



Church of England Junior School

No: 16
8th May 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you all enjoyed the long weekend!

Last week Year 3 enjoyed their trip down to the river Loddon. Over the last two weeks Year 3 have been out and about by the river as part of their 'River Deep, Mountain High' topic. They enjoyed river dipping and using identification keys to see what they found!

Well done to our hockey team who took part in a completion at Down Grange last week, they represented the school really well and played some tough games! They ended the tournament as winners, so will now progress to the county finals!

Conan Doyle put on a wonderful performance during their sharing assembly, it was lovely to see our youngest children work as a team and perform so confidently.

Our play leaders headed over to Old Basing Infant school today to help at their sports afternoon. It is lovely to be part of these events at the infant school to support transition and maintain our close links with the school.

Year 6 SATs

Next week, our Year 6 pupils will be taking their SATs. We are incredibly proud of all the hard work, effort and resilience they have shown throughout the year. We would like to reassure parents and pupils that there is no need to worry - SATs are not the be-all and end-all, but simply one opportunity for children to show what they are capable of. We know they will do their very best. SATs do not measure how kind, creative, sporty or musical our pupils are; they do not reflect talents in art, music, PE or the many other skills that make each child unique! They are just one small measure of our wonderful Year 6 children, and we are proud of them every step of the way.

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!

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 for this talk point!

***'Would you rather have a day where everything goes exactly to plan, or a day full of surprises?
Why?'***

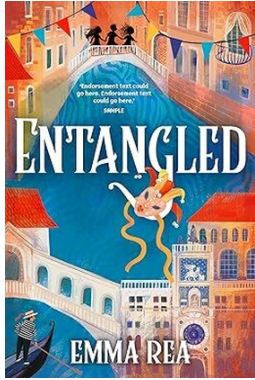
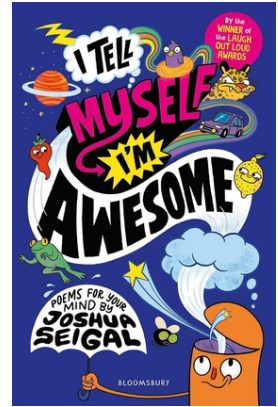
New book recommendations

I Tell Myself I'm Awesome: Poems for your mind by Joshua Seigal, illustrated by Chris Piascik

Reading age: 7+

I have a spicy mind. It doesn't / do what people tell it to!

This poetry collection is 'for your mind', which means that not only are all sorts of emotions explored, so is the concept of your mind not always being an easy place to be. And, importantly, playful poetic forms, pleasing rhymes and 'stretch vocabulary' will entertain and even challenge your mind.



Entangled by Emma Rea Reading age: 9+

When an anxious Thomas accompanies his sister on her art trip to Venice, he's determined not to leave her side. In fact, he's felt that way since she lost her sight a year ago, throwing family life into disarray. Despite being notoriously clumsy, Thomas feels it's his duty to take care of his big sister, describing every detail of their surroundings to her and always ensuring she's safe. So when Tia is mysteriously taken from their hotel, Thomas embarks on a dangerous night-time mission to rescue her. Why are girls being kidnapped? And can he trust the police? What follows is a high-stakes romp through Venice, featuring rising water levels, ancient palaces, masked carnival balls and shadowy canals.

News from St Mary's Church



St Mary's Flower Festival and Open Gardens – Parish Life in Petals. **Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th May, 11am - 4pm**

St Mary's is looking forward to welcoming the school choirs who will be singing at the Festival at 11.30 am on Saturday 16th May.

There will be several children's activities, including the return of the popular Teddy Zip Wire from the top of St Mary's Church Tower! This is not exclusively for Teddies – other brave toys are welcome too!

Do come along over the weekend to see over 30 arrangements and displays in the church, view the various craft stalls and enjoy the refreshments, including BBQ on the Saturday. A reminder too to bring along your jam jar of flowers!

Open Gardens: A number of villagers in Old Basing will be opening up their gardens to visitors over the weekend. Entry to the gardens is by buying an Open Gardens Booklet (£10 per adult) which gives access to all gardens and a voucher for a cream tea. Booklets will be available from the church over the weekend.

Jamming a Jam Jar with Joy!

As part of St Mary's Flower Festival, we are inviting local schools and children's groups to take part by "Jamming a Jam Jar with Joy". The theme this year is "Parish Life with Petals"

The Festival is being held over the weekend of the 16th and 17th May and is being run in conjunction with a Village Open Gardens event.

