



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

### School Meals

As you are aware, an email was sent to all parent this week regarding the increase of school dinner prices. Gateshead School Catering (Gateshead Council), who provide the catering service for our school, have increased their charges to schools. As a result of this increase, the cost of a school meal for parents will rise from £3.00 to £3.10 per day, effective from Monday 27 April 2026.

This change reflects rising costs faced by Gateshead School Catering, including increases in food prices and staffing costs, which are outside the school's control.

We understand that any increase in costs can be challenging, and we want to reassure you that we remain committed to providing high quality, nutritious meals for all pupils. Children who are eligible for Free School Meals will not be affected by this change.

Thank you for your continued support.

### Attendance - Monitoring letters

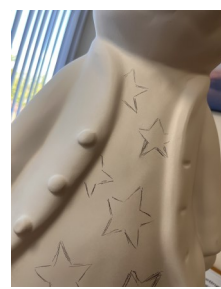
In line with our school attendance policy, all parents will have received a termly update outlining their child's attendance. As required by both the policy and BWCET guidelines, the school must also issue attendance monitoring letters to pupils whose attendance falls below a specified percentage.

These letters explain the expectation that pupils work towards achieving 100% attendance over a four-week monitoring period. If you receive a letter, we are confident that you will support your child in meeting this target during the set timeframe.

We also remind all parents that the school must be informed if your child will be absent for any reason.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and commitment to ensuring the very best education and opportunities for your child.

**Our school Peter Rabbit is coming along nicely. We've started to bring him to life! More to follow...**



### Stella Radio

The Wednesday Word Stella FM is once again up and running. Thanks to Miss Hall and Mr Patterson along with our Year 6 hosts, Logan and Molly as they delivered a reflection on this coming weeks Gospel. Please click on the image to take the opportunity to join us in prayer and reflection. It's the perfect opportunity to take a moment for yourself.



*"To follow Jesus means to share his merciful love for every human being."*

Pope Francis (Pope from 2013-2025)



## 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 also have our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in school, Mrs Bennison (Assistant Headteacher/ Year 2 class teacher and senior leader), Mrs McDonald (Year 4 teacher) and Miss Foster (School Business Manager).

If you are unable to speak to Mr Craig, you can speak to Mrs Bennison 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.

## 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 **class 2** who won the trophy this week.

Week beginning: Monday 20th April 2026	
Year group	Attendance percentage
<i>Reception</i>	97.78
<i>Year 1</i>	96.30
<i>Year 2</i>	<b>98.08</b>
<i>Year 3</i>	95.96
<i>Year 4</i>	97.13
<i>Year 5</i>	94.44
<i>Year 6</i>	97.62

### Inset day

Please note that school will be closed on Thursday 7th May due to our school being used as a polling station.

Staff will be in school on this day for training.

### Year 3 Swimming Lessons

Children in Year 3 will be partaking in swimming lessons on a Tuesday until the end of this academic year.

Please ensure that they have the correct swimming kit in school with them each week.

### School Mass

Children from Year 5 will be leading school Mass on Thursday 30th April at 9.05 a.m.

All are welcome to attend.



### Bank Holiday Monday

A reminder that school will be closed on Monday 4th May due to Bank Holiday

### School trips

Can parents please log onto Arbor on a regular basis, we have a few school trips on that require payment and for parents to give consent for your child to attend. Year 6 have 2 trips, the residential to Robinwood and a trip to Express at the Metro Centre. I have just put a trip on for Year 2 to attend Beamish Museum. If you need any assistance with Arbor, please contact Miss Green in the school office.

## Dates for your diary

### Sports Days

Please see our dates below for our annual Sports Days.

#### Monday 6th July - Key Stage 1 Sports Day

Gates will open at 1 p.m. for the event to start at 1.15 p.m.

#### Tuesday 7th July - Key stage 2 Sports Day

Gates will open at 1 p.m. for the event to start at 1.15 p.m.

#### Wednesday 8th July - Nursery Sports Day

This will take place in the morning with times to follow.

