

St Mary's

Church of England Junior School

No: 9
19th December 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have made it to the end of term!

On behalf of all the staff, I would like to thank you all for the kind sentiments and generous gifts we have received this week, your messages and thoughts are appreciated.



Well done to Dickens class who entertained us last week with their sharing assembly, it was lovely to see how confident they are already after just one term with us.

We kicked off our festive celebrations at St Mary's Church Tree Festival on Saturday 7th December. Our Junior Choir sang beautifully, it was lovely to see them perform alongside the singing club from Old Basing infant school which is now led by Mrs Malone; this is a great way for the two schools to work together and support transition at the end of Year 2.

On Sunday 8th December, the streets of Milestones Museum were filled by the sound of our orchestra as part of the museum's Christmas event. They entertained friends, family and visitors to the museum with a range of festive songs ending with a rendition of Auld Lang Syne. They all performed brilliantly and with confidence, many visitors were surprised to see the sounds they heard were from a children's orchestra! Thank you to the volunteers who regularly help with our orchestra. We really appreciate your support.

Our musicians continued to entertain the crowds at our annual Christmas concert held in school last Monday night. We enjoyed performances from groups and soloists; we were especially proud of our younger Year 3 performers who took part in their first concert.



Last Sunday our Senior Choir performed at Winchester Cathedral Christmas market – it was an honour to be asked to perform again and wonderful to showcase the outstanding music provision here at St Mary's.

It was lovely to see the church packed on Tuesday night for our annual carol service. Well done to all of the children who read and thank you also to the adults who did a reading for us. Thank you to our school governors who provided and served the seasonal refreshments after the service.

This week has ended with some very noisy Christmas parties, end of term church visits and our Christmas lunch today – I think that all of the children are now ready for the break!

Please do check the dates at the end of this newsletter as there are occasionally some changes and often new dates added.

Finally, I wish you, and your families, a very happy Christmas and all the best for 2025. I look forward to welcoming you all back to school on Monday 6th January.

Christmas Community Projects

It is important that our school community gives back and forges links with those in our local community. This Christmas, each year group has undertaken a small project to share our school value of love.

Year 3 wrote Christmas cards and delivered them along with Christmas pencils to their Year 2 buddies at Old Basing Infant School. Year 4 created Christmas tree decorations which were delivered to St Michael's Hospice for the staff, patients and their families.

Pupils in Year 5 enjoyed a walk to Old Basing Village Nursery, where they gave cards and pencils to all of the children, they thoroughly enjoyed staying for a play!



Year 6 pupils made gift boxes using their knowledge of 3D shape nets. These were filled with Christmas chocolate treats and delivered to the residents of Basingfield Court and the staff on the children's ward at Basingstoke hospital. Thank you children for all your efforts and kindness.



Table Tennis News

A huge well done to Sophie H in Yr. 6 for winning the individual girls Basingstoke area table tennis competition this week, she will now represent Basingstoke at the county finals in Southampton in January!

School Dinners

You may be aware from reports in the media, Hampshire Education Catering, will stop providing meals to schools in 2026. We are currently working alongside Old Basing Infants to source a new catering company to provide our school meals. Many schools in Hampshire have already successfully changed to alternative providers. This process obviously takes time and we will keep you informed with any updates as appropriate.

Uniform

Thank you for your support in ensuring most children have the correct uniform on each day, we have seen a huge improvement in PE kit so far this year with the majority of pupils wearing plain black tracksuit bottoms.

Please can you ensure that your child is wearing their shirt and tie on non PE days, unless there is a prior agreement with the school as to why your child can not wear the correct uniform.

Toys from home

Please can you ensure your child does not bring in toys from home unless previously agreed with your child's class teacher. We are seeing an increasing amount of soft toys, fidgets etc being brought in and as I am sure you can imagine it can cause upset if they are misplaced!

Attendance

At the end of term the school's overall attendance stands at 97.2%

We have seen an increasing number of requests of leave during term time for holidays. In line with Hampshire County Council guidance on school attendance, these will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.

Safeguarding

Do not feel alone if you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, friend or relative over the Christmas period. Please do make a note of these useful contacts:

Hampshire Children's Services

Members of the public please telephone: 0300 555 1384

Hampshire Adult Services

0300 555 1386

NSPCC

0808 800 5000

Childline

0800 1111

Police

101 or 999

Domestic Abuse - Safe to Talk

0800 111 4998. In an emergency call 999, if you cannot speak, press 55 when prompted.

Governors' Corner

Stronger Together: A Collaborative Partnership.

We're excited to share some exciting news about a new partnership that will strengthen our school community. St. Mary's has formed a collaborative agreement with Old Basing Infant School, Saxon Wood School, and Great Binfields Primary School.

This partnership will enable our Governing Boards to support each other, share best practices, and provide mutual support. By working together, we can:

- Share expertise and knowledge: Learn from each other's experiences and challenges.
- Provide mutual support: Offer guidance and advice on governance matters.
- Enhance our collective impact: Work together to improve the quality of education for all our students.

We believe that this collaboration will strengthen our governance practices and ultimately benefit our school community. We look forward to a bright future of shared learning and support.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Sefton Lucas Chair of Governors

F.O.O.B.S. news

Merry Christmas from F.O.O.B.S! We hope you have a wonderful break and we look forward to seeing you for more events in 2025!

Juniors only.... A couple of dates for the diary. The year 5 disco will be held on Friday 17th January and the year 6 movie night will be held on Friday 31st January.

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



Year 3 Applications for September 2025

Don't forget that the application window for applications into Year 3 in September 2025 close on 15th January 2025.

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

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)