



We love, we learn, we live.

ST. MARY'S R.C. FIRST SCHOOL HEXHAM



Prospectus 2019 –2020



We love, we learn, we live.

ST. MARY'S RC FIRST SCHOOL

‘The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding, the well-being and personal and spiritual development of each pupil is at the heart of the school’s vision and the staff and governors are united in implementing this across all areas of school life.’

Diocesan Inspection January 2016

‘There are very close links between staff and parents and real partnership working.’

Ofsted March 2016

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

HEXHAM ST. MARY'S R.C. FIRST SCHOOL

Information for Parents 2019 - 20

School Address:

St Mary's RC First School
Hencotes
Hexham
Northumberland
NE46 2EE

Telephone Number: 01434 - 603791
E-mail address: admin@hexhamstmarys.uk
Website: www.hexhamstmarys.uk

Classification of School: Voluntary Aided

Name of Executive Headteacher: Mrs Fiona Conley

Name and Address of Chairman of Governors

Mr Tomás Neeson
c/o St. Mary's RC Middle School
Hencotes
Hexham
Northumberland
NE46 2EE

Service Director for Education and Skills (NCC)

Dean Jackson
Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61

Welcome to St Mary's

Welcome to St Mary's RC First School. I am proud to be Executive Headteacher of St Mary's School, which dates back as far as 1832.

The very first official school for Roman Catholics since the Reformation was built on Hencotes in Hexham and was the earliest to be run by a Catholic Parish in the County. Like many other schools of that time it was a subscription school, with parents paying 9d a week for their children to be taught!

In September 1858, the Sunderland based Order of the Sisters of Mercy opened a branch house in Hexham, and for 137 years were involved in the running of the school and the education of Catholic children as teachers and Headmistresses. This era came to an end in 1996 when Sister M Philip the only remaining nun on the staff retired.

The original St Mary's School unfortunately had to be pulled down to make way for the extension and refurbishment of the school in 1993. One piece of the building still remains though, the school bell, which is incorporated into the East wall of the new extension on the side of the hall.

At St Mary's we care for children and their needs, talents and widening interests during this first important stage of their education. Every child has individual gifts and abilities. Our school recognises this. We believe that the key to high academic attainment is a good organisational structure and high expectations of the pupils. A firm discipline, combined with good teaching, set in a happy, caring working atmosphere will provide a stimulating learning environment in which all children can be encouraged to fulfil their potential.

If you would like to visit the school at work, please feel free to contact us for an appointment or visit our website to get a flavour of life at St Mary's including our most recent Ofsted reports.

www.hexhamstmarys.uk

We look forward to meeting you.

Fiona Conley
Executive Headteacher

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to welcome you to St. Mary's RC First School on behalf of the governing body.

We are very proud of our school and of the hard work and achievements of the staff, parents and pupils. I hope that you will appreciate the dedication and professionalism within the school when you visit us.

Although proud of this school, we are far from complacent. We are always striving to achieve the best possible results and resources for all the children in our care.

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the work of the governing body, please contact me via the school.

Yours faithfully,



Tomás Neeson
Chair of Governors

Introduction

This prospectus provides information concerning the school as required by National Legislation.

The prospectus is written primarily for parents who are considering this school for their child from within the parish catchment areas of St Mary's, Hexham; St John of Beverley, Haydon Bridge; St Wilfrid's, Haltwhistle; St Oswald's, Bellingham; St Elizabeth's, Minsteracres and St Mary's, Swinburne.

Parents whether resident inside or outside the school's catchment area who wish their children to attend the school must submit to Northumberland County Council an application by completing a School Preference Form. Please check Northumberland County Council Website for admissions portal.

How to find us

St Mary's First School is situated in the centre of Hexham, opposite the Sele Gate on Hencotes. We are adjacent to St Mary's Church and within walking distance of the town centre, the Queen's Hall Art Centre and library, swimming pool and many other amenities. The school has been extended and was totally refurbished in 1993, greatly improving the facilities and creating a tranquil, well protected and attractive site at the very heart of the town.

Facilities provided to assist access to the school

Outside ramps into the main reception area, hall, and rear playground entrance provide access for disabled pupils. There is also a disabled toilet on the ground floor for pupils requiring this facility. All classrooms are situated on the ground floor.

Type of school

St Mary's First School is a co-educational First School for boys and girls of all abilities between the ages of 4 and 9 years. It is the first stage of a three tier system of education. Children are admitted to our Reception Class in the September following their 4th birthday.

At the end of National Curriculum Year 4 at the age of 9+ children transfer to the middle school phase of their education.

DETAILS OF GOVERNING BODY

School Governors

Chairman Mr Tomás Neeson

Foundation Governors

Dr Howard Forrest
Mr Mark Dotchin
Fr Chris Warren
Mrs Patricia McMullon
Mr Mick Jonas
Mr John McArdle
Mrs Barbara Anne Dunn