### Parents afternoon for new starters

We will be holding two afternoons for parents of children who will be starting school for the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

**Tuesday 23rd June** - Nursery open afternoon for parents of children attending the academic year 26/27. This meeting will be in the school hall commencing at 4 p.m. This is for parents only.

**Wednesday 24th June** - Reception open afternoon for parents of children attending Reception class. This meeting will be in the school hall commencing at 4 p.m. This is for parents only.

### Year 5/6 Football

We are incredibly proud to celebrate our school football team, who have won the league for the second year in a row - an amazing achievement and a first in Stella history! Boys, you are true history makers. Even more impressively, the team did not concede a single goal all season, showcasing an exceptionally strong and resilient defence. This success is even more remarkable given the setback of losing a key player to injury.

Click the link to watch a special video made by the boys, documenting their training, predictions, and the signing of a Year 5 player to the team following the injury: <https://youtu.be/IKmgkMcIpFo?feature=shared>

Well done, boys, we couldn't be prouder!



## Spotlight Celebration



Zac Wilson Year 3. Zac has completed his 100m certificate with his swimming club. Well done.

Jack (Y2) and Marco (Y1) achieved their Ball Mastery milestone at football this week...well done boys!



Anya (Year 6) had a busy Easter holidays with golf - playing over 100 holes and qualifying for the national Ping Junior Masters Final in October.



Leighton walked away with the POTM trophy today for a performance defined by pure grit and determination. He dominated the midfield and seemed to be all over the pitch at once. His decision-making was excellent, knowing exactly when to hold the ball and when to feed the attackers with some brilliant long balls. He even found himself in front of goal a couple of times



Jack in year 2 achieved his 10m in swimming over the Easter holidays...well done Jack!!



Emily has received her silver gymnastics award which she's worked so hard to achieve.

We would love to see more achievements, works of art or an event that you are proud of. Please send them to [hgreen@smtb.bwcet.com](mailto:hgreen@smtb.bwcet.com)

## Spotlight Celebration



Dixie had an incredible weekend last weekend and won 4 awards for her skiing.

- it was the club national race with skiers from all over the country and Dixie came first in her category and 3rd overall - such a great experience for her too and we're super proud !!



**Well Done to our Ski Champion**  
Dixie in Year 4 has once again demonstrated her excellent skiing skills while representing her school. Well done Dixie for all of your incredible achievements in skiing this year. With more to come on the horizon.

We would love to see more achievements, works of art or an event that you are proud of. Please send them to [hgreen@smtb.bwcet.com](mailto:hgreen@smtb.bwcet.com)

## Dates for you diary

### Summer Term

Thursday 30 <sup>th</sup> April	Year 5 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> May	Polling Day - Inset Day
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 4 Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 1 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 6 visiting the Metro Centre
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> May	Photographer in school taking class photographs
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> May	School Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> May	Year 6 visiting a Careers workshop at the Metro Centre
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Year 2 Fun Run at Saltwell Park
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May	Pentecost Parade

Half Term Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2026

### Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June

### Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> June

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June

### Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June

### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June

Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> July

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July

Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July

### Inset Day

### Year 2 visiting Beamish Museum

Year 6 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church

Holy Communion in Church

Year 4 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church

Year 3 Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall

Year 2 Assembly 9 a.m. in the school hall

New Nursery Parents afternoon - 4 p.m.

Reception Parents afternoon - 4 p.m.

Year 6 visiting the YMT for the Primary Festival

Gateshead Athletics Festival

Year 6 Residential at Robinwood Activity Centre

Year 1 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church

BWCET Celebration of Sport for Year 5

Keystage 1 Sports Day in the afternoon

Keystage 2 Sports Day in the afternoon

Nursery Sports Day in the morning

Year 2 Mass 9.05 a.m. in Church

Year 6 and Reception Celebration of the Word 2.30 p.m. in the school hall

School Mass (Leavers) 9.05 a.m. in Church

Year 6 Leavers Production

Summer holiday Monday 20<sup>th</sup> July until Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2026

Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August - Bank Holiday

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026 - Staff Inset

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026 - Staff Inset

