**St Mary’s Catholic Primary School**

**Newsletter**

**9th February 2015**

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**Dear Parents,**

As indicated in my recent letter, we have an exciting new initiative starting in school this week. The Lend Me Your Literacy team will begin working with Years 2-5 on Tuesday and we hope to have some work uploaded on their website by the end of the week. The promotion of writing is one of our key priorities in school this year and we hope that the opportunity to become published online authors will be an incentive for the pupils.

As in all schools across the country, Headteachers and school staff have a statutory duty to ensure that attendance is as high as possible. In 2011 the Department for Education (DfE) set the threshold for ‘persistent absence’ to 85%. This means that any child who is absent for 15% or more of lessons for whatever reason is classed as persistently absent and this data is collected by School for Governors, Ofsted and DfE. To put this into perspective, 90% represents one day off per fortnight and 80% represents one day off per week and one month off per school year. Our school attendance is currently above the national average, but there has been a dip in attendance since Christmas and we must therefore keep working hard to ensure that our children are in school as often as possible and we are grateful for your continued support with this important matter.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very relaxing and peaceful half term break.

**Mr Talbot**

**First Holy Communion Preparation Class - Reconciliation**

Congratulations to all of the children who made their first reconciliation in church yesterday; they were a credit to themselves, their families and their school. We continue to pray for them and the Catechists who are kindly donating their own time to prepare the children.

**Gospel Values Art Competition**

We were delighted to see so many entries for the competition. The judging will take place this week and the winners will be announced in Friday’s celebration assembly.

**Sportshall Athletics Final**

Our wonderful athletics team have made the final of the above competition, and will be travelling to Catterick Leisure Centre on Thursday 26th February to take part in the next round. We wish them the very best of luck!

**Batteries & Sainsbury’s Vouchers**

Could we remind you that we are collecting batteries for recycling; a collection is arranged for after half term. We are also collecting Sainsbury’s vouchers, and there is a collection box outside Ouse Classroom.