hall Year 5 coffee and chat in school
Wednesday 17th July	Leavers Assembly for Year 6 Parents at 4 p.m. in school
Thursday 18th July	Year 6 Leavers Mass 9.10 a.m. in Church
Friday 19th July	Year 6 Liturgy & Coffee and Chat is now CANCELLED

Friday 19th July - Children will break up at 3.15 p.m. for the summer break

Monday 22nd & Tuesday 23rd will be staff INSET days



Please note that any changes of DATES and TIMES will be highlighted in red

FREE EASTER ENTRY FOR KIDS

Friday 29th March
19:30 Kick off



Monday 1st April
11:00 Kick off



Kids go free with a paying Adult. Just show this voucher on the gate.

£7 Adult - £4 Concession - £3 Kids