

# St Mary's

Church of England Junior School

No: 15  
24<sup>th</sup> April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Now that the weather has been nicer it has been lovely to see the children on the field at break and lunchtime making full use of our lovely school grounds. School council are currently choosing the new playground equipment that we can purchase following our Easter raffle, so there will soon be more to play with outside too! We are looking into different ways to enrich playtimes with a wider variety of activities for the children, we look forward to sharing these with you.

The children have all come back after the Easter break settled and showing positive learning behaviours; we look forward to a productive and fun final term of the year.

The first two weeks of the Summer term have been busy. This week Year 3 classes went off to visit Gilbert White's House and Gardens in Selborne to launch their science unit on plants. They all had an enjoyable time in the gardens – we were particularly lucky with the weather and I think they particularly enjoyed pretending to be pollinators!



Mitchell and Nelson classes worked really hard to put on great performances to their friends and family in their sharing assemblies over the last two weeks. These assemblies provide an opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills and help build confidence. Well done to them all.

We are looking forward to the Year 4 disco this evening – thank you to F.O.O.B.S for putting on these events for our school community. Next week Conan Doyle have their sharing assembly which we are all looking forward to!

Places for Year 3 in September 2026 have now been allocated and we are looking forward to welcoming our new pupils and families over the summer term as part of their transition work. We will be sending our newsletters to our new families this term to give them an insight into life at St Mary's.

Finally, this Sunday Miss Hill will be joining thousands of other runners in the 2026 London Marathon! We all wish her the best of luck and we look forward to hearing how she gets on!

Miss Hill is running for the charity 'It's Time' – a charity that supports young adults who have experienced the loss of one or both parents, as well as helping their family, friends, educational establishments and businesses to support them better, a charity close to her heart. If you would like to contribute to her fundraising, you can through this link:

[Charlie and Molly Hill are fundraising for It's Time](#)

The summer term is always a very busy one with lots of events so please do make a note of the diary dates on our newsletters and keep an eye on Parent Mail.

Have a lovely weekend and we look forward to seeing you next week.

### **Try an instrument - Tuesday 19th May 3.45pm to 4.45pm**

Come along to our FREE music event. Try out all the instruments we offer at St Mary's through Hampshire Music Service. Meet the instrumental teachers and if you like, sign up for lessons next year!

### **Assessments**

Year 6 SATs will be taking place once again during the week commencing Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May, beginning on the Monday, with the final test on the Thursday.

The Multiplication Tables Check (MTC) for Year 4 will take place over a two week period from Monday 1st June until Friday 12th June. Information about these assessments has already been sent to Year 4 parents, but it can be accessed here:

[Multiplication tables check: information for parents - GOV.UK](#)

Your child's end of year report will contain teacher assessments for reading, writing and maths, Year 6 parents you will also be informed of your child's SAT's results and Year 4 parents will be informed of their child's MTC result.

It is important to remember that every child is different and they do not all make progress in straight lines. For example, a child may be working at 'Age Related Expectations' at the end of one academic year, but the next they may be assessed as 'Working Towards Age Related Expectations' because the curriculum has changed and they may need time to consolidate some areas of their learning, they will still have made progress. It is important that as a school we look at progress over time with the end goal being their attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 and not just look at each year in isolation.

We work regularly with other local schools to moderate our assessments and use a variety of resources in school to support teacher assessments. We also have regular Pupil Progress meetings to look at performance and progress of individuals so that early intervention can be put in place.

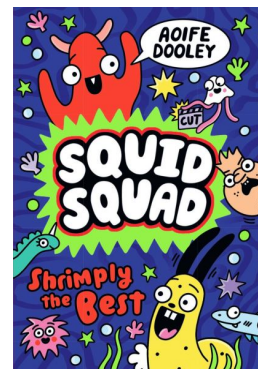
### **New book recommendations**

#### **Squid Squad: Shrimply the Best Synopsis**

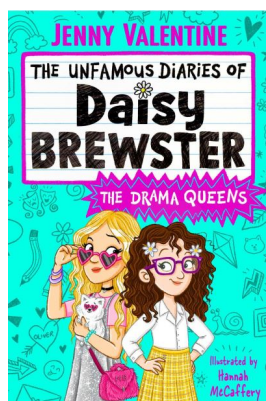
##### **Reading age +5**

Ollie the vampire squid, Zing the sea bunny and the rest of the Squid Squad are back for more hilarious, zany and action-packed adventures in this full-colour graphic novel for readers aged 5-8, perfect for fans of Bumble and Snug, Spongebob Squarepants and Bunny vs Monkey.

