



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

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the start of the Spring term. As we step into 2025, we look forward to a year full of exciting opportunities for our children, staff, and the entire school community.

The children have quickly settled back into school life, embodying our 'Back Pocket Principles' by being respectful, responsible, and ready to learn, all while continuing to live out our Gospel Values.

As a team, we are excited about the year ahead and all it holds. Thank you for your continued support.

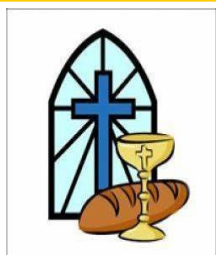
Best regards,

Mr. J. Craig

Year 4 Mass

The Year 4 children will be leading Mass in Church on Thursday 16th January, 9.05 a.m.

All are welcome to attend.



Arbor

We kindly remind families that school meals must be paid for regularly, and any outstanding balances should be cleared promptly to avoid them accumulating. If you require assistance with payments via Arbor or wish to discuss this further, please don't hesitate to contact us.



This week Pope Francis reminds us,

"We will never be disillusioned or lose our way if we are guided by God."



Bishop Wilkinson Celebratory Free lunch for every primary-aged child

Following the success of the October event, we are delighted to confirm that on Thursday 16th January 2025, we are having another **"Celebrating Together"** day across all of our Primary Schools and, as part of the celebration, all Primary-aged children will once again receive a FREE school meal, fully funded by Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust.

Below is a selection of the menu which is based on popular items which our children enjoy and regularly feature in our school meal provision.

- Selection of pizza
- Sausage roll bites
- Chicken or Quorn nuggets
- Potato wedges & dips
- Selection of sandwiches & wraps
- Vegetable sticks
- Scrumptious salad bar
- Fresh fruit
- Ice cream pots

The free lunch offering applies to all primary school children across all our schools.

We hope that all children enjoy this day and take this opportunity to sample a school meal with their friends.

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 5 class teacher), Mrs Bennison (Assistant Headteacher/ Year 6 class teacher 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:

Attendance

During celebration assembly on Friday, 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 5 & 6** who will share the trophy this week.

Week beginning: Tuesday 6th January 2025	
Year group	Attendance percentage
Reception	94.39
Year 1	97.46
Year 2	96.88
Year 3	98.16
Year 4	99.07
Year 5	100
Year 6	100

Celebrating Attendance

It is wonderful to see so many children getting to school on time and already showing great attendance records for 2025.

With two classes having full attendance this week and others at over 97%, it is a joy to see our children thriving in school.

Our aim for attendance is 97% or above for all children, let's try our best to work together to make that a reality for every child.

As always, your support is gratefully received.

The Stella Team.



Special visit

Bishop Stephen will be celebrating Mass here in Stella on Sunday 19th January.

To mark this occasion the children have been invited to sing during Mass. Look out for Monday's letter for more information about this special event.





**GATESHEAD WEST
UNIFORM
SCHEME**

Did you know?
We sell surplus stock on Vinted as gwusne. If you need to discuss pricing or collection, just send us a message on Vinted.

Who are we?
We are a registered charity, operating in Gateshead West since 2021. We provide good-quality preloved and brand new school uniforms to our community
CURRENTLY JUST FROM OUR SITE IN BLAYDON.
**No prices.
It's pay-as-you-feel.**



www.facebook.com/gatesheadwestprelovedschooluniform
<https://www.gatesheadwestuniformscheme.org.uk>
contact@GatesheadWestUniformScheme.org.uk
and find us as gwusne on Vinted

UPDATE!
ALL of our markets are now in St Cuthbert's Community Hall in Blaydon. We are next to the big blue building behind Morrisons.
NE21 5PT

Jan/Feb Markets are all at our Blaydon site...

Blaydon Fri 3rd Jan, 3:30pm - 5pm.
Blaydon Sat 11th Jan, 9:30am - 11am.
Blaydon Sat 18th Jan, 9:30am - 11am.
Blaydon Mon 27th Jan, 6pm - 7pm.
Blaydon Fri 7th Feb, 3:30pm - 5pm.
Blaydon Sat 8th Feb, 9:30am - 11am.
Blaydon Sat 15 Feb, 9:30am - 11am.
Blaydon Mon 24th Feb, 6pm - 7pm.

➔ NEW TIMES FOR SATURDAY MARKETS! ➔



1ST RYTON BEAVERS & CUBS

Calling all young adventurers to join our Beavers (6 - 8 year olds), Cubs (8 - 10 year olds) and Scouts (age 10 - 14 year olds).



Teamwork



Community Projects



Learn New Skills

To join Cubs, email emma.mons-white@rytonscouts.org.uk

To join Beavers (or the waitlist if you're not yet 6), email eleanor.baggaley@rytonscouts.org.uk

To join Scouts, email duncan.graham@rytonscouts.org.uk

The Gateshead West Uniform Scheme **will be operating markets out of the Blaydon site only for the foreseeable future.** The Ryton site is currently not in use.

