

Dates For Your Diary

Tuesday 9th January 2024- Children return to school

Friday 9th February 2024- Children break up from school for half term holiday

Monday 19th February 2024- Children return to school

Thursday 28th March 2024- Children break up from school for Easter holiday

Monday 15th April 2024- Children return to school

Monday 6th May- Bank Holiday (school closed)

Monday 13 May to Thursday 16 May 2024- Year 6 will sit Key Stage SATs

Friday 24th May 2024- Children break up from school for half term holiday

Monday 3rd June 2024- Children return to school

Friday 19th July 2024- Children break up from school for summer holiday



Happy Birthday

to pupils celebrating their birthday during December

Nadia Anastasia Georgia Harley KJ
Emily M Borys Kirsty



December Highlights

Big Sing:

On Tuesday 5th December, Year five and six took part in the Music Services 'Big Sing at Ushaw College. They sang a range of Christmas tunes to get us in the Christmas spirit.

Feast of Nicholas:

The 6th December was the feast of St. Nicholas. We thought about Christmas traditions around the world. In Poland, on the feast of St. Nicholas, children receive a small gift. Every child arrived at school to find a small gift waiting for them.

Christmas Coffee Afternoon:

On Wednesday 6th December, the PTA held their Christmas coffee afternoon with refreshments, stalls and games. A huge thank you to Mrs MacDonald for baking delicious goods (our wonderful cook, Mrs Wilkinson too), preparing all the games and visiting the shops to beg for donations.

Dementia Friends:

On Monday 11th December, we had a visitor from Dementia Friends. We now know some key messages about dementia. Every child was given a dementia friendly badge and a blue sweet to turn our tongue blue! Thank you Mrs Woodward!

Pantomime:

On Wednesday 13th December, the whole school went to Darlington Hippodrome to watch Snow White and the seven dwarfs. The children were fabulous ambassadors for St. Joseph's.

Polar Express Night:

On Wednesday 13th, the PTA ran a polar express night. The children dressed in the pyjamas, drank hot chocolate and ate Christmas treats.

Christmas Dinner:

On Thursday 14th December, we enjoyed Christmas dinner and crackers. Thank you so much Ms Wilkinson for preparing our delicious meal!

Christmas Visitors:

On Thursday 14th December, Santa and Newton Aycliffe Community police came to visit us along with their dog mascot. On Thursday 21st December, Santa came into school and gave every child a gift.

Christmas Disco:

On Wednesday 20th December, the PTA held a Christmas disco for the pupils. The children danced the night away and played a range of games.



Attendance

Children are required to be at school by 9am as our core subject lessons (English and Maths) begin immediately after registration.

Appointments should be made out of school time where possible please.

Holidays should be taken outside of term time.

The Department for Education deems that if a child's attendance drops below 90%, they become known as a Persistent Absentee. All absences are monitored thoroughly.

To celebrate great attendance, children with 100% in a week receive 10 dojos on a Friday.

Below are the percentages of attendance for each class for December:

Matthew (Nursery/Reception) – 84%

Mark (Year 1/2) – 89%

Luke (Year 3/4) – 92%

John (Year 5/6) – 85%

The government's target for attendance for primary school pupils is at least 95%.

Our whole school attendance for December was 87.3%

Our whole school attendance since the beginning of September is 91.4%

A child is classed as late if they arrive at school after 9.20am.

0.3% of our pupils arrived late in December.

A child is classed as unauthorised absence if they arrive at school after 9.30am.

1.7% of our pupils had unauthorised absences in December.



Uniform

School uniform promotes a sense of pride in the school and makes children feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance.

If your child is not in correct school uniform, we will ask for correct uniform to be brought in for your child to change into.

Our uniform is:

- Red sweatshirt or sweat cardigan



- White polo shirt



- Grey trousers or skirt/pinafore dress



- Sensible, plain black leather shoes/ trainers



Jeans and leggings are not permitted. Skirts and trousers should be grey not black.

PE

On PE days, children are to come to school dressed in their PE kit.

Mark (Year 1/2)- Monday

Luke (Year 3/4)- Thursday

John (Year 5/6)- Thursday

Our PE uniform is:

- Plain white T-shirt with no branding or logos from professional sports teams
- Plain black shorts or tracksuit bottoms with no branding or logos from professional

sports teams

- Red sweatshirt or sweat cardigan or hoodie
- Suitable black trainers

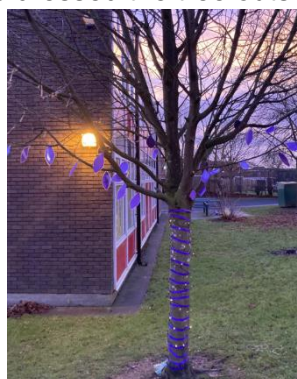
If your child comes to school in PE kit on a day which is not their PE day, we will ask for uniform to be brought in for your child to change into.

Eco Warriors Update

We have a battery recycling box in the main school reception area. We would love it if you could bring batteries in, when they're finished with, and recycle them. Please look for the box with the following sticker on:



Tree dressing, in the first week of December, is based on many old customs from all over the world and at different times of the year. We dressed the tree outside of the school reception for Advent with 'leaves of hope'.



Thank you!



Mini Vinnies Update

On Thursday 7th December, we led Christmas jumper day to raise money for Save The Children.

On Monday 11th December, we ran an afternoon tea for our parishioners. We set up the food and table, took the people's drink orders, chatted to them and led a game of bingo... with prizes! It was a fantastic afternoon.



**We wish you a
merry Christmas
and a
happy new year!**



**Lord you wait for us
to come and see you.
You wait to shine light
where there is darkness,
To show love
where there is hate,
To share peace
where there is conflict.
Lord you wait for us
to come and see you.
You wait for us
to remember
what has been fulfilled,
to prepare
for what must still be done.
You wait in hope and expectation,
Longing for us
To shine your light,
To show your love,
To share your peace.**