The deep-sea town of Nowhere is home to the wackiest and weirdest creatures the ocean, with abilities like shooting thorns, tripling in size and releasing stink-bombs! Teaming up as the Squid Squad, they're ready to save the day - or cause chaos...



of



#### ***The Unfamous Diaries of Daisy Brewster: The Drama Queens Synopsis***

##### **Reading age +9**

The sparkling new series of middle grade diaries continues in *The Drama Queens!* Perfect for fans of Lottie Brooks and Dork Diaries, with a celebrity hook. Daisy is back at school, but her super-celebrity cousin Maxxy is STILL sharing her room while filming for a new TV show. And it's all anyone can talk about! Daisy's mum is always at the film set with Maxxy, her dad is always busy with work, and her brother Leo is being a teenage tyrant.

The only thing keeping Daisy calm are her drama club rehearsals. With only a few weeks to go before the big opening night, Daisy is pouring everything into her performance.

But with Maxxy being a total DIVA, sudden strange feelings towards her floppy-haired co-star Olivier, a HUGE SPOT appearing on her chin, and gossiping girls desperate for Maxxy's attention, Daisy will have to channel her inner method actor to keep the show on the road. Drama, BFFs, secrets and theatrics await!

### Summer Term Uniform

Summer uniform can now be worn. This consists of green checked dresses, grey shorts and white polo shirts or short sleeved shirts with their ties. Sensible footwear, please – no flip-flops or open-toed sandals, school shoes should still be worn.

### Talk Point!

Regular conversations with adults and siblings, for example during meals, exposes children to varied vocabulary and discussions about current events or worldly issues at the table improve children's knowledge and self-esteem.

What ideas will you come up with this week for this question!

**'What's better: morning or evening? Why?'**

### Attendance

As of today the school's overall attendance stands at 97.4%.

Please can we remind parents that holidays should be taken during school holiday periods. Only absences for **very** exceptional circumstances will be authorised and 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within 100 sessions can result in a penalty notice.

### INSET Days for 2026/2027 Academic Year

The following INSET days for next academic year have been agreed with Old Basing Infant School and approved by our governors:

Tuesday September 1<sup>st</sup> 2026

Monday November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2026

Friday December 18<sup>th</sup> 2026

Monday February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2026

Friday May 28<sup>th</sup> 2027

Term dates for next academic year can be found following this link:

[School holiday dates | Education and learning | Hampshire County Council](#)

### Governors' Corner

A sunny, dry day and a peaceful countryside venue in Selbourne was the setting for Year 3 to explore science in nature. 70 pupils travelled to the Gilbert White Field Studies Centre (<https://gilbertwhitewhouse.org.uk/field-studies-centre-heart-outdoor-learning/>) to learn more about plant life and to give them inspiration to develop their curiosity about our natural world.

The pupils were welcomed by the centre staff and spent time thinking about what they learned in Year 2 in the life cycle of plants. They then worked in smaller class groups with adult support to participate in several activities that explored variety in nature.

The pupils examined a variety of seed samples – runner beans, parsnips, lettuce, onion, pumpkin to name a few. They moved on to consider germination and how plants grow - needing air, light, water, nutrients and space to flourish. A discussion about pollination by insects and other pollinators completed this stage of the cycle. Outside they searched for plants in the kitchen garden that grew from their seed specimen. The warm windy day was ideal conditions to think about one of the clever mechanisms in nature to disperse seeds such as for Dandelions. Finding the colours in the "Quarter" garden amongst the array of flowers and Crested Newts in natural pond was enjoyed.

The outdoor learning continued amongst the wide range of wonderful tree specimens. "Tree leaf bingo" was a great way to notice the variety of hedge plants. As well as using recognised scientific ways to measure height and circumference of a specific tree, the pupils caught mini beasts lurking in the branches using a special net and found out about the special features each tree had – such as the hard wood of Hornbeam being used in Roman chariot wheels and in more modern-day drumsticks! A "Top Trumps" style record was compiled by each small group for their tree. The pupils thought about how trees helped them, producing oxygen and fruit etc, as well as the helping wildlife that sheltered in the branches, nesting and feeding. The indoor activities gave pupils a chance to be creative. They produced their own "zig-zag" leaflet about the plant life cycle to remind them about their learning. They painted with mud solution to demonstrate the soil nutrients for seeds and the subsequent germination process; leaf rubbing; colouring with the pigments of green grass and Dandelions, then drawing a picture of their chosen pollinator using the scientific specimens the Centre has in the Gilbert White natural history collection as inspiration for size, shape, and colour.