Parent Governors Dr Suzanne Fairless-Aitken
Mrs Eleanor Stoves

Co-opted Governor Mrs Debbie Elliott

Staff Governors Mrs Kate Seddon

Executive Headteacher Mrs Fiona Conley

Clerk of Governing Body Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth

STAFF LIST

Executive Headteacher:	Fiona Conley
Executive Deputy Headteacher :	Kate Seddon
Assistant Headteachers:	Joanna Gelson Gavin Simpson
Teachers:	Rachel Baird Rachel Kane Emma Armitage Will Thompson Ruth Hunneysett Sarah Oakes
Inclusion Support Manager:	Eleanor Stoves
Classroom Support:	Debbie Elliott – HLTA Vita Lockhart - HLTA Samantha Montague Julia Henderson Marie Armstrong (TA Apprentice) Isobel Sandilands Amanda Bell Sharon Erving Selina Dodd
Federation Senior Admin Manager:	Alison Mellor
Admin Staff:	Pauline Gormley Helen Forster Susan Henderson Vicki Forster Anna Hutchinson
Caretaker in charge:	Farrel McKie
Cleaner:	Kathleen Longstaff
Lunch-time Supervisors:	Frances Barron
Kitchen Unit Manager:	Janet Berges
Catering Assistant:	June Blaylock

Mission Statement



*We Love,
We learn,
We live.*

St Mary's RC First School

This is what we are about:

- To tell the Christian story
- To try to be like Jesus
- To understand that we are all special, made to be like God
- To build a community which shows care and love
- To be fair, honest and forgiving towards each other
- To delight in living, learning and loving God... Together!
-

St Mary's RC First School, Hencotes, Hexham, Northumberland NE46 2EE

A Vision Statement for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Hexham and Newcastle Diocese has a proud, centuries-old tradition of education dating back to St Aidan, St Bede and St Cuthbert. Their story and witness to the Church's mission in education can be found in the Diocese's many historic churches and priories.

"As Catholic schools of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle we are called to be places centred on the person and message of Jesus Christ. This message is grounded in the scriptures, the teachings and traditions of faith and prayer of the Catholic Church and witnessed by saints and scholars of this and past ages" ***Bishop Kevin Dunn (Deceased March 2008)***

Our schools are an integral part of the Diocesan commitment to Catholic education as a lifelong process. Diocesan schools have a clear understanding of their mission. They exist to give the best education possible in the context of a distinctive Catholic ethos. Within this ethos they teach, give witness to, and offer to our young people a daily experience of the Catholic faith and Gospel teaching

ST MARY'S RC FIRST SCHOOL **ADMISSION POLICY 2020-21**

St Mary's RC First School was founded by the Catholic Church to provide education for children of Catholic families. Whenever there are more applications than places available, priority will be given to Catholic children in accordance with the oversubscription criteria listed below. The school is conducted by its governing body as part of the Catholic Church in accordance with its trust deed and instrument of government, and seeks at all times to be a witness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a Catholic school, we aim to provide a Catholic education for all our pupils. At a Catholic school, Catholic doctrine and practice permeate every aspect of the school's activity. It is essential that the Catholic character of the school's education be fully supported by all families in the school. We therefore hope that all parents will give their full, unreserved and positive support for the aims and ethos of the school. This does not affect the right of an applicant who is not Catholic to apply for and be admitted to a place at the school in accordance with the admission arrangements.

The admission policy criteria will be dealt with on an equal preference basis.

The governing body is the admissions authority and has responsibility for admissions to this school. The local authority undertakes the coordination of admission arrangements during the normal admission round for reception year admission in September.

Parishes served by the school

The school serves the parishes of St Mary's, Hexham (including Corbridge and Swinburne), St John of Beverley, Haydon Bridge, St Wilfred's, Haltwhistle, St Oswald's, Bellingham, St Peter's, Otterburn, St Elizabeth's, Minsteracres.

Published Admission Number

The governing body has set its published admission number (PAN) at 30 pupils to be admitted to [the reception year] in the school year which begins in September 2020.

Application Procedures and Timetable

To apply for a place at this school in the normal admission round (not in-year applications), a Common Application Form (CAF) must be completed. This is available from the local authority in which the child lives. Please see link below.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1.aspx>

The parent will be advised of the outcome of the application on 16 April or the next working day, by the local authority. If the application is unsuccessful (unless the child gained a place at a school the parent ranked higher) the parent will be informed of the decision, related to the oversubscription criteria listed above, and has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel.

If the parent is required to provide supplemental evidence to support the application (e.g. a baptismal certificate), this evidence should be provided at the time of application. If not provided, evidence may be sought by the governing body following the closing date for applications. This information must have been correct at the date of closing for applications.

All applications which are submitted on time will be considered at the same time and after the closing date for admissions which is 15 January 2020.

Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (see note 1)

The admission of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Educational Needs is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs that names the school must be admitted. Where this takes place before the allocation of places under these arrangements this will reduce the number of places available to other children.

Late Applications

Late applications will be administered in accordance with the home local authority Primary Coordinated Admissions Scheme. Parents are advised to ensure that the application is submitted before the closing date.

Admission of Children below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry

A child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following their fourth birthday. A child's parents may defer the date at which their child, below compulsory school age, is admitted to the school, until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year for which an offer was made. A child may take up a part-time place until later in the school year, but not beyond the point at which the child reaches compulsory school age. Upon receipt of the offer of a place a parent should notify the school in writing, as soon as possible, that they wish to either defer their child's entry to the school or take up a part-time place.

Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Any such request should be made in writing to the Executive Headteacher of the school. The governing body will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the Executive Headteacher who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

Summer Born Children

The parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August, may request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to the reception class in the September following their fifth birthday and that that the child will remain in this cohort as they progress through school.

Parents who want to make this request should make an application for their child's normal age group at the usual time. The application to the local authority should include this request and in addition it should be made in writing to the Executive Headteacher of the school. The local authority will liaise

with the governing body that will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the Executive Headteacher, who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the governing body will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

Parents will be informed of the outcome of the request before primary national offer day.