All stock from Ryton is now at the Blaydon site including branded and unbranded uniform. They are based in St Cuthbert's Community Hall, next to the bright blue building behind Morrisons supermarket in Blaydon, NE21 5PT. Please note that the timings of the Saturday morning markets have changed slightly.

They have a market this Saturday 11th January, 9:30am - 11am, at Blaydon. No prices, just pay-as-you-feel.

If any parents cannot make it to Blaydon, they can contact us to arrange an alternative collection point by emailing us at contact@GatesheadWestUniformScheme.org.uk or messaging via our Facebook page.

School trips


As of Monday 13th January, we will have 3 school trips uploaded onto Arbor.

These will be for Year 2 to go to Beamish on 21st March, Years 4 and 5 to go to Segadunum on 3rd February. Both trips will be open from 8 a.m. on Monday until Friday 24th to make payments.

We also have the Year 6 residential trip on Arbor, this will close on 11th May.

Don't forget that parents can pay by instalments for the Year 6 residential trip.

If you require assistance with payments via Arbor or wish to discuss this further, please don't hesitate to contact us.



Afterschool clubs

Monday	Karate
Tuesday	Debating Club (keystage 2)
Wednesday	Art Club (Year 4 & 6)
Thursday	Tennis

We will let you know via the newsletter if any other clubs will be available.

School Uniform

Can we please remind parents that earrings are not part of the school uniform.

If your child has just had their ears pierced they must cover their ears with tape **before** they come into school or wear retainers.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Spotlight Celebration



Well done to Blake in Year 2 who passed his Stage 3 swimming.



Congratulations to Grace in Reception class who won a medal in her street dancing show during December. This is her first medal, what a superstar



Have you been won a trophy or a medal, did you paint a wonderful picture that you would like to share with us. This Spotlight Celebration page is for you!

We would like to see images of your achievements so that we can share them with our school community.

Did you climb your first mountain, help in the community or run your first race? All talents will be shared.

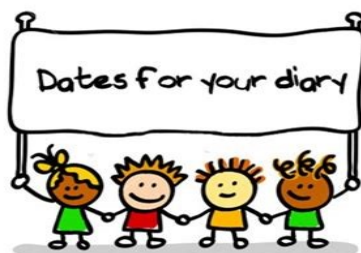
Please send all images and a short description to Miss Green by the end of the day on Thursday.

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

Dates for Your Diary

Thursday 16th January	Year 4 Mass in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Tuesday 21st January	Year 5 Assembly 9.10 a.m.
Thursday 23rd January	Year 2 Mass in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Friday 24th January	Reception Liturgy followed by coffee and chat
Tuesday 28th January	Year 4 Assembly 9.10 a.m.
Thursday 30th January	Year 5 Mass in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Saturday 1st February	Year 5 Enrichment Day at St Thomas More
Monday 3rd February	Year 4 & 5 visiting Segedunum
Thursday 6th February	Year 3 Mass in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Friday 7th February	Year 2 Liturgy followed by coffee and chat
10th - 13th February	Bikeability Year 5 & 6
Tuesday 11th February	Year 6 Assembly 9.10 a.m.
Thursday 13th February	Year 1 Mass in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Thursday 20th February	Whole School Mass in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Monday 24th February - Friday 28th February Half Term	
Wednesday 5th March	Ash Wednesday service in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Friday 14th March	Year 1 Liturgy followed by coffee and chat
Tuesday 18th March	Year 3 Assembly 9.10 a.m.
Friday 21st March	Year 2 visiting Beamish
19th - 26th March	Bookfair
Wednesday 26th March	Dance Festival
Friday 28th March	Year 5 Liturgy followed by coffee and chat
Tuesday 1st April	Big Sing at St Thomas More for Year 5
Tuesday 1st April	Reception Assembly 9.10 a.m.
Thursday 10th April	Whole School Mass in Church at 9.05 a.m.
Thursday 10th April	Year 6 Parents welcome evening at St Thomas More
Monday 14th April - Friday 25th April Easter Holidays	

Please note that if any of these dates change we highlight the new date in **Red**.



St. Mary and
St. Thomas Aquinas



Catholic Primary School

ADMISSIONS 2025

We are an
OUTSTANDING
School

**ALL FAMILIES
WELCOME**



- Flexible Nursery Provision, 15 & 30 Hours
- Before & After School Care
- Wide Variety of Extra Curricular Activities

Contact Us:

0191 414 3116
info@smtb.bwcet.com



**Why not
book a visit
to see our
school?**

St Mary & St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School
Stella Lane, Blaydon-on-Tyne, NE21 4NE
stmaryandstthomasaquinasblaydon.bwcet.com

