



Star of the Sea Primary School
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7th February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our February newsletter. As the mornings and evenings become lighter, things feel brighter and everyone is feeling a little happier.

Lent starts next week and this is a time for reflection, leading up to Easter.

Please read the information below.

Our School values



We refer to our school values regularly in school. Our weekly awards are based on these. This photograph was taken from the display in the school hall. These values have been agreed with staff and pupils and are important to us.

Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent: Wednesday, 14th February

This year, Ash Wednesday falls on the 14th February. Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent and takes place 46 days before Easter. This also means that Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day) is the day before! Father Andrew will be coming into school to lead a service with our school family.

Children's Mental Health Week 5th to 11th February

This is a most important week in the school calendar. All classes will be involved in wellbeing and mindfulness activities and will discuss the importance of their own wellbeing.

If you feel your child needs any support with their mental health/wellbeing, we have many support mechanisms in place such as the school nurse, mental health first aid leads, the nurture club for break times and lunchtimes to name a few.

School Kindness

As you know, I am very proud to be the head teacher of our wonderful school and at Star of the Sea we hope there is a mutual code of conduct and respect for one another. We should be courteous and considerate to each other as this creates an atmosphere of kindness in and around our school. We should all be the best role models for our children. Unfortunately, I have been saddened to hear of a couple of disputes in the car park, surrounding neighbourhoods and on our yard which has prompted me to write this. Can we be mindful of how we speak to each other to allow Star of the Sea School to be a place where friendships and kindness flourish. Thank you.

Big Dribble

Please can we remind you that we are doing our sponsored the 'Big Dribble' this week. We are challenging pupils to dribble a football over a distance set by their teacher. This will take place during your child's usual PE lessons.

The money raised from 'The Big Dribble' will be used to fund FIFA standard footballs **for both our school and for young people in Zambia**. Every **£15** raised, is enough to purchase or donate a FIFA standard football from the not for profit charity, Alive and Kicking. We are hoping to raise as much money as possible with your help!

Donations can be made by clicking on the link below:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/starseabigdribble>

School Meal Changes and Valentine's Day and Pancake Day Treats

We have received feedback from our pupils on the meals that they enjoy and the ones that are not as popular so we have updated our school meals menu as follows:

Week 1: on Tuesdays: margherita pizza and baked potato wedges instead of the chicken wrap

Week 3: on Mondays: margherita pizza and baked potato wedges instead of creamy tomato pasta, on

Wednesdays: quorn fillet with roast potatoes and gravy instead of quorn and bean stew and on Thursdays: pasta bolognese instead of chicken and tomato pasta bake.

The updated menus are now on our website.

Also, next week, our school kitchen is adding some extra desserts on the following days:

13th February: pancakes with a choice of toppings, including fruit and syrups!

14th February: heart shaped cookies

I am sure our children will enjoy them.

Nut free school

We have children within school who have severe allergies to nuts. Please can you ensure that children's snacks do not contain nuts or nut extracts. Thank you.

Twitter

Please can we remind you that our school twitter account can be viewed at [@starseatweets](#).

World Book Day: Thursday 7th March

We will be celebrating this day in different ways in school. As you will know it is a priority that we foster the love of reading in children every day. On world book day children will be asked to bring into school their favourite bedtime book and can come to school wearing their pyjamas, if they would like to!

Comic Relief Red Nose Day: Friday 15th March

This will be a non-uniform day. More details will follow next half term.

February half term holiday

School will close on **Friday 16th February** and reopens on **Monday 26th February**.

Easter Holidays

School will close on Thursday 28th March for our Easter break. We reopen on Monday, 15th April.

Children's Common Conditions

We sometimes get enquires about head lice and threadworms, which are both common conditions in children which spread easily. Please can we remind you to check your child's hair regularly for head lice and if you would like advice on head lice or threadworms please visit the following NHS website:

[Head lice and nits - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

[Threadworms - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk).

RSC production with year 5 children

Once again, we are delighted to have been invited to work with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) this year. This will involve some of our year 5 children performing part of Hamlet at the Northern Stage Theatre in June. Miss Austin and Mrs Taylor will be leading on this.

Pupils' mobile phones

We regularly remind all children who own a mobile phone that these should be turned off before they come onto the schools grounds, then handed into their class teacher. Unfortunately, we occasionally have a problem with this. Please remind your child about turning their phone off before walking into the school yard. Thank you for your support with this.

Colour vision research with Newcastle University: Thursday 8th February

All children from year 3 to year 6 have been invited to take part in this research. The researchers are now coming into school this Thursday as they would like to interview as many pupils as possible so please could we ask that you complete the consent form if you would like your child to take part in this. You can return your child's form to school by tomorrow morning. Many thanks.

Applying for free school meals and holiday food vouchers

If your financial circumstances have changed your child may be eligible for free school meals and holiday food vouchers.

If you have already applied for free school meals, please email student.support@northtyneside.gov.uk and provide your child's name, date of birth, and school and ask them to re-assess your claim.

Please only apply online (if you have not already done so) at the link below or ring student support on 0191 643 2288 option 3 (lines are open from 09:00 – 15:00 Monday to Thursday and 09:00 – 14:00 Friday).

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/238/free-school-meals>.

Attendance letters for pupils with less than 90% attendance since September 2023

As advised in previous newsletters, we want all children to reach their full potential and they need to be in school in order to achieve this. Next week, attendance letters are being sent to families, if your child's attendance has fallen below 90%. The Local Authority has contacted school about some of our persistent absentees (attendance of below 90%) and will be asking to speak with some of our parents /carers.

If you need any support with your child's attendance, please contact school. Thank you.

Combat and Desert Survival Team Challenge Days

Our year 3 and 4 children had a fantastic time taking part in various challenges with their team leaders. We were very proud of how they worked together within their teams. Well done years 3 and 4.

Safeguarding

Safer Internet Day: This week, the 6th February, was internet safety day. All children were reminded of the importance of this and also how to keep themselves safe online. I am re-sharing the link below about children's use of social media apps: for example, **children should be aged 13+ when using Tik Tok and aged 16+ when using WhatsApp.**

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/what-age-can-my-child-start-social-networking/>

Important dates

Half Term holiday	19 th to 23 rd February
Shrove Tuesday (pancake day)	13 th February
Ash Wednesday	14 th February - service in school for pupils and staff
World book day	7 th March – wear your pyjamas day!
Comic Relief/Red Nose Day	15 th March – wear your own clothes day
Shakespeare Week	w/b 18 th March
Easter holiday	29 th March (Good Friday) to 12 th April
Summer term restart	Monday 15 th April

If you have any queries regarding any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me. I hope you have a lovely half term holiday when it comes.

Kindest regards,

Mrs K DiMambro
Head teacher.