

St Mary's

Church of England Junior School

No: 8
6th December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you to the hard working volunteers from F.O.O.B.S who were in school last week to run the Christmas Market. The children love this event and really enjoy choosing gifts for relatives or friends – I'm not sure the teachers enjoyed the wrapping up after! Thank you to everyone who donated items for this year's shop.

It was lovely to see so many Year 4 relatives in last Thursday to see their children's Viking Art work – their clay masks were really well made, well done year 4.



Year 6 have been out and about on their bikes for the Bikeability training, they have done so well. Those who lacked confidence have come on so much and those who were non-riders have learnt how to ride a bike on the playground! We are really proud of them all. I hope that they continue riding now that they have learnt and I hope that all of year 6 put into practice all they have learnt when out on their bikes to keep themselves safe. Their week ended with a fantastic day working with West End in Schools, who led a workshop on the Dickens classic 'A Christmas Carol'. This was a fantastic launch to their next unit of English work.

We enjoyed watching Nelson classes sharing assembly yesterday, they performed with confidence and worked well as a team to put it all together, well done Nelson class.

Finally, our Year 6 football team and the Year 5 and 6 basketball team represented the school really well in recent matches, well done to all involved. The Basketball team did really well coming back with a medal from their competition!

Next week in Act of Worship we will continue with the theme of Advent and look at the stories in the bible that lead up to the birth of Jesus.

Spotlight Christmas Toy Appeal

Thank you so much to everyone who donated gifts for this year's Toy Appeal. A representative from Spotlight was thrilled to collect such a huge donation today, your generosity really does make a difference to those in our local community who find themselves in need.

News from our Junior Road Safety Officers – We have a winner!

We have drawn our first competition winner! Well done to Grace whose entry was pulled out in assembly and took home a pack of reflective gear. An amazing 198 pupils entered – look out for the next one! Please remember to keep yourselves safe on the roads and in your cars – wear your seatbelts! George, Elliot, Hattie and Charlotte

Governors' Corner

As School Governors we are able to receive training from Hampshire Services for Schools. Once each year we have a training session for the whole governing body. This year we focused on the subject of "Monitoring Behaviour in school". The course facilitator helped us to think about many aspects of behaviour and also our role as governors. As well as receiving reports from the headteacher about behaviour, governors are also able to observe behaviour first hand during visits to the school, for example when meeting their subject link teacher. I had been into school that week to review safeguarding and had been pleased to note the generally very good behaviour of the children.

We also can participate individually in one of many other training courses, generally run on-line. I recently took part in a course about "Effective Use of Pupil Premium". The Pupil Premium, which is additional to main school funding, is provided in order to address the current underlying inequalities between children

eligible for free school meals and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most. Many of the actions taken benefit all pupils within the school. Each year a Pupil premium strategy statement is prepared by each school. The current and previous statements for St Mary's are on the school website. As governors we review the impact that the interventions have on the progress of pupils.

Philip Hiorns Foundation Governor

Safeguarding – Parents wellbeing at Christmas

We are all feeling the pressures of building towards the big day and the to-do lists are getting longer! Whilst we are all hoping that Christmas will be a wonderful family celebration, you might actually see some behaviours in your children that are challenging! Remember – this is normal. Most of our children are tired, excited and overwhelmed. You might not see this on Instagram or Facebook, but you certainly would in many of our homes!

Don't be hard on yourself if it does go wrong. Don't feel paying a fortune on expensive gifts is the answer, or run yourself ragged trying to make it all perfect. It might be a beautiful Christmas day, or you might be hiding behind the turkey! In the future, your children will look back fondly, and all the Christmas's will blur into happy memories.

Whether it's the financial strain that accompanies this time of year, the cold and dark winter nights, or the reality of spending Christmas without some friends or family, there can be a number of triggers for mental health problems during the holiday season

Make sure you look after yourselves. Happy parents mean happy children. If you are feeling overwhelmed with the pressures of this time of year, you're not the only one. You are not alone. Please do seek support from friends, family or other support agencies. The following website has some useful advice and links to support:

<https://www.priorygroup.com/mental-health/christmas-and-mental-health>

Health and Safety

Please make sure you have read and understood the ParentMail sent our earlier this week in regards to the administration of medicine in school.

Christmas Events

• Carol Concert

Our annual Christmas Carol Concert will be held in the church on Tuesday 17th December at 6:00pm, we look forward to welcoming you to this special service. Some pupils will be involved in the service as part of the Senior Choir and other pupils from across the school will be asked to read or present their RE work from this term. Class teachers will contact the parents of those pupils involved.

