

# St Mary's

ISSUE 5 - 24TH NOVEMBER 2023

## Christmas Club

Of the many extra curricular clubs that we run here at St Mary's, one of the most popular current clubs is Christmas Club. Students in Key Stage 3 gather to make beautiful Christmas cards which we pass on to the charity St Cuthbert's Care. Miss Thirlwall, who runs the club, has been really impressed with students' enthusiasm and creativity.



## Thurston Trip

Students in Year 9 visited Thurston recently, an outdoor activity centre in the Lake District. In spite of the wet weather, they had a brilliant time engaging with enthusiasm in all kinds of adventurous activities including gorge scrambling and hill walking. Mr Thompson who led the trip was delighted with students' willingness to try new experiences.





## Headteacher's Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers

It was wonderful to see so many of our current Year 11 students and their parents and carers at the Sixth Form Open Evening this week. We look forward to supporting the students in their transition to Sixth Form next year.

It is also lovely to see our students preparing in earnest for the season of Advent, including leading fundraising, practising for the Christmas Concert and planning for their form group Advent Fayres. Have a great weekend.

Very best wishes,  
Miss Patterson, Headteacher.

## Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal

Our students continue to demonstrate incredible efforts with charitable fundraising in school, including with the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal. Above is 9M who were really enthusiastic in leading the year group with this appeal. Students launched their project in assembly and have worked very hard to collect all the lovely things to send away to those in need. Well done!



## **Pathway to University- Northumbria University Campus Trip**

Recently, a group of Year 12 students visited the campus of Northumbria University in Newcastle upon Tyne. This trip included sessions where students considered whether they wished to go to university to help them to make an informed decision about this.

Furthermore, students were able to ask current university students questions about university life and they also were given a tour of the different facilities on offer at Northumbria University.

## Let's talk homework ...



We recognise the crucial role parents play in supporting their children's learning. Evidence suggests that parental involvement can lead to learning gains of +3 months over the course of a year! Here are some tips for helping your child:

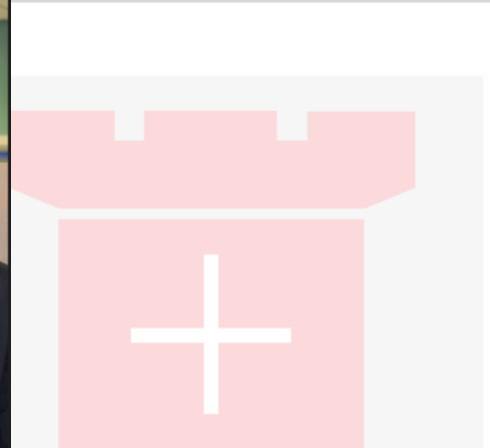
- Choose one place for completing homework – make sure it is well lit and comfortable.
- Decide a plan of action: what homework first? How long for?
- Gather supplies: pens, pencils etc.
- Remove unnecessary electronics – distractions can make children lose focus and become uninterested.
- Some students benefit from relaxed music whilst studying. If you have Spotify or other music apps, there are multiple playlists you can use such as those which have lo-fi beats, healing frequencies or nature music. You can also find these on YouTube for free.
- Start homework within the first hour of getting home. This way, the information learned throughout the day is still fresh in their mind, resulting in finding their homework easier.
- Offer them healthy snacks to keep them motivated.
- Allow small breaks if there is a lot of homework to be done.
- Be their motivator and their monitor. Sometimes it is not easy to finish school and go home to do more work, therefore it is important to motivate children to finish their homework.
- And if you need help, ask the teachers! Teachers are more than happy to support parents' involvement with their child's education.

## Oxford University Workshop



Recently, the University of Oxford came into school to run a workshop with our Year 9 students. The students looked at why they may wish to apply for higher education. Following this, the students carried out an activity looking at the critical thinking skills required for university.

The students enjoyed the session and looking at different areas of study beyond St Mary's.



## Interview Preparation

With the university admissions process well underway, our prospective medicine students recently took part in a practice MMI interview with the help of several teachers running the different stations.

All of the students enjoyed the event and are continuing to practice for upcoming interviews. Good luck to all students involved!

## Upcoming dates and events ...

**Monday 11th December:**  
Year 12/13 Parents' Evening  
(in school)

**Wednesday 20th December:**  
Christmas Music Concert (in school)