



Church of England Junior School

No: 2
25th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

The first four weeks of term have been busy with lots of fun activities and hard work going on!

Savage Saxons is this term's topic in Year 4. They have launched their learning by welcoming back Oxenwood Education Centre to lead a Saxon enrichment day here for them. They enjoyed meeting a very special guest! An Anglo-Saxon thane, who is an advisor of King Alfred, time travelled to our school to help us to learn more about how Anglo-Saxons lived, ate and fought.



This week Year 6 have been very busy! They have loved their outdoor learning sessions led by Mrs May, it has been lovely to see them exploring the outdoors. They also enjoyed a trip out to QMC Primary Science Centre where they learnt more about the human body. Then to top off the week RAF Odiham staff visited Year 6 to help launch their geography topic of 'Extreme Earth'. They enjoyed an action packed day developing their team building and geography skills. They worked as a team to build earthquake-ready structures out of spaghetti and marshmallows; played an online game called 'stop the disaster' to manage the impact of a natural disaster in a simulated computer game and enjoyed hearing how the RAF use their chinook helicopters to deliver aid to disaster areas in the aftermath of earthquakes or other natural phenomena. They were challenged to create a parachute to protect their 'relief pack' (an egg!). It was a great day with lots of excitement and fun.

Today Mr Gibbs took a group of girls from year 6 to The Costello School for a football session led by the PE department there. Our links with the Costello school continue to grow and it has been lovely to hear how well our ex pupils have settled into year 7. I look forward to visiting Costello for their Open Evening on 8th October.

Thank you so much for your generous donations to our Harvest collection for the Basingstoke Foodbank. This has been our value of love in action! Thank you to Loraine Baldwin, an ex-parent, who is kindly delivering our donations to the foodbank early next week.

Thank you also to those who were able to attend our MacMillan Coffee morning this morning and for your kind donations to this wonderful charity. Our year 6 helpers enjoyed serving the cake! Thank you to the staff of St Mary's for donating cakes. We will share our final fundraising total next week, Donations can still be made via his link: [Can you donate to Macmillan Coffee Morning 2026?](#)

The next few weeks are looking busy; we are looking forward to having the English Civil War Society in to support Year 5 in their history learning and we look forward to watching our first sharing assembly of the year.

Individual Photographs

On Thursday 1st October, all pupils will have their individual photographs taken. **There will be no PE lessons on this day**, therefore all pupils need to be in full, smart school uniform.

Message from Old Basing Infant School

We were lucky enough to harvest some honey from our bee hives this year and we are currently selling jars of our own natural honey for £7.50 a jar - cash only. If you are interested, please visit the infant school office to purchase a jar.

Sonia Denning, Headteacher, Old Basing Infant School

St Mary's CE Junior School - Open Days for prospective parents 2027

Do you, or do you know someone who has a child due to start Year 3 in September 2027? We will be holding two open days this term for prospective new parents. These will give you the opportunity to tour the school and see us in action, as well as an opportunity to find out more about what you and your child can expect from St Mary's from the leadership team.

This year's dates are:

Tuesday 13th October 2026, starting at 1:30pm and finishing around 3:00pm.

Wednesday 4th November 2026, starting at 9.30am and finishing around 11:00am.

If for any reason you are unable to make one of these dates, please contact the school office on 01256 465092 or adminoffice@st-marys-jun.hants.sch.uk, and we will try our best to arrange an alternative date.

Please note that applications for places will need to be completed online through the Hampshire admissions website from 1st November and applications will close on 15th January 2027.

[Year R and year 3 applications | Education and learning | Hampshire County Council](#)

News from St Mary's Church

Please see the attached poster from St Mary's Church advertising their Christmas Tree festival! Our Junior Choir (Yrs. 3 and 4) will be singing on the Saturday at 11:30pm – save the date!

Parents Evening

A reminder following a parent mail last week, bookings for parents evening, Wednesday 14th October and Thursday 15th October, will open on ScoPay on Monday. Please make sure you book your appointments.

Seasonal Bugs!

As the autumn term progresses, it is common for seasonal bugs like colds, coughs, and stomach bugs to circulate within the school community. We encourage good hygiene in school, please do remind your children to regularly wash their hands! For illnesses involving diarrhoea and vomiting, children must stay home for at least 48 hours after their symptoms have stopped. This is crucial to prevent the spread of contagious stomach bugs.

Talk Homework!

Along with Old Basing Infant school we are continuing to work this year to improve our pupils' speaking and listening skills. In each of our newsletters we will be sending an idea for a family discussion over dinner, in the car or before bed.

What is the best thing about your new class at school?

Talking about this together encourages children to reflect positively on their start to the year, share their feelings and experiences, and develop a strong sense of belonging. It is also a lovely opportunity for families to find out more about friendships, learning and what their child is enjoying at school.

