St Mary's

Church of England Junior School

One Family

Life in all its fullness – achieving more together.

Love Courage Creativity

No: 4
23rd October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I appreciate this is a long newsletter – please do make yourself a drink and sit and read it all, next half term is set to be busy and this newsletter contains information about some upcoming events!

It was lovely to hear how the school and local community came out in force for the annual F.O.O.B.S Trail and Fun Run. Well done to everyone who entered and thank you to all those who helped organise the event and those who volunteered on the day. Without the very hard working committee, these events would not be possible and the schools would not benefit from the donations F.O.O.B.S are able to make.

Teachers enjoyed meeting with you all during parents' evening last week. It was lovely for them to share your child's achievements so far. Please do contact your child's teacher if you ever have any concerns, do not wait until the spring parents' evening.





The Year 6 corridors were full of wonderful smells as they planned and made their own vegetable soups last week in Design Technology. They all enjoyed this unit of work and many tried vegetables that they hadn't eaten before.





In Collective Worship recently, we have been thinking about our Christian value of Creativity and what it means to share our talents, gifts and ideas with others to help them. We learnt about this through The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30). We talked about some of the many things that people in our school are good at. This might be a sporting talent, an ability to help others, a skill in maths, creativity in art or music, or an interest in looking after God's world. We thought about how we can use these gifts and talents, not just for ourselves, but to help and encourage others. At break time last week, Nanika (Year 5) and Freddie (Year 6) put this into action by sharing their sporting talents with pupils in Years 3 and 4. They helped them to improve their badminton and keepy-uppie skills. This week, three of our Year 5 pupils, Alexa, Hannah and Eddie led a Collective Worship to share their desire to look after God's world as they have an interest in looking after wildlife. It has been lovely to see creativity in action!

Yesterday we enjoyed Wellington class's sharing assembly, it was great! Well done Year 4 for sharing your learning with your friends and family.

This week Year 6 have been in Calshot for their residential trip. I was able to spend the first half of the week with them before swapping with Mr Gibbs on Wednesday. They have had a great time learning new skills and they have made many lasting memories. Many have overcome fears and pushed themselves to try new things – the biggest challenge for most was making their own beds! Thank you parents for supporting your child and sending them on this trip, it really is a great experience for them. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the staff and Mrs Ashton and Mr Jubin, two of our governors, for giving

up their time to accompany the children on this trip. Without the willingness of staff and governors to be away from their own families for the week, these residential trips could not go ahead.

Be Bright To Be Seen!

Don't forget that the clocks go back on Sunday, October 25th. This means that as well as dark mornings we will start to see the evenings getting darker as well. Our 'Be bright to be seen day' today reminded the children about being visible when out and about. As parents, you may want to back this up with some further road safety work with your children over the holidays. Please also keep yourselves safe! Below are some links you may find useful to share with your children:
Teaching Road Safety: A Guide for Parents
https://www.rospa.com/media/documents/road-safety/teaching-road-safety-a-guide-for-parents.pdf
Safety First – Cycling at Night
https://www.cycletraining.co.uk/cycle-training-and-cycle-safety/safety-first-cycling-at-night/

Applying for a Secondary School place Yr 7

A final reminder that you need to get your applications for secondary school in by **31st October 2026.**
https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/admissions/applicationprocess/year7

Open Days for prospective parents 2026

Do you, or do you know someone who has a child due to start Year 3 in September 2026? We will be holding one more open day in the autumn term for prospective new parents. This 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.
Wednesday 4th November 2026, starting at 9.30am.
If for any reason you are unable to make this date, 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 November and applications close in January 2026.

After School Clubs

Just a reminder that after school clubs start back after half term (w/c 2nd November) and will run for 5 weeks. There will be no after school clubs for the last 2 weeks of term.

