

St Mary's

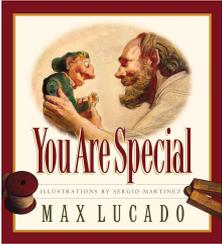
Church of England Junior School

No: 12

14th February 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

How have we come to the end of another half term? I hope that you all have a nice break next week, hopefully when we return after the half term break we will have more sunshine and see more signs that spring is here!



Year 3 were amazing this week in their musical production of Max Lucado's "We are special". The singing was fantastic and they all worked so hard to learn their parts. It was a real team effort, well done Year 3! I can't wait to see them in their Year 6 production if this is what they can do now! Thank you to all of our Year 3 parents/carers who helped with learning lines, song words and with costumes.

Last week Year 4 enjoyed a short walk around the local area looking at land-use as part of their geography topic. They were very sensible and came back with many photographs, notes and sketch maps to use in subsequent sessions. Year 4 classes have also enjoyed cooking vegetable tarts in DT, they smelt delicious and I hope that they have now offered to cook dinner for you at home sometime! This week all three Year 4 classes have visited QMC Primary Science Centre as part of their unit on Electricity, they had a great time and learned lots. It has been a very busy and hands on fortnight for them!



Year 5 have started their swimming lessons, this was delayed due to work being undertaken at the pool, but lessons are now in full swing and will continue after half term. We were especially proud of those who have entered a swimming pool for the first time. This opportunity for six swimming lessons funded by the school as part of the PE curriculum is really important for those who do not swim out of school.

Thank you to everyone who completed our parental survey this week. We really appreciate your feedback. The results of this survey will be collated and shared with governors and staff to help us plan strategic priorities and make improvements where possible.

As you will have seen from our newsletters this half term has been a busy one! We look forward to future learning and enrichment opportunities next half term.

Ofsted News

As I am sure you have seen in the media, Ofsted have announced a new inspection model and school inspection toolkit which means that from September 2025 schools will be inspected against different criteria and benchmarked against different standards than previously. Ofsted have opened a consultation for parents, carers, professionals and learners to find out what they think about their proposals to change education inspections and their new report cards for providers. You can find out more and have your say through this link:

[Improving the way Ofsted inspects education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/improving-the-way-ofsted-inspects-education)

Big Emotions Meeting

Hopefully you will have received the Parent Mail last week about a meeting we are hosting run by the Primary Behaviour Support Services about understanding BIG EMOTIONS. This