If the request is agreed by the governing body, the application for the normal age group may be withdrawn before a place is offered. If the request is refused, the parent must decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to year one for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Where a parent's request is agreed, they must make a new application as part of the main admissions round the following year.

One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission out of the normal age group. Parents, therefore, should consider whether to request admission out of the normal year group at all their preference schools, rather than just their first preference schools.

Waiting Lists

In addition to their right of appeal, applicants will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. This waiting list will be maintained in order of the oversubscription criteria set out below and not in the order in which applications are received or added to the list. Waiting lists for admission will operate throughout the school year. The waiting list will be held open until the last day of the summer term. Inclusion on the school's waiting list does not mean that a place will eventually become available.

Infant Class Size Regulations

Infant classes may not, by law, contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher (subject to the provisions in the School Admissions Code for 'excepted children'). Parents do have a right of appeal in accordance with the infant class size regulations if the school is oversubscribed and their child is refused a place.

The governing body will, where logistically possible, admit twins and all siblings from multiple births where one of the children is the last child ranked within the school's PAN.

In-Year Applications

An application can be made for a place for a child at any time outside the admission round and the child will be admitted where there are available places. Applications should be made to the school by contacting the Executive Headteacher at St Mary's RC First School. Parents will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing. Where there are places available but more applications than places, the published oversubscription criteria, as set out above, will be applied. If there are no places available, a request can be made that the child is added to the waiting list (see above). The parent has the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel if refused a place.

Right of Appeal

Where a parent has been notified that a place is not available for a child, every effort will be made by the local authority to help the parent to find a place in a suitable alternative school. Parents who are

refused a place have a statutory right of appeal. Further details of the appeals process are available by writing to the chair of governors at the school address.

Fair Access Protocol

The school is committed to taking its fair share of children who are vulnerable and/or hard to place, as set out in locally agreed protocols. Accordingly, outside the normal admission round the governing body is empowered to give absolute priority to a child where admission is requested under any local protocol that has been agreed by both the diocese and the governing body for the current school year. The governing body has this power, even when admitting the child would mean exceeding the published admission number (subject to the infant class size exceptions).

False evidence

The governing body reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a place or, where a child is already attending the school, the place itself, where it is satisfied that the offer or place was obtained by deception.

Oversubscription Criteria

Where there are more applications for places than the number of places available, places will be offered according to the following order of priority.

First priority in each category will be given to children who will have an older sibling attending the school in September 2020.

1. Catholic looked after and previously looked after children. (see notes 2&3)
2. Catholic children who are resident in the parishes of St Mary's, Hexham (including Corbridge and Swinburne), St John of Beverley, Haydon Bridge, St Wilfred's, Haltwhistle, St Oswald's, Bellingham, St Peter's, Otterburn, St Elizabeth's, Minsteracres. (see note 3)
3. Other Catholic children. (see note 3)
4. Other looked after and previously looked after children. (see note 2)
5. Catechumens and members of an Eastern Christian Church. (see notes 4&5)
6. Children of other Christian denominations whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader. (see note 6)
7. Children of other faiths whose membership is evidenced by a minister or faith leader. (see note 7)
8. Any other children.

Tie Breaker

Where there are places available for some, but not all applicants within a particular criterion priority will be given to children living closest to the school determined by the shortest distance. Distance will be measured in a straight line (as the crow flies) from the front door of the child's address (including flats) to the main entrance of the school, (using the Local Authority's computerised measuring

system) with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. In the event of distances being the same for two or more children where this would determine the last place to be allocated, random allocation will be carried out in a public place and supervised by a person independent of the school.

Notes and definitions

1. An **Education, Health and Care Plan** is a plan made by the local authority under section 37 of the Children and Families Act 2014, specifying the special educational provision required for a child.
2. A **looked after child** has the same meaning as in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989, and means any child who is (a) in the care of a local authority or (b) being provided with accommodation by them in the exercise of their social services functions (e.g. children with foster parents) at the time of making application to the school.

A **previously looked after child** is a child who was looked after, but ceased to be so because he or she was adopted, or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order.

3. **Catholic** means a member of a Church in full communion with the See of Rome. This includes the Eastern Catholic Churches. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of baptism in a Catholic Church or a certificate of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. For the purposes of this policy, it includes a looked after child living with a family where at least one of the parents is Catholic.

For a child to be treated as Catholic, evidence of Catholic baptism or reception into the Church will be required. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism should contact their Parish Priest who, after consulting with the Diocese, will decide how the question of baptism is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.

4. **Catechumen** means a member of the catechumenate of a Catholic Church. For the purposes of admissions this refers to the child on whose behalf the application is being made. This will normally be evidenced by a certificate of reception into the order of catechumens.
5. **Eastern Christian Church** includes Orthodox Churches, and is normally evidenced by a certificate of baptism or reception from the authorities of that Church. Those who have difficulty obtaining written evidence of baptism or reception should contact the Diocese who will decide how the question of baptism or reception is to be resolved and how written evidence is to be produced in accordance with the law of the Church.
6. **Children of other Christian denominations** means children who belong to other churches and ecclesial communities which, acknowledge God's revelation in Christ, confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures, and, in obedience to God's will and in the power of the Holy Spirit commit themselves: to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is his body; and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. An ecclesial community which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition,

is included if it manifests faith in Christ as witnessed to in the Scriptures and is committed to working in the spirit of the above.