Year 3 Transition Survey

We have been really impressed with how the year 3 children have settled in to life at St Mary's. They have already contributed much to the whole school with their enthusiasm for learning and in how they have embraced our school values. Thank you to our Year 3 parents for completing the Transition Survey, although the responses were overwhelmingly positive we continue to look for ways in which we can improve transition for subsequent years.

Applying for a Secondary School place Yr 7

Year 6 parents, applications are now open for applying for Year 7 places. Please remember that you need to get your applications for secondary school in by **31st October 2026**.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions/applicationprocess/year7>

Safeguarding update – Devices in Bedrooms

We would encourage all parents and carers to think carefully about the electronic devices children have access to in their bedrooms at night. Phones, tablets, gaming devices, smart TV's and other internet-enabled technology can make it very tempting for children to go online when they should be sleeping, often without adults being aware or around to monitor what children are accessing. Where possible, we recommend establishing a family routine where devices are left outside bedrooms overnight. This can help children to switch off, sleep well and be ready to learn the following day!

This advert from Smart Phone Free Childhood US is food for thought – remember it isn't just Smartphones where children can access online platform. [Smartphone Free Childhood US - "Let's Change The Norm"](#)

Time to Shine Day – 'Be Bright To Be Seen'

On Sunday 25th October British Summer times ends and sadly those clocks will go back. On Friday 23rd October we are having a 'Be Bright to Be Seen' day in school and we would like the children to come to school dressed as brightly as they possibly can – what would you need to wear to be seen safely out walking or cycling during the darker evenings? If year 6 pupils want to take a bright outfit to Calshot to wear on that day that would be great!

In school each class will talk about and complete activities about keeping safe on the streets. Year 6 will cover these important messages with their classes when they return from Calshot.

We look forward to seeing St Mary's full of colour – the brighter the better!

Governors Corner

It is a great pleasure and privilege to be involved with St Mary's both as a Governor and a volunteer. This means that in addition to the shared Governor priority of ensuring every child feels safe, supported and happy, mentioned by Andy Grayson our new chair last week, I support a range of activities that are part of school life and pupils' learning experience.

One such activity was accompanying year 5 (now year 6) for the end of summer term visit to St Mary's Church. As you know this is a special environment where all pupils, whether they have experience of any religious activity or none, can reflect, learn and celebrate together.

Able led by Mrs McCluskey, the year 5 end of summer term visit was an opportunity to reflect on the 2025 – 26 academic year. Several pupils actively participated in the content of the session using visual aides to bring their discussions to life. The enthusiasm of pupils to "have their say" and join in, showed how engaged they felt with the school values of "Love, Courage and Creativity". Their heartfelt insights and comments demonstrated they were developing together as positive young people in the school and wider community, who as year 6 pupils now will be important role models for those younger than them.

From a wider perspective these visits to the church are also important in the overall governance of the school. You'll be aware that earlier in the calendar year the school was inspected by OFSTED with a very positive "good" outcome. In this academic year St. Mary's is expecting a Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS), a requirement of the Education Act 2005. This will assess and evaluate how effective the schools' Christian vision enables both pupils and adults to flourish by exploring pastoral care, mental health support, spiritual, moral, and cultural development. Building on the valuable feedback from OFSTED, the outcome of the SIAMS visit will help the teaching team see what is working well and identify opportunities for further improvement that will strengthen the learning of individual pupils, the school environment, and the wider community.

Karen Ashton, Foundation Governor.

F.O.O.B.S. news

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

FOOBS Fun Run The countdown is on... just 18 days to go! Join us on Sunday 11th October, with gates opening at 10:30am. Entries are still open, so there's plenty of time to get involved!

Whether you're running, walking or cheering everyone on from the sidelines, we'd love to see as many families as possible there.

Entries are available via the F.O.O.B.S. website: !

Year 2 School Disco, Our Year 2 Disco is taking place on 2nd October. Tickets are going on sale next week, so keep an eye out for further information.

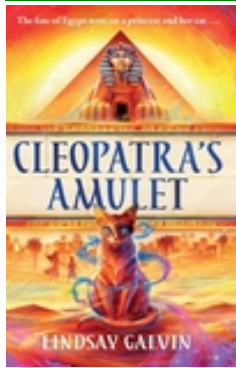
F.O.O.B.S. AGM – 7th OCTOBER: Our Annual General Meeting will be held on 7th October at 7:30pm at Old Basing Infants. Everyone is welcome to come along! It's a great opportunity to hear about what F.O.O.B.S. has achieved over the past year, find out what's coming up, and see how you can get involved with supporting the school and our children.

We look forward to seeing lots of you at our upcoming events.

Attendance

Currently the whole school attendance stands at 97.8%. Thank you to the vast majority of you who are managing to get your child to school on time, this really supports children to settle in to the day and be ready for both the register and to start learning at 8.50am.

