



IMPORTANT REMINDERS/TASKS THIS WEEK:

- REMINDER: All pupils will return after their half-term break on Monday 2nd March 2026.
- Please see attached **holiday dates for 2026-2027** (please be advised that there are two further Inset Days for the year which have yet to be allocated).
- All parents please read the enclosed note about **NHS Healthier Together**.
- Tuesday 3rd March – Reception and Year 6 Heights and Weights Session (information previously sent out via Arbor).
- Running club will resume each Wednesday after half term for pupils in KS2 (8:20am start). Pupils taking part should where their PE kit to school.
- Swimming will resume each Thursday for Year 4 after February half term.
The pupils will not require kit on Thursday 5th March, however, as pupils will be taking part in a classroom-based water safety session at the pool.
- Thursday 5th March - Reception Class, Year 1 and Year 2 visit to Wickham Library.
- World Book Day Celebrations in school – Friday 6th March. Children invited to come in to school in literary-themed costume (maybe inspired by a book that they have read in school this year).
- World Book Day Themed Meal – Friday 6th March – please see details below.

LENT 2026:

Last Wednesday marked the beginning of Lent: the season of preparation throughout which we journey in hopeful pilgrimage towards the glorious celebrations of the Easter Triduum (the three most holy days in the Church's calendar). At Mass on Wednesday, Canon Peter reminded us of our Christian calling throughout Lent: the ancient disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Over the coming weeks, pupils and staff will be getting involved in a range of activities as we ready ourselves for Easter.

- All pupils will be participating in the **Big Lent Walk** to raise money for CAFOD on the morning of **Wednesday 1st April**. We would love to invite family/friends from the school to join us on our walk. If you are able to give over a morning to help us out, please complete the following [form](#).
- We will also be asking pupils to consider doing something more for members of our community living in hardship by donating items to local food banks. Throughout Lent, pupils are being asked to bring in any of the following items that are in constant demand. Please be as generous as you can with your donations.
SHORT SUPPLY – UHT milk, cereal, dried pasta, pasta sauce, tinned garden peas, carrots, sweetcorn, feminine hygiene products, antiperspirant.
OTHER PRIORITY ITEMS – tomato purée, tinned custard, fruit, rice pudding, potatoes, tinned meat, baked beans, chopped tomatoes, tuna, long grained rice, cooking oil, biscuits, teabags, sugar, coffee, toothpaste, laundry powder/liquid, washing up liquid, spray cleaner.
- We will be celebrating Mass for the end of the Spring Term on **Thursday 26th March**. All welcome.

We pray that this will be a holy and reinvigorating Lent for us all.

REMINDER - EXPLORE THE CURRICULUM SESSIONS:

Explore the Curriculum sessions will begin after half term. Please see below a reminder of the dates/times of the upcoming sessions:

DATE	CLASS
Tuesday 3 rd March 9:15am	Y1 and Y2
Wednesday 4 th March 9:15am	Y3
Friday 6 th March 9:15am	Y6
Tuesday 10 th March 9:15am	Y5
Wednesday 11 th March 9:15am	Reception
Friday 13 th March 9:15am	Y4

WORLD BOOK DAY THEMED MEAL-FRIDAY 6TH MARCH:

To celebrate World Book Day, the kitchen will serve a *Horrid Henry* themed meal. As ever, if your child as a medical/alternative diet, their needs will be catered for within the special menu:

Horrid Henry's Crispy Chicken Burger (chicken burger in bun with lettuce and mayo)

Moody Margaret's Miserable Morsels (veggie burger in bun)

Perfect Pete's Virtuous Medley (mixed salad/veggie sticks)

Greasy Greta's Special Spuds (homemade garlic wedges)

The Purple Hand Gang's Secret Naughty Pud (double chocolate chip chocolate muffin)

SPORTS UPDATES:

Swimming Gala

Congratulations to our Y6 swimmers who performed brilliantly at the Gateshead Schools Swimming Gala this week. The team showed incredible teamwork, determination and support for one another to finish in 6th position overall and qualify for the South of Tyne Finals at South Shields in March. A huge well done also to our three individual medalists: Samuel for a bronze in breaststroke, Albie for a silver in the backstroke and with an outstanding gold in the backstroke, Ella! We look forward to seeing how they get on in their next stage of competition.

Key Stage 1 Girls' Football Festival

We are incredibly proud of our Year 2 girls, who took part in a special festival of girls' football last week. Every pupil demonstrated remarkable enthusiasm, teamwork and determination throughout the event, making it a truly memorable occasion. Events like this play an important role in inspiring more young women to take up football, helping them build confidence, stay active, and discover a love for the sport. Our Year 2 pupils represented the school brilliantly, and we hope their experience encourages even more girls to get involved in the future.

Well done to all who took part — you were fantastic ambassadors for our school!

NHS HEALTHIER TOGETHER – SUPPORTING FAMILIES AT ST MARY’S:

We are delighted to share that St Mary’s Catholic Primary School is taking part in the **NHS Healthier Together Programme**, helping families access reliable, NHS-approved health advice quickly and easily.

What Is Healthier Together?

Healthier Together is an NHS-trusted website and app that provides clear, evidence-based guidance on common childhood illnesses, mental health, and when to seek medical help. It helps families make confident decisions about their child’s health using reliable information. The website and app are NHS apps therefore please ensure you read the data sharing agreements when signing up to this. St Mary’s Catholic Primary School will not be able to access any of your information via the website or the app.

How This Benefits Families

Families often need quick access to trustworthy advice, especially outside GP or school hours. This programme gives parents NHS-approved guidance at their fingertips, supporting children’s health, confidence and attendance at school.

How can I download the App?

Your child has brought home a leaflet containing a **QR code** that will take you directly to the app on Google Play or the App Store.

The leaflet also includes useful guidance such as *“Worried your child has a fever?”*—just one example of the trusted information available through the app.

How You Can Support Us?

We would really appreciate parents downloading and using the Healthier Together app over the coming weeks. Your engagement helps us understand how useful families find this NHS resource and supports the success of the programme in school.

At the end of March, we will send out a short Microsoft Form asking for feedback on whether you’ve used the app and how helpful it has been. Your responses will be invaluable in guiding how the app is used in schools and the wider community in the future.