This service is open to you all, and it is a really special time in our school calendar. We meet in the staff carpark at 5:30pm. Reverend Jo will join us there and she will then lead a procession down to church please bring your lanterns and torches to make this procession a sea of light! The church doors will not be open to anyone until the procession from the school arrives.

• Christmas Cards

The Christmas post boxes are out and filling up! Please make sure that envelopes are marked with full names and classes to help our Year 6 elves deliver them!

• Christmas Parties

All classes will have their Christmas party during the afternoon of Wednesday 18th December. We ask for children to bring in their own individual small box/bag of 'party food' for them to enjoy during the party. Please note this is in addition to their normal packed lunch or school dinner.

This day will also be a non-uniform/Christmas jumper day and we look forward to seeing lots of festive attire.



- **Christmas Dinner**

Finally, thank you for returning your children's Christmas dinner orders already. Our annual Christmas lunch will be held on the last day of term, Thursday 19th December.

End of term Church visits

You are welcome to join us at our end of term church visits on Thursday 19th December. Classes will visit church at the following times. Please contact the school office if you are able to help walk down to church with your child's class.

09:15am – Russell, Mitchell, Paulet, Austen

10:00am – Nightingale, White, Nelson, Conan Doyle

11:00am – Davies, Brunel, Wellington, Dickens

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!) Miss Bunkle (our SENCo), Mrs Alvarez (our ELSA) and Mrs Squire (Behaviour Support LSA) are also on hand to chat about issues.



Meet us 9am to 10.30am on:

Tuesday 4th February

Tuesday 1st April

Tuesday 20th May

Tuesday 8th July

F.O.O.B.S. news

Hello from F.O.O.B.S! It was lovely to see the children choosing gifts for their loved ones at the Christmas Markets last week. We hope the children enjoyed the event even more than we did!

For those who bought Letter to Santa Kits, replies will be sent home in a plain sealed envelope addressed to parents/guardians in the last week of term for you to share with your children as you wish.

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

INSET Days for 2024/2025

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

Friday 20th Dec 2024

Monday 24th Feb 2025

Friday 23rd May 2025

Dates for your Diary

7th Dec – Junior Choir at St Mary's Church 11:30am

8th Dec – Orchestra Xmas Concert at Milestones 10:15am

10th Dec – Yr. 3 Art Gallery 3:25-4:00pm, parents welcome

12th Dec – Dickens Sharing Assembly 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome

12th Dec – Yr. 5 & 6 Art Gallery 3:25-4:00pm, parents welcome

15th Dec – Senior Choir at Winchester Xmas market 1pm

17th Dec – Carol Concert at St Mary's Church 6:00pm

18th Dec - Class Christmas parties 1:30pm (non uniform/Christmas jumper day)

19th Dec – End of term church visits am, parents/carers welcome

- 09:15am – Russell, Mitchell, Paulet, Austen
- 10:00am – Nightingale, White, Nelson, Conan Doyle
- 11:00am – Davies, Brunel, Wellington, Dickens

19th Dec – Last Day of term

20th Dec – INSET Day

6th Jan 2025 – First day of Spring term

w/c 6th Jan – Spring term after school clubs start

8th Jan – Year 5 Swimming starts

14th Jan – Year 6 Church visit 1:30pm, parents/carers welcome

15th Jan – Year 5 Swimming

16th Jan – Russell class sharing assembly 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome

17th Jan – F.O.O.B.S Year 5 Disco, 5:00-6:30pm

21st Jan – Year 6 SATs information evening 6pm

22nd Jan – Year 5 Swimming

23rd Jan – Mitchell class sharing assembly 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome

28th Jan – Year 4 Church visit 1:30pm, parents/carers welcome

29th Jan – Year Swimming

30th Jan – Paulet class sharing assembly 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome

31st Jan – F.O.O.B.S Year 6 movie night, details to follow

4th Feb – Parent & Carer coffee morning 09:00-10:30am

5th Feb – Year 5 Swimming

w/c 10th Feb – No after school clubs this week

w/c 10th Feb – Year 3 show week, details to follow

10th Feb – Year 4 QMC visit

11th Feb – Year 4 QMC visit

12th Feb – Year 5 Swimming (last one)

14th Feb – F.O.O.B.S Dare to be Different Day

w/c 17th Feb – Half term

24th Feb – Inset Day

25th Feb – First day back (after school clubs start back this week)