New Book Recommendations



Cleopatra's Amulet, by Lindsay Galvin

Reading age: 9+

Twelve-year-old Cleopatra has always known a life of royalty and comfort as Princess of Egypt, but everything changes when her father is kidnapped and she is forced into exile. Suddenly cut off from the palace and unsure whether to trust her older sister and the Romans she keeps company with, Cleo must uncover the plot against her family, and work out who wants the throne enough to kill for it. This is a great historical adventure which immerses you in the glittering gold of Ancient Egypt from the very first page. Lindsay Galvin balances mystery, myth and danger with a really good pace, keeping the story moving as Cleo follows clues through temples, tombs and the shadowy world of politics!

When I Was a Wolf, by Liz Flanagan.

Reading age: 7+

Jasmine loves wolves and enjoys sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm with Mum. However, everything changes when Mum falls ill.

Gran moves in to look after them both, but she does things differently to Mum, and Jasmine becomes anxious and overwhelmed.

Gran signs Jasmine up for art club, giving her a welcome escape from her worries. There, she meets artist Ali, who helps her to make a magnificent wolf puppet for the town's forthcoming lantern parade.

This tender tale explores a range of complex emotions and demonstrates how creativity can help people to manage negative feelings in constructive ways. Engaging black-and-white illustrations, which beautifully capture Jasmine's feelings of joy, sadness, loneliness and anger, will help readers to visualise the characters, setting and puppetry described in the story.



For even more news, updates and photos, don't forget to visit our website:

<https://www.st-marys-jun.hants.sch.uk/>

Gemma Lillywhite
Headteacher

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

Inset Days 2026/2027

Monday 2nd November 2026

Friday 18th December 2026

Monday 22nd February 2027

Friday 28th May 2027

Dates for your Diary

w/c 28th Sept – Yr 6 Bikeability

1st Oct – Individual Photographs (No PE this day)

6th Oct – Year 6 Church Visit 1:30pm (Parents of Yr 6 welcome to attend)

7th Oct – F.O.O.B.S AGM 7:30pm Old Basing Infants

8th Oct – Davies Sharing Assembly 2:45pm (Parents of Davies Class welcome to attend)

8th Oct – The Costello School Open Evening

11th October – F.O.O.B.S Fun Run!

13th Oct – Open Afternoon for Year 2 Parents 1:30pm

14th Oct – Parents Evening

15th Oct – Parents Evening

15th Oct – Whole school flu immunisation

w/c 19th Oct – Year 6 to Calshot

22nd Oct – Wellington Sharing Assembly 2:45pm (Parents of Wellington Class welcome to attend)

23rd Oct – Be Bright To Be Seen Day

26th-30th – Half Term

2nd Nov – INSET DAY School closed to pupils

4th Nov - Open Morning for Year 2 Parents 9:30pm

5th Nov – Space Dome Yr 5

6th Nov – Year 3 F.O.O.B.S Disco

10th Nov - Year 3 Church Visit 1:30pm (Parents of Yr 3 welcome to attend)

12th Nov – White Sharing Assembly 2:45pm (Parents of White Class welcome to attend)

13th Nov – Children in Need Non Uniform Day

16th-20th Nov – Friendship Week

17th Nov - Year 4 Church Visit 1:30pm (Parents of Yr 4 welcome to attend)

16th Nov – Yr 3 Iron Age History Workshop

23rd Nov – F.O.O.B.S Christmas Market

24th Nov - Year 5 Church Visit 1:30pm (Parents of Yr 5 welcome to attend)

3rd Dec – Russell Sharing Assembly 2:45pm (Parents of Russell Class welcome to attend)

5th and 6th Dec – St Mary's Church tree festival Junior Choir to sing on 5th

11th Dec – Yr 6 Christmas Carol at the Haymarket (TBC)

15th Dec – Carol Concert at St Mary's Church 6:00pm

16th Dec – Class Christmas Parties

17th Dec – End of term church visits

18th Dec – INSET DAY School Closed to Pupils

21st Dec – 1st Jan – Christmas Holidays

4th Jan – Start of Spring term

10th -13th May 2027 Key Stage 2 (KS2) SATs (Year 6)

7th – 18th June 2027 Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)

For all Hampshire term dates please follow this link:

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

St Mary's Church

OLD BASING & LYCHPIT

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

★ The Gift of Christmas ★

5 & 6 DECEMBER
11AM – 4PM



Christmas tree displays



Stalls



Refreshments



SCHOOL CHOIRS
SATURDAY
11.30am



BASING SINGERS
SUNDAY
2.30pm



VISIT
**FATHER
CHRISTMAS**

A magical visit
for children
of all ages!



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
BAND & CORPS OF DRUMS
SATURDAY
2pm

*Everyone
welcome!*



COMMUNITY ★ CREATIVITY ★ CELEBRATION