Details of Spring term clubs, and how to book, will be sent out after the half term break

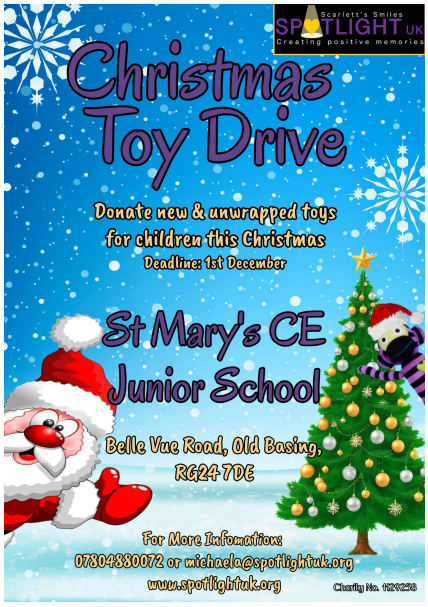
Talk Homework!

As you know along with Old Basing Infant school we continue to work this year on improving our children's speaking and listening skills! It would be lovely to hear what your family have discussed this week!
This week what will you come up with for this question?

Who has been kind to you recently? What did they do?
How have you show kindness to someone else?

Spotlight Christmas Toy Appeal

Once again this year we are supporting Spotlight's Christmas Toy Appeal by being a collection point to help ensure that as far as possible, all children in our local area receive a present this year. Items do need to be new and unwrapped. We are collecting donations from Monday 2nd November up until Monday 30th November 2026.
Please spread the word around different organisations and work places as anyone can use the school as a donation hub.



Remembrance

As usual, we will be supporting the British Legion Poppy Appeal. Children will be able to buy poppies and various other items from after half term, we will send out further details when we have them. We will have representatives from our school lay a wreath at St Mary's Church and at the War Memorial in town as part of the Remembrance Day commemorations. As a school, we will be marking Remembrance Day on the 11th November with a special assembly and a minute's silence.

Children in Need 2026 - 13th November

We will once again be supporting the 'Children In Need Appeal' with a non-uniform day on Friday 13th November. We would love to see as many people as possible celebrating the charity's spotty theme by being 'SPOTacular'. Can you create your spottiest outfit to support this great charity? A link for donations will be sent out after half term.

Friendship Week and Odd Socks Day – 16th November

The week commencing 16th November is our annual Friendship Week which coincides with National Anti-Bullying week. This year we will incorporate Odd Socks day on Monday 16th November to celebrate the fact that we are all unique. You do not need to buy anything special or donate money for this event – just look in your odd socks drawer at home! During the week pupils will take part in a wide range of activities about Friendships and Anti-Bullying. We will also share a break time with Old Basing Infants which is always great fun!

Safeguarding update

Please take care over the half term holiday, take care if your children are out 'Trick or Treating' over Halloween, or if you are planning a firework display over the final weekend of half term ahead of November 5th!

The Child Accident Prevention Trust has some tips to think about before venturing out with your family for Halloween.

How to keep children safe this Halloween | 12 top tips

Information from the Royal Society for the prevention of Accidents, includes information about enjoying fireworks safely. This can be found here:

RoSPA- Firework safety tips | RoSPA

New Book Recommendations

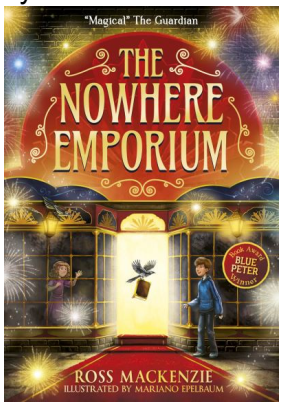
The Sky We Share - Star Stories From Around the World
By Laura Knowles
7+ Readers



For thousands of years, civilisations have turned to the stars for guidance.
From the Polynesians who voyaged across open oceans using only the stars to light their way, to ancient farmers who timed their harvests by celestial rhythms, and storytellers who filled the heavens with legends, this book explores incredible stories from each corner of the world.
Featuring myths and folklore passed down through generations with modern scientific insight and tips for budding stargazers, *The Sky We Share* is the perfect Christmas gift for curious children and anyone who has ever looked to the night sky with imagination and wonder.
Created in collaboration with Royal Observatory Greenwich.