Fill a simple jam jar with flowers and foliage to bring to St Mary's Church on either Friday 15th May from 3pm-5pm, or Saturday 16th May from 8am-10am (or later on the Saturday if you are already planning a visit). The jars may be labelled or decorated and we ask for a donation of £1.00 per jar.

The Church arrangers will then display the Jars of Joy around the Church for the Festival.

You may wish to create your own display which would also be very welcome.

Please contact Debbie Filer, Church Administrator on admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk for more information.

Attendance

As of today the school's overall attendance stands at 97.5%.

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. Term dates for next year are already available through the link on this newsletter to help you plan holidays for year.

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 1st 2026

Monday November 2nd 2026

Friday December 18th 2026

Monday February 22nd 2027

Friday May 28th 2027

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

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

Governors' Corner

As governors we are able to observe different aspects of the school's work. Sometimes that will be to meet with the teacher who is the lead for a particular subject and hear all about the teaching of that subject. We can report back to the Full Governing Body, and so ensure that we are all well informed about all the different subjects. But there are other opportunities that we have to see the school staff and pupils at work as you will read about each fortnight in these short reports. I recently was able to sit in on a meeting where teachers in one year group reviewed the progress of pupils in that year. Similar meetings happen for each year group, and happen several times throughout the academic year. The aim is to ensure that each pupil is able to achieve as well as they can in Reading, Writing and Maths. Different interventions and approaches are used for individual children to help them in their learning. It was good to see this being discussed.

Philip Hiorns - Foundation Governor

F.O.O.B.S. News

We hope you all had a lovely bank holiday.

Non uniform day for both schools is Thursday 21st May. Can we please ask for a Tombola prize (or a £1 donation) for the Summer Fair to be brought to school in return. The gifts should be new/unused and can be for an adult or a child and any bottles will be added to the Bottle Tombola.

Safeguarding – What can you do when you feel lonely as a parent?

It is normal to feel loneliness from time to time. As a parent you can spend the whole day being climbed on by your children, but still feel like you're on your own. Or you have years of great chats with your child and all of a sudden, hormones hit, and they stop wanting to spend time with you. You might find your family going through something that others can't relate to. All of these things, as well as life events like a divorce or a house move, can leave you feeling lonely or isolated. While it's important to think about how your children are handling challenges, how can you make sure you're also getting the support you need? This page on the NSPCC website has some useful advice for parents, remember you are not alone.

[How to cope with parental loneliness | NSPCC](#)

Old Basing Schools 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:

20th May

8th July

Gemma Lillywhite
Headteacher

Dates for your Diary

11th-14th May 2026 Year 6 SATs tests

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

w/c 18th May – No after school clubs this week

18th May-22nd May – Walk to School Week

19th May – Try an Instrument 3:45-4:45pm

20th May – Parent & Carer coffee morning 09:00-10:30

22nd May – INSET Day (School closed to pupils)

25th – 29th May – Half Term

1st-12th June 2026 Year 4 Multiplication Tests

4th June – Sports Day

5th June – White Class to Gordon Brown Centre

8th June – Mitchell Class to Gordon Brown Centre

8th June – Year 3 to QMC (Class TBC)

9th June - Year 3 to QMC (Class TBC)

10th June – Brunel class to Gordon Brown Centre

12th June – Reserve Sports Day

16th June – Class Photos (whole Y6 photo on 18th June)

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

18th June – Whole Year 6 Photo

18th June – Year 4 trip to Ufton Court

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

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

23rd June – BPSM Evening Performance 7pm The Anvil

24th June – BPSM Evening Performance 7pm The Anvil

24th June – Year 5 trip to Costello

24th June – Year 6 Diocese Leavers Service – Winchester Cathedral

30th June - Year 5 Church visit (parents welcome) 1:30pm

w/c 6th July – No after school clubs this week

5th July – F.O.O.B.S Summer Fair

8th July – Parent & Carer coffee morning 09:00-10:30

w/c 13th July – No after school clubs this week

13th -16th July – Year 6 Show Week

17th July – Family Picnic, joint with Old Basing Infants

20th July – Year 6 Leavers Service - St Mary's Church

21st July – Year 6 Leavers Party

22nd July – End of term Church Visits – times TBC

22nd July – Last Day of term

Inset Days 2026/2027

Tuesday 1st September 2026

Monday 2nd November 2026

Friday 18th December 2026

Monday 22nd February 2027

Friday 28th May 2027