All members of Churches Together in England and CYTŪN are deemed to be included in the above definition, as are all other churches and ecclesial communities that are in membership of any local Churches Together Group (by whatever title) on the above basis.

Applicants must provide a baptismal certificate or where child baptism is not practised, a letter confirming their church membership from their minister or faith leader.

7. **Children of other faiths** means children who are members of a religious community that does not fall within the definition of ‘other Christian denominations’ at 6 above and which falls within the definition of a religion for the purposes of charity law. The Charities Act 2011 defines religion to include:

- A religion which involves belief in more than one God, and
- A religion which does not involve belief in a God.

Case law has identified certain characteristics which describe the meaning of religion for the purposes of charity law, which are characterised by a belief in a supreme being and an expression of belief in that supreme being through worship.

Applicants must provide a letter of support to confirm their faith membership from their minister or faith leader.

8. A child’s **home address** refers to the address where the child usually lives with a parent or carer, and will be the address provided in the Common Application Form (“CAF”). Where parents have shared responsibility for a child, and the child lives for part of the week with each parent, the home address will be the address given in the CAF, provided that the child resides at that address for any part of the school week.

9. **Sibling** includes:

- (i) all natural brothers or sisters, half brothers or sisters, adopted brothers or sisters, stepbrothers or sisters, foster brothers or sisters, whether or not they are living at the same address; and
- (ii) the child of a parent’s partner where that child lives for at least part of the week in the same family unit at the same home address as the child who is the subject of the application.

10. A **parent** means all natural parents, any person who is not a parent but has parental responsibility for a child, and any person who has care of a child (having care of a child means that the child lives with and is looked after by that person).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the local authority’s admission guidance for parents.

Class Organisation

St Mary's is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic First School for children between the ages of 4 and 9 years. Our school covers the Foundation Stage (Reception class), Key Stage 1 and the first two years of Key Stage 2 (Lower Key Stage 2). Upper Key Stage 2 is completed when the children reach 11 years of age at the end of Year 6 in middle school.

Age (majority of children at end of key stage unit)

Foundation Stage
Teaching & Learning Unit

Five Years

Key Stage 1
Teaching & Learning Unit

Seven Years

Lower Key Stage 2
Teaching & Learning Unit

Nine Years

Each key stage unit is mixed ability and includes both boys and girls. The composition of classes and groups within a unit is flexible to maximise teaching and learning.



School Uniform

Supplied by SALTO UK, Prudhoe

Early Years & Years 1 & 2

Compulsory

Navy/Sky Sweatshirt or Cardigan with school logo

White Polo Shirt with school logo

Navy skirt, pinafore or navy trousers for girls

Strictly no jeans, leggings or fashion trousers

Grey trousers for boys

Plain black polishable school shoes, trainers are not allowed

PE Kit

Compulsory

Polo shirt

Shorts

Optional

Boys plain navy track pants

Girls plain navy leggings

Navy/Sky Hoodie

Years 3 & 4

Compulsory

Navy/Sky Sweatshirt or Cardigan with school logo

Navy/Sky Tie

White shirt or blouse

Navy skirt, pinafore or navy trousers for girls

Strictly no jeans, leggings or fashion trousers

Grey trousers for boys

Plain black polishable school shoes, trainers are not allowed

PE Kit

Compulsory

Polo shirt

Shorts or skort

Optional

Boys plain navy track pants

Girls plain navy leggings

Navy/Sky Hoodie

All Year Groups

Girls will also have the option to wear a summer dress in pale blue and white gingham with a plain navy cardigan.

A book bag and PE bag is also available from the suppliers.

Jewellery

Watch

Earrings (1 pair only) should be gold, blue or silver studs

Necklace – crucifix or cross only

No nail varnish

St Mary's RCVA First School GDPR STATEMENT

St. Mary's First School strives to meet the standards, as set out in the GDPR and the Data Protection act 2018.

Data Protection Act 1998: How we use pupil information

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Who do we share pupils information with?

We routinely share pupil information with:

- Schools or colleges that the pupils attend after leaving us
- Our local authority and their commissioned providers of local authority services
- The Department of Education (DfE)

Storing pupil Information

At St. Mary's First, we keep information about your child on our computer systems and also sometimes on paper.

We hold your child's education records securely. Any essential records on an individual child follow them through their education establishments. St. Mary's First holds a record of the schools each child has moved to.

There are strict controls on who can see your information. The school protects all data and will pay particular attention to the security of especially sensitive data. Parents will be asked for their consent for the school to process some specific data (such as photographs).

The National Pupil Database (NPD)

The NPD is owned and managed by the Department for Education and contains information about pupils in schools in England. It provides invaluable evidence on educational performance to inform independent research, as well as studies commissioned by the Department. It is held in electronic format for statistical purposes. This information is securely collected from a range of sources including schools, local authorities and awarding bodies.

We are required by law, to provide information about our pupils to the DfE as part of statutory data collections such as the School Census and Early Years' Census. Some of this information is then stored in the NPD. The law that allows this is the Education (Information About Individual Pupils) (England) Regulations 2013.

To find out more about the pupil information we share with the Department for Education (DfE), for the purpose of data collections, go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-pupil-database-user-guide-and-supporting-information>.