The Nowhere Emporium Illustrated Edition
By Ross MacKenzie
9+ Readers

When the mysterious Nowhere Emporium arrives in Glasgow, orphan Daniel Holmes stumbles upon it quite by accident. Before long, the 'shop from nowhere' and its owner, Mr Silver, draw Daniel into a breathtaking world of magic and enchantment.



With the help of Mr Silver's daughter Ellie, Daniel explores the Emporium's vast labyrinth of passageways and rooms -- rooms that contain wonders beyond anything Daniel has ever imagined. But when Mr Silver disappears, and a shadow from the past threatens everything, the Emporium and all its wonders begin to crumble.
Can Daniel and Ellie save their home, and their friends, before the Nowhere Emporium is destroyed forever?
This modern classic has been reimagined for a new generation with magical, atmospheric illustrations by Mariano Epelbaum. A unique die-cut hardback design invites readers to open the door and step inside the fantastical shop from nowhere. Just bring your imagination!

F.O.O.B.S News

Hello from F.O.O.B.S. - After half term we have a busy few weeks! The year 3 disco will be held on Friday 6th November. Tickets go on sale today via our website www.foobs.weebly.com .
We have a HappySchoolBag collection booked for Thursday 19th November. Half term would be a great opportunity to dig out some things to donate!
Always a firm favourite with the children, the F.O.O.B.S. Christmas Markets will return again this year!
Please bring your donations into school after half term.
Lastly, Letter to Santa kits will also be on sale in November.
Look out for emails from the school with more details on all of these events
Finally, we hope that everyone has a wonderful half term!

Governors' Corner

I am taking over as chair of the Learning and Ethos Committee, from Andy Grayson who is now Chair of Governors. This subcommittee of the Governing Body meets twice in the Autumn term and once in each of the Spring and Summer terms. We normally hear from a teacher who is lead for a particular subject. Over the past year we have heard a lot about the Action Plans for English, thinking about how both in writing and in reading improvements are being made in teaching and in the level of achievement of the pupils. In the last newsletter, Parent governor Sarah Adams wrote about the recent subject focus which was RE, and helpful in preparing for the expected SIAMS inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). As well as reviewing various bits of data, the committee, as it's title suggests, also has an agenda item of "Ethos". This enables us to provide strategic oversight of the school's Church school status and ensure that the Christian ethos is consistently embedded and upheld across all aspects of the school's work. Foundation governors, approved by the local church, are significant in this role.
Philip Hiorns - Foundation Governor

Attendance – it matters!

Last week you will have been sent your child's latest attendance report. Good school attendance is essential for pupils to get the most out of their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The pupils with the highest attainment nationally at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 have higher rates of attendance over the key stage compared to those with the lowest attainment. At the end of September whole school attendance was 97.6%. We continue to be pleased with the attendance of our pupils and we are pleased to see some improvement in pupils who have previously been persistently late to school. We also understand that at this early stage in the academic year, a child's illness can negatively impact their overall attendance percentages, please do not worry if this has affected your chid.



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

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
16th Nov – Odd Socks Day
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
6th Jan – Yr 5 Swimming Starts (details will be sent out next half term)
11th Jan – Southampton Art gallery working with Yr 5
12th Jan - Year 6 Church Visit 1:30pm (Parents of Yr 6 welcome to attend)
14th Jan - Mitchell Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm (Parents of Mitchell Class welcome to attend)
15th Jan – Year 5 F.O.O.B.S Disco
26th Jan - Year 4 Church Visit 1:30pm (Parents of Yr 6 welcome to attend)
28th Jan - Nightingale Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm (Parents of Nightingale Class welcome to attend)
29th Jan – Yr 6 F.O.O.B.S Movie Night
3rd and 4th Feb – Parents Evening
10th Feb – Yr 3 Show Afternoon Performance
11th Feb – Yr 3 Show Evening Performance

15th – 19th Feb – Half Term

10th -13th May 2027 Key Stage 2 (KS2) SATs (Year 6)
7th – 18th June 2027 Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)
4th July – F.O.O.B.S Summer Fair
10th June – Sports Day (Yrs. 3 and 4 AM Yrs. 5 and 6 PM)

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