

St. John's C of E Primary School, Shildon

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Newsletter: Autumn Term 2023

Welcome

What a busy half term and an excellent start to the new school year! There are lots of things to share and celebrate ... as well as a few messages and important dates to pass on. I would also like to thank you for your continued support in all aspects of school.

Facebook

I hope you have all enjoyed following our Facebook page for up-to-date news and events in and out of school.

Pets

Our main responsibility in and around school is the safety of all our children. With this in mind, we are kindly asking anyone bringing or collecting children from school NOT to bring any pets, even to the school gate. Recently, there have been a number of instances of dogs biting or nipping children just outside the school gates. At the start and end of the day, the entrance area is very busy and this can cause anxiety for any pet, and if scared, they will retaliate. Please help us to keep everyone safe!

School Uniform and PE Kit

Firstly, thank you for your continued support in encouraging your children to wear school uniform. Our children always look so smart and ready to learn.

A reminder that we do not expect parents to pay for named or designer PE Kit. We would like children to wear plain back (no logos) and this can be purchased from any supermarket.

Our Uniform

- Red Jumper /Cardigan
- Dark Grey Trousers/Skirt/Pinafore (Red check dress for summer months if preferred)
- White Polo Shirt
- Black/Dark school shoes/trainers

PE Kit – It is essential that all children have a change of clothes for their PE kit for hygiene reasons. This can be brought into school on a Monday and returned home on a Friday for washing. Please note that parents are not expected to buy named sports items for PE kit.

- Plain Black round neck t-shirt (Please note the change of colour)
- Plain Black shorts/joggers/leggings
- Trainers/Plimsolls

Attendance and Punctuality

Congratulations to Year 2 who currently have the best overall attendance so far since September 96.73%, closely followed by Y4 with 96.36%. Well done everyone, a great achievement.

Attendance in school continues to be a priority and is vital to ensure pupils are not falling behind. We understand this can be challenging with many germs, however, if you have any questions at all about whether your child should be in school, please ask the school office for advice.

Our whole school attendance for Autumn 1 was 94.7%, which is just below Government expectations (96%). Please help us to continue to improve this. Earlier this term, we were extremely proud to award 7 pupils a certificate and £10 Tesco gift card for achieving 100% attendance throughout the whole of 2022-2023! Amazing!

Punctuality

Just a quick reminder that the school day starts at **8:40am prompt**. Making sure your child is in school on time is so important as learning begins immediately. Registers in each class will be taken by 9:00am. Children arriving after 9:00am will be marked as late. Any children arriving **after 9:30am**, will be marked as unauthorised and could result in a fine.



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These times are calculated over a school year - you can see how much these quickly add up:

5 minutes late each day = 3 days lost!
10 minutes late each day = 6 ½ days lost!
15 minutes late each day = 10 days lost!
20 minutes late each day = 13 days lost!
30 minutes late each day = 19 days lost!

Bikes and Scooters

We do continue to encourage children to walk, ride scooters or cycle to school. Thank you for reminding your children to walk their bikes and scooters through the school gates. However, just a quick note that bikes and scooters left at school are not the responsibility of school and we cannot guarantee their safety.

Primary School Choir of the Year Competition

Many of you will have seen that we have entered the Durham Music Service Primary School Choir of the Year Competition. We hope to get to the second round, when we will get to perform at Ushaw College near Durham. If our choir gets to the final, we will be singing in Durham Cathedral sometime in February 2024! Well done to our fantastic choir!

School Chaplain

Some parents have already met our School Chaplain, Catherine. Catherine works in school on a Thursday. She delivers Collective Worship and works all around school with pupils from all classes and is a listening ear for pupils, staff and parents. She is also an amazing driving force for lots of exciting community-based projects. Catherine will be running two Chaplaincy Groups for pupils in Y3 & Y4 (Thursday lunchtime) and Y5 & Y6 (Thursday 3-4pm). We are all extremely excited to have her on board as part of our Staff Team.

Mrs Norman

Mrs Norman (Nursery) is sadly leaving us this week, she has been a crucial part of our St. John's family for eight years and we will all be extremely sad to see her go. We would like to wish Mrs Norman the very best of luck as she embarks upon a new career.

Coat Collection

We have been totally blown away by the number of donated coats, for both children and adults. Thank you all so very much. We will be offering these coats free to any parents who would like or need one on **Thursday 16th November at 3:00pm** so don't forget to come along and try one on.



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Curriculum News

There have been so many wonderful things happening within school over the last half term. Most of these have been shared on Facebook, but just to mention a few:

Year 5 Science

Year 5 have completed some amazing Science work this term. They have visited: Low Barns Nature Reserve, a local area walk in Shildon and surrounding area, Harehope Quarry, Hamsterley Forest, Bowlees and Low Force.

Zoo lab

Zoo Lab came to Year 1. The children had a fantastic time looking at and even holding some strange and wonderful creatures as part of their science topic all about animals. The children saw everything from giant millipedes to tarantulas. They were all super brave too!

Year 6 Japanese Cooking

Year 6 enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of Japanese cooking. Pupils chopped, grated and sliced and produced the most amazing dishes that made everyone's mouths water all around school.

Parent Meetings

A huge thank you to all of the parents who attended our Parent Meetings last half term. It is crucial that children know that we are working together to support each and every one of them, so thank you! If you have any concerns about your child's learning, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

Harvest Service

A massive thank you to all of the children and parents that attended our Harvest Service. We were extremely disappointed not to have been able to go to Church, but we did not let that stop us from having an amazing time. Our pupils' singing was breathtaking – as always!

World Mental Health Day

As always, all of our children got on board to wear yellow to learn about World Mental Health Day. Thank you to parents for your support with this. Pupils were reminded about the positive benefits of talking and sharing their feelings. We even watched an assembly by Ant and Dec!



Durham Resilience Programme and Anxious About School

As a school we are currently taking part in two programmes to support us to improve the wellbeing of our school community.

The first is the Durham Resilience Programme (DRP) which aims to raise awareness of the importance of

developing and supporting resilience across school communities. The second is the Anxious About School Programme which aims to support those who are anxious, helping us to educate and identify how to support those in need.

Important Dates

Please note that children will return to school on **Thursday 4th January 8:40am.**

Breakfast club and Intervention Groups will also start again Thursday 4th January.

- Monday 13th November – Anti Bullying Week
- Friday 17th November – Children in Need
- Monday 20th November – Road Safety Week
- Friday 24th November – 2:00pm Coffee Afternoon
- Friday 1st December – 4:30pm Christmas Tree Switch on in Shildon – our school choir will be singing (parents are welcome)
- Tuesday 5th December – EYFS Performance am/pm
- Wednesday 6th December – KS1 Performance
- Thursday 7th December – KS2 Performance 2:00pm/6:00pm
- Friday 8th December – Reception, KS1 & KS2 – at Glow Church watching ‘The Gift’ Christmas performance
- Monday 11th December – Y5/Y6 Party
- Tuesday 12th December – Y3/Y4 Party
- Wednesday 13th December – Christmas Dinner Day
- Thursday 14th December – Y1/Y2 Party
- Friday 15th December – EYFS Party
- Tuesday 19th December – Christingle Service (9.30am in St. John’s Church) – everyone welcome
- Tuesday 19th December – 3:00pm Break up for Christmas Holidays



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