The DfE may share information about our pupils from the NPD with third parties who promote the education or well-being of children in England by:

- Conducting research or analysis
- Producing statistics
- Providing information, advice or guidance

The DfE has robust processes in place to ensure the confidentiality of our data is maintained and there are stringent controls in place regarding access and use of the data. Decisions on whether DfE releases data to third parties are subject to a strict approval process and based on a detailed assessment of:

- Who is requesting the data
- The purpose for which it is required
- The level and sensitivity of data requested and
- The arrangements in place to store and handle the data

To be granted access to pupil information, organisations must comply with strict terms and conditions covering the confidentiality and handling of the data, security arrangements and retention and use of the data.

For more information about the DfE's data sharing process, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection-how-we-collect-and-share-research-data>

For information about which organisations the DfE has provided pupil information, (and for which project), please visit the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-pupil-database-requests-received>

Requesting access to your personal data

Under data protection legislation, parents have the right to request access to information about themselves or their child that we hold. To make a request for your personal information, or be given access to your child's educational record, please contact the school office or the Executive Headteacher. The school will, on an annual basis, share individual Data Collection Sheets with you in order to ensure that our records are accurate and up to date. We request that these are returned promptly and that school is advised of any changes as soon as possible.

You also have the right to:

- Object to the processing of personal data that is likely to cause, or is causing, damage or distress
- Prevent processing for the purpose of direct marketing
- Object to decisions being taken by automated means
- In certain circumstances, have inaccurate personal data rectified, blocked, erased or destroyed; and
- Claim compensation for damages caused by a breach of the Data Protection regulations

If you have a concern about the way we are collecting or using your personal data, you should raise your concern with us in the first instance or directly to the Information Commissioner's Office at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns/> .

GOVERNOR AIMS AND AMBITIONS FOR ST MARY'S

Parents, staff, governors and parishioners came together to articulate their ambitions for St Mary's RC First School and the children in its care. They confirmed the strong ethos of care and achievement that is central to the School. These Ambitions will remain alive and important as the yard-stick by which governors will measure the continuing success of the school and against which they will report to parents.

Progress and attainment in core skills

At St Mary's, children will learn at the best pace for each individual, develop positive attitudes towards their own and others' high attainment, and be confident to make the most of their own potential.

Wider skills, knowledge, talents and experiences

At St Mary's, children will experience a rich variety of opportunities for learning, make healthy choices about lifestyles, be encouraged to develop a passion for learning and be able to enjoy celebrating their achievements inside and outside school.

Social skills and interactions

At St Mary's, children will respect themselves and others and the differences between people, listen to others' views and articulate their own ideas with equal confidence, and be able to speak out against inappropriate behaviour including when they might feel excluded or see others being excluded.

Faith and beliefs

At St Mary's, children will understand and enjoy their faith and see it as integral to their daily life, have confidence to explore and ask questions about their own faith, benefit from close physical and spiritual links between school and church, and respect and be inquisitive about others' faiths.

To support the overall ambitions for St Mary's, communications between the school and parents will remain based on easy access to teachers, provide clear, timely, written information that explains significant changes in good detail, and give parents the opportunity to know that their child is making best progress.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN - DUTY OF CARE

The Governors and Staff of St Mary's RC First School have a duty of care regarding the welfare of children. In line with current Child Protection Guidelines we are duty bound to refer to Social Services if we are concerned that a child is at risk of any of the four categories of abuse: neglect, physical, emotional or sexual.

The Curriculum

From September 2014, a new ‘Primary Curriculum’ was introduced across all schools the main aim of which was to raise standards and produce productive, creative and well educated students.

St Mary’s continues to provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils in line with national expectations.

We strive to deliver the kind of programme that we feel is going to make a real difference to children’s lives. Ensuring that our children grow up to lead safe, happy and successful lives is at the heart of what we do. We are working hard to meet the outcomes of the “Every Child Matters” agenda by taking every opportunity to integrate them both within and beyond the school.

Core Subjects: RE, Maths, English, Science

The Foundation Subjects: Computing,
History, Geography,
Design & Technology,
Music, Art and Design, PE,
Citizenship

In addition St Mary’s offers a range of outdoor educational activities.

The programmes of study for the above foundation subjects are taught within carefully selected topics which draw upon a number of different subject areas.

The children are taught these National Curriculum subjects and RE in mixed ability groups delivered through a skills based creative curriculum.

Liaison with St Joseph’s RC Middle School, Hexham ensures continuity and progression through the programmes of work for the children as they work through Key Stage 2 of the National Curriculum in Years 3 and 4 with us at St Mary’s then into Years 5 and 6 at St Joseph’s Middle School.

Religious Education



St Mary's is a Catholic school created by a community of faith wishing to pass on a way of life and an understanding of this faith to their children.

This is the reason for our existence and is at the heart of everything we do. We hope it is clearly expressed in our Mission Statement and reflected in our relationships with each other.

We celebrate our faith in a variety of ways; daily in each class, weekly in assemblies, Collective Worship and with the school Parish community both in school and church.

The programme for teaching Religious Education is based on "Come and See" and it is integrated into many other aspects of the curriculum as well as our wider parish communities. We are greatly enriched by the strongly supportive community to which our children belong.

Preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist usually takes place in Year 4 in partnership with the parish to which the children belong.

For children of other faiths we look for shared beliefs rather than differences and welcome the opportunity to grow closer to each other in our common search for God in our lives.

English



Reading: Children learn to read with understanding and fluency. They are encouraged to be enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers. The school uses a variety of resources. Children are introduced to a wide range of literature to extend and enrich their reading experiences.