The visit was a great example of how the St Mary's brings the Science Curriculum to life, with opportunities to be creative in a relevant practical setting and using imaginative ways to make experiences more memorable. An interesting, worthwhile, and fun day for all!

*Karen Ashton, Foundation Governor.*

### F.O.O.B.S. News

Hello from F.O.O.B.S.

We hope the year 4s enjoy their disco this evening!

The Easter Fair was a great success this year, and we raised £1700 which is great! Thank you also to everyone who donated items for the Happy School Bag collection last Friday. We collected a massive 574kg of donations which earned us a fantastic £258.

We are now in full Summer Fair planning mode, please save the following dates - Non-School Uniform day on Thursday 21st May at both the Infant & Junior schools in return for a prize for the General Tombola or the Bottle Tombola. Donation date Friday 5th June for the Toys, Books & Uniform stall and Pick a Jar donation week 8th-13th June. More details to follow.

Thank you for all the entries for the Junior School competition to design the Summer Fair poster. Well done to everyone who took part! The winner will be announced in due course.

### Safeguarding

Please find attached a copy of this month's Safeguarding Newsletter.

### Old Basing Schools Coffee Mornings

Parent and Carer Coffee Mornings

Our half-termly coffee mornings are an opportunity for parents to get together, share ideas and challenges over a cup of coffee (and biscuits!)

Mrs Medlin (our SENCo) and Mrs Thompson (OBI SENCo) will be attending alongside the Primary Behaviour Service.

Meet us 9am to 10.30am on:

20<sup>th</sup> May

8<sup>th</sup> July



**Gemma Lillywhite**  
**Headteacher**

### Dates for your Diary

24<sup>th</sup> April – F.O.O.B.S Year 4 Disco 5:00-6:30pm

28<sup>th</sup> April – Dickens class river trip am

29<sup>th</sup> April – Conan Doyle class river trip am

30<sup>th</sup> April – Austen class river trip am

30<sup>th</sup> April - Conan Doyle class sharing assembly 2:45pm

4<sup>th</sup> May – Bank Holiday Monday

11<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> May 2026 Year 6 SATs tests

12<sup>th</sup> May - Year 4 Church visit (parents welcome) 1:30pm

18<sup>th</sup> May-22<sup>nd</sup> May – Walk to School Week

20<sup>th</sup> May – Parent & Carer coffee morning 09:00-10:30

**22<sup>nd</sup> May – INSET Day (School closed to pupils)**

25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May – Half Term

1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> June 2026 Year 4 Multiplication Tests

4<sup>th</sup> June – Sports Day

5<sup>th</sup> June – White Class to Gordon Brown Centre

8<sup>th</sup> June – Mitchell Class to Gordon Brown Centre

8<sup>th</sup> June – Year 3 to QMC (Class TBC)

9<sup>th</sup> June - Year 3 to QMC (Class TBC)

10<sup>th</sup> June – Brunel class to Gordon Brown Centre

12<sup>th</sup> June – Reserve Sports Day

16<sup>th</sup> June – Class Photos (whole Y6 photo on 18<sup>th</sup> June)

16<sup>th</sup> June - Year 3 Church visit (parents welcome) 1:30pm

18<sup>th</sup> June – Whole Year 6 Photo

18<sup>th</sup> June – Year 4 trip to Ufton Court

19<sup>th</sup> June – BPSM Rehearsals all day, Christ Church Chineham 9:30am-2:30pm

23<sup>rd</sup> June – BPSM Rehearsals all day, The Anvil 9:30-2:30pm

23<sup>rd</sup> June – BPSM Evening Performance 7pm The Anvil

24<sup>th</sup> June – BPSM Evening Performance 7pm The Anvil

24<sup>th</sup> June – Year 5 trip to Costello

24<sup>th</sup> June – Year 6 Diocese Leavers Service – Winchester Cathedral

30<sup>th</sup> June - Year 5 Church visit (parents welcome) 1:30pm

8<sup>th</sup> July – Parent & Carer coffee morning 09:00-10:30

5<sup>th</sup> July – F.O.O.B.S Summer Fair

13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> July – Year 6 Show Week

17<sup>th</sup> July – Family Picnic, joint with Old Basing Infants

20<sup>th</sup> July – Year 6 Leavers Service - St Mary's Church

21<sup>st</sup> July – Year 6 Leavers Party

22<sup>nd</sup> July – End of term Church Visits – times TBC

22<sup>nd</sup> July – Last Day of term