

**IMPORTANT DATES/TASKS THIS WEEK:**

- School will be closed on Monday 5th May for the May Bank Holiday.
 - Please make a note of the important dates for the upcoming term (see below).
 - IMPORTANT: Please read the note from Mr Wheatley regarding pupil attendance.
 - Please ensure that payment is made for all after-school clubs and extra-curricular opportunities.
 - Uniform – pupils may now wear Summer uniform (see [here](#) for more details). Please ensure that all items of clothing coming in to school are clearly labelled with your child's name.
 - Hot weather – please ensure that your child brings a filled water bottle to school each day and that sunscreen and sunhats are worn on hot days.
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SCHOOL UPDATES & REMINDERS

Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome back! I trust that you have all enjoyed a revitalising Easter holiday. I cannot quite believe that it is this time already, but once again, we find ourselves at the outset of our final Term of the school year. As you will see from the below diary dates, it is going to be another jam-packed Summer Term at St Mary's, and I – for one – cannot wait to see what is in store. I look forward to you being able to share in the successes of the upcoming Term with us all here at St Mary's and would urge you to continue keeping an eye on our weekly News Bulletin, school website (<https://stmaryswhickham.bwcet.com/>) and school X feed (@whickhamstmarys) for regular updates.

As ever, I would ask for your continued co-operation and support in maintaining the excellent levels of attendance that we have seen this year. As you know, we endeavour for all of our pupils to manage 97% attendance for the year as we know the impact that excellent attendance has on pupils' learning, well-being and friendships. Pupils are expected to be in school 190 out of the 365 days in a calendar year; it is for this reason that we discourage any unavoidable term-time absences and expect families to plan their holidays around the allocated school and bank holidays. That being said, it is important that pupil absence is always reported accurately and that we have a true record of where pupils are on days of absence as part of our safeguarding duty. Should you need to make a request for a term-time absence, please ensure that you inform us at least ten days prior to the intended absence via a 'request for leave of absence' form (available from the school office) which will ensure that we are able to respond to the request appropriately and make staff aware of any upcoming absence for pupils in their class. Thank you.

Thank you, as always, for all you do to support the aims of the school in helping your child to flourish. As ever, if you should have any concerns or need for a discussion please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours in Faithful Optimism,

Mr J Wheatley
Headteacher

POPE FRANCIS 1936-2025:

As you will undoubtedly be aware, Pope Francis, who served as the 265th successor of St Peter from his election on 13 March 2013 to 21 April 2025, died following a period of illness on Easter Monday. Through his leadership, Pope Francis was for our Church a beacon of humble service and pastoral care for the most vulnerable and marginalised members of our world, and we continue to pray for the repose of his soul, that he may now rest in the peace and rise in glory.

We pray too for the cardinals who will soon be called to elect the next leader of the Roman Catholic Church. We pray that the Holy Spirit move among the conclave guiding and encouraging these elected leaders to name the successor to St Peter for whom the Church waits expectantly.

TERM DATES:

- May half term will be from Monday 26th – Friday 30th May.
- The school will be closed to pupils for staff inset on Monday 2nd June.
- The final day of the school term for pupils and staff is Friday 18th July.
- The new academic year begins on 1st September 2025.

DIARY DATES:

Please make a note of the following key diary dates for the upcoming term:

- 12.5.25 – 15.5.25 KS2 SATs
- 19.5.25 – 23.5.25 Y6 Residential to Bassenfell Manor Christian Outdoor Centre
- Wb/2.6.25 (2-week window) Y4 Multiplication Tables Check
- Wb/9.6.25 Y1 Phonics Screening Check
- 10.6.25 Sports Day (KS2 – am, Rec/KS1 pm)
- 13.6.25 First Holy Communion celebration for pupils in Y4 (5:30pm at St Mary's RC Church)
- 22.6.25 Parish of Our Lady and St Philip Neri Gift for Life Summer Social
- 25.6.25 'Project Day' at St Thomas More for Y6 pupils
- 26.6.25 Friends of St Mary's family event (3:20-6pm)
- Wb/7.7.25 Celebrate the Curriculum events (see plan below)
- KS2 SATs results 8.7.25
- 11.7.25 Annual reports to be sent home
- 1.7.25 or 2.7.25 Transition Day (TBC)
- 3.7.25 Y5 to attend the Bishop Wilkinson CET 'Celebration of Sport'
- 10.7.25 French Day
- 17.7.25 Y6 Leavers' Mass (9:30am with reception at school following Mass)

Further dates and changes will be communicated via the weekly News Bulletin.

CELEBRATE THE CURRICULUM:

We would love to welcome parents/carers, family and friends to our final curriculum event of the year which will be a celebration of pupils' learning this year. The sessions will last approximately 30-45 minutes.

DATE/TIME	CLASS
9:15am 8.7.25	Year 2
2:30pm 8.7.25	Year 4
9:15am 9.7.25	Reception
2:30pm 9.7.25	Year 6
9:15am 10.7.25	Year 5
2:30pm 10.7.25	Year 3
9:15am 11.7.25	Year 1

FUN RUN:

We would be hugely grateful for volunteers to help our participation in the Gateshead schools' fun run at Saltwell Park (Years 3, 4 and 5 participating) on Friday 23rd May, 8:30am – 12pm. Please contact the school office if you are able to volunteer.

SPORTS UPDATE:

Well done to the school football team who, after a hard-fought season of action in the Blaydon and District League, were crowned champions of the 'shield' finals event which took place last week. On a wonderful evening of football, it was – as ever – the attitude and character of the players which shone through with the silverware acting as the icing on the cake for Mr Colling who has been so proud of everything that the team have achieved over the course of the season.