Writing: The children are stimulated to write stories, letters, poems and are taught punctuation, spelling rules, grammar skills, language structure, handwriting, layout and presentation. They are encouraged to record their work independently in science, technology and humanities.

Speaking and listening: Children are encouraged to speak with confidence, fluency and clarity expressing their thoughts, feelings and ideas as clearly as possible.

Listening skills are developed to enable the child to understand, concentrate and follow instructions, to memorise and discriminate.

Mathematics



Through quality teaching of mathematics children are helped to develop enquiring minds in a stimulating and challenging context. Our maths teaching is underpinned by the learning objectives stated in the National Curriculum, providing a rich diet of maths activities and experiences delivered at an exciting pace. Teachers aim to make mathematics fun, and although the learning aims are similar for all children within a unit – the tasks are set appropriately to suit the varying ability levels. We provide opportunities for investigational and problem solving work, as well as ensuring that maths is linked to the real world wherever possible.

Science



Science incorporates knowledge about living things, different kinds of materials and physical processes, but it presents them in an exciting and practical way which stimulates children to investigate and to make sense of the familiar world around them. We use a wide range of resources and equipment to challenge the children to explore, to investigate, to think about their findings and to present their discoveries in a systematic manner.

Computing

All of our children from Reception class onwards benefit from our ICT facilities. Each classroom has internet access and an interactive whiteboard. We also enjoy the facility of an ICT suite where the whole class can work simultaneously.

Our range of equipment such as iPads and software caters for all aspects of ICT at a variety of levels and so prepares our children to be confident and capable users.

Music

This is an important part of the curriculum. We provide opportunities for choral, instrumental, tuned and untuned percussion playing. We train children to listen, compose and perform to music.

All children are encouraged to show their creative skills in productions and participation in celebrations whenever possible. Musical workshops are presented to encourage pupils to participate in instrumental tuition. We have peripatetic violin, guitar, piano and percussion teachers who visit the school on a weekly basis by arrangement.

PE



PE plays an important role in the whole curriculum at St Mary's. We see PE as developing the whole child physically, socially and intellectually. We try to build on the child's enjoyment and enthusiasm.

The children have opportunities to experience dance, games (both individual and team), athletics, gymnastics and swimming in both key stages.

Humanities and Technology



Design technology, history and geography are linked to a variety of topics throughout the school. Most topics have a particular emphasis to ensure that specific areas of the curriculum can be covered while incorporating other subject areas.

Art and Design

Children are given opportunities to experience and investigate a variety of materials, tools and techniques. By making comparisons and reflecting upon works of art and artefacts, including their own they are encouraged to develop their knowledge and understanding of art.

Primary Curriculum for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education



Relationships Education is taught through religious education and science as well as other areas of the curriculum by way of a cross curricular, integrated approach. All elements of Citizenship are covered. We are part of the Northumberland 'Healthy Schools' initiative and deliver areas of Relationships Education through Health Education too.

We recognise that Relationships Education requires sensitive teaching which is matched in particular by the specific needs and concerns of pupils. Teachers will use their professional judgement when addressing issues in Relationships Education.

It is our hope that parents would wish pupils to be involved in the school's programme of Relationship and Sex Education. However, we recognise parents have the right to withdraw their children from this but not from those areas which are required by the science National Curriculum. If you wish to withdraw your child you must confirm this in writing to the Executive Headteacher.

Special Help for Children

The staff and governors continue to ensure the importance of provision of Special Educational Needs across the whole curriculum. Provision of SEN will be an integral part of each separate curriculum subject, through planning and providing for activities which are suitable to best reflect the individual pupil's level of ability and interest, and ensuring that this is matched to National Curriculum Attainment Targets within appropriate levels.

It is initially the responsibility of the class teacher, liaising with parents, to identify and register children whose academic, physical, social or emotional development is giving cause for concern. Children's areas of need which require extra attention are then identified.

At first, action will normally be taken to meet the child's needs within the normal range of differentiated classwork. If further, more detailed help is required, an individual education plan will be drawn up to address problem areas more specifically.

In the event that specialist advice is sought (educational psychologist, social services, specialist teacher etc) this will guide the formulation of a special education plan, which, again, will still be carried out within the normal school setting as far as possible.

If professional advice is such that still further help is needed the child will be referred to the LEA for statutory assessment which may then lead to a Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) setting out the child's difficulties and the measures which must be taken to address them.

While these are the formal stages which are followed, the principle of support and encouragement by school and parents and the identification of strengths as well as weaknesses are vitally important. In their individual work plans children are set a small number of achievable goals, building on what they have already achieved, so that they experience success. This is the most powerful stimulus of all.

Homework

Homework at St Mary's may be given in a variety of forms:

- * Reading
- * Weekly spellings
- * Numeracy tasks
- * Mini projects - finding out information
- * Extension of work already started in the classroom
- * Preparation of work to come
- * Consolidation of skills already learnt i.e. practice and revision

Our aims in setting homework are:

- * to strengthen the partnership between home and school
- * to consolidate skills
- * to extend school learning
- * to exploit resources for learning at home
- * to improve children's attitude towards learning
- * to develop discipline of studying alone (KS 2)

and ultimately boost confidence and the academic achievement of every pupil.

Whilst we do feel that it is important that children develop the routine of doing homework it should not be used to the extent that it restricts the time available for other out of school activities which help

to develop the physical and social elements of the whole child such as sporting activities, cubs, brownies etc.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We try to offer opportunities for extra- curricular activities such as after school sports clubs run by established sports' providers. When such courses become available parents are informed by the school.

We also offer opportunities during the school day for children to learn to play the violin, guitar, and drums. Gardening club is also a popular extra-curricular club.

Health and Safety

Our safety representative is the Executive Headteacher. There are also several members of staff who are qualified First Aiders. It is our policy to take all measures which are reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of all pupils, staff, other workers and visitors to the school site. Fire drills operate at least once a term.

In the event of a minor accident or illness, the child is dealt with on the premises. If a child requires hospital treatment, parents are informed and in the event of serious injury Northumberland County Council are also informed.

Behaviour and Discipline

Our aim is to develop self-discipline in all our pupils. Children are expected to be orderly in their conduct, showing respect, courtesy and good manners and having regard for their own and others' property. Our approach to behaviour management is based on the Gospel values and Christian principles that each person is uniquely important and brings to the school community his/her own gifts and needs. It requires all staff to work together to promote an explicitly Christian ethos where the development of the whole child is central.

In brief our policy aims to:

- * develop the gifts of each individual child through self-discipline
- * place an emphasis on a positive approach using encouragement and praise rather than on a negative one of criticism and punishment
- * develop good relationships throughout the school based on mutual respect between adults and children with a clear code of conduct
- * ensure that pupils, parents and staff are aware that bullying behaviour is completely unacceptable and that everyone has a responsibility to challenge and prevent such behaviour

In serious cases of misconduct, parents are informed and their co-operation requested. Praise is used to reinforce acceptable behaviour.

The children are aware of the school rules and code of conduct that operates.

Important information for parents

- Money brought into school should be in a clearly marked envelope with the child's name, class and what the money is for. When children are requested to bring money to school, this will be collected at the earliest opportunity by appropriate members of staff. School also operates an online payment system through Parentmail which makes payment of monies even easier.
- No child will be allowed to leave school during school hours, unless they go home for lunch, unless they have written permission, or unless they have the permission of the Executive Headteacher or the teacher on duty.
- All children's property should be marked with the child's name.
- The reason for a child's absence should be made known as soon as possible, by telephone or letter.
- Concerning loss or theft of pupil's personal property including jewellery: children should not bring expensive items of personal property to school. The school cannot guarantee the safety of such items and the LA cannot accept responsibility for the loss or theft of pupil's personal property.
- Jewellery, including earrings, should not be worn by children in school for various reasons of safety. Pupils who wear jewellery may expose themselves and others to risk of serious injury, particularly during practical lessons where machinery or apparatus is used, as well as in PE and games activities.
- Sweets are not encouraged on the premises.
- Due to potential allergy risk, we would ask that your child does not bring any food to school that does not contain nuts.

In order to safeguard your child's property and to maintain standards within the school we ask for your co-operation over these matters at all times.

The Home - School Partnership

At St Mary's we have created what we believe is a welcoming environment; we operate an 'open door' policy which does not restrict contact with the school to the annual formal parents' consultation evenings. Meetings with parents are an integral part of school life and we believe we can discuss issues in an atmosphere of mutual support. It is important to involve parents as soon as possible when concerns arise about their child and we endeavour to do this promptly, rather than as a last resort.

We encourage parents to initiate contact with school if they have a concern requiring urgent attention. An appointment can then be made with relevant staff as soon as possible.

An informal afternoon is held each autumn term and parents are invited to discuss how their child has settled into the new school year. Formal interviews are held in the spring term to discuss academic

progress. This is followed by a written report in the summer term describing the child's progress in more detail which can be followed up by a teacher/parent interview on request.

A Home-School Contract exists between staff, pupils and parents and throughout the year St Mary's staff hope to enhance our home - school partnership by encouraging a shared commitment to the success of the individual child.

SCHOOL CATERING SERVICES

- We will provide a varied and balanced two course meal for children every day.
- Healthy eating is at the heart of school catering.
- The national nutritional guidelines are set as a minimum standard, and all the menus are nutritionally analysed by a state registered dietician.
- Medical dietary requirements can be catered for, please speak to the unit manager on site if you need to discuss individual requirements.
- Menus may be viewed in school.
- We work in partnership with reputable suppliers to ensure all the ingredients used are of high quality.
- We are committed to training all of our staff to ensure that a first class service is delivered.
- Our customer promise is displayed in school. Customer first, is of the highest importance whether it be children, parents, teaching staff or school governors, and therefore your views will always be welcome.
- Or alternatively you can contact the unit catering manager by telephone or in person.

Pastoral Care

While each child is in the special care of the class teacher, the welfare, progress and care of every child is the concern of all members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching. The ultimate responsibility for pastoral care rests with the Executive Headteacher. In accordance with the Data Protection Act the priest with pastoral responsibility for your child may seek your child's name, address and date of birth. If you do not wish this to be made available you must advise the Executive Headteacher in writing.

School Health Service

The School Health Service may carry out routine medical inspections on all children, although parents do have the right to opt out of this service.

For many years schools and the School Health and Dental Services have worked together to ensure that all children in school are offered immunisation, health and dental surveillance, advice and support. To do this the School Health and Dental Services need population databases – an up-to-date list of all children attending school. In response to changes in the Data Protection Act we are required to ensure that parents know that the school gives your child's name, date of birth and address to the School Health and Dental Services for this purpose.

This information will be shared unless you advise the Executive Headteacher in writing that you do not wish this to happen.

Information about the services offered by School Health and Dentist are detailed in the information leaflet that you will have received when your child started school. Further copies, if required, can be obtained from the school nurse. Please note that no immunisation or dental work is carried out without a signed consent form from the parent or guardian.

Charging Policy

Parents may be invited to make a contribution towards the cost of travel or other expenses when we enhance the curriculum i.e. swimming, visiting theatre groups, outdoor activities and visits. When parents are invited to make such a contribution, this will be to cover only the true cost of the planned activity and will not contain any element of subsidy for other pupils. Remission of charges in cases of hardship will be dealt with on an individual basis and in accordance with the Christian ethos of the school.

Road Safety Policy

Although not statutory, road safety education is incorporated in the curriculum of this school.

Pupils are taught general road safety principles, and this is done through both planned and informal ways which are designed to develop a road safety awareness in the minds of pupils. As road safety is particularly relevant to local circumstances and the environment, educational programmes are related to support this wherever possible, this includes safe routes to school.

Pupil Attendance Records

Regular attendance is essential so that pupils can obtain maximum benefit from the opportunities offered at the school.

Parents are asked to explain any absence either by phone to the office by 9.30am on the day of absence or to the class teacher in writing as soon as their child returns to school. We will always communicate with parents if any pupil is away without explanation in order to check truancy. Any unexplained prolonged or frequent absence may be followed up by a visit from the Educational Welfare Officer.

If a pupil has an appointment for a dental/medical visit, advance notice by phone or letter would ensure the pupil is given his/her mark.

Pupils are not entitled to leave the premises at any time during the day unless authorised by the Executive Headteacher. If a parent wishes their child to leave the school during the day for any reason, a letter must be sent to the class teacher. Parents must accompany pupils on all such visits.

For information regarding absence from school for holidays, a copy of the leaflet Hexham Partnership Policy for 'Family Holidays during Term-Time' can be obtained from the school office.

Arrangements - Accident or Illness

In the event of a child becoming ill or having an accident at school, the school will need to contact parents quickly. You are therefore asked to give the school a telephone number (or address) of an EMERGENCY CONTACT, in case you cannot be contacted at home or work.

The Director of Children's Services has issued specific directions to schools regarding accidents and the immediate care of the child. We are particularly attentive in this matter to carry out these instructions.

We have a number of qualified first-aiders on the premises.

School Transport

Families with children living within 2 miles of the school must make their own arrangements for transport to and from school. Catholic children living in the catchment area but more than 2 miles from school can be taken to and from St Mary's in dedicated taxis provided by the LA. They are issued with special passes confirming their eligibility to travel. School transport is arranged by Transport Section based at County Hall.

Any queries can be referred to the department on 01670 624079.

Access to Documents

The following documents are available in school, upon request from the Executive Headteacher:

- Curriculum Policy Statements
- Charging Policy
- Complaints procedure
- Behaviour Policy
- Statutory Instruments or Orders
- SEN Policy
- Provision/Intervention policies

- Attendance
- Leave of Absence During Term-Time

Any reports on the school by Ofsted and Diocesan Education Authority can be viewed at the school or on the school website.

Complaints Procedure

Before a complaint is made on a formal basis every effort must have been made to resolve the points at issue by informal means, including discussions between the Executive Headteacher (and staff where appropriate) and the complainant. The complainant will be expected to demonstrate that such informal procedures have been pursued and exhausted, and only in the event of the matter remaining unresolved should a formal complaint be made to the Executive Headteacher, or if appropriate the Chairman of Governors, or a committee of the Governing Body.

Assessments

Foundation Stage assessments of children are made on their entry into St Mary's and at the end of Reception year. Teachers then keep a running record of children's progress and at the end of the year a summative record of each child's achievements in relation to the Age Related Expectations (ARE) is brought up to date. This record is updated at the end of each school year.

In year 2, towards the end of Key Stage 1, standardised national tasks are given in mathematics and English to support teacher assessment. The results of the overall teacher assessment will be given to parents before the end of the summer term.

Friends of St Mary's Parent/Teacher Association

St Mary's has a very active Parent/Teacher Association. When your child starts at the school you automatically become a member.

The Association is run by a committee comprising parents and teachers and meetings take place regularly during term time.

A variety of educational, fund-raising and social events are organised by the committee.

The Executive Headteacher and staff very much value the Associations role in the life of the school and hope that parents will become involved and similarly give their support.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) takes place annually in the autumn term at which new officers and committee members are elected.



USEFUL ADDRESSES

School Admissions

School Admissions 01670 624889
schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk

School Transport

Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF
Telephone: 01670 624079



Pre-school Provision

St Mary's Nursery is a private nursery which is open all year round (bank holidays excluded) providing child-care and education for 0-4 year olds. It has an LA registered and funded 25 place separate Education Pre-school Class and being situated adjacent to school in a parish building allows the children to share in many of the whole school celebrations and activities and familiarises them with a school environment. Day care provision provides a further 25 places of which 8 are for under 2s.

Information packs are available upon request and appointments to visit can be made by contacting the nursery on 01434 608723.

Smarty's Out of School Club **Tel. Hexham 01434 608723**

Smarty's is an out of school club run by St Mary's Private Nursery providing safe and secure, creative and stimulating care for children aged 4 to 13.

The club operates a 16 place breakfast club and 25 place after school club in term time and full day care on teacher training days and school holidays.

Play opportunities are provided by a varied schedule, whilst individuality and choice are encouraged.

A registration and pre-booking system is in operation. Further information can be obtained by calling Smarty's on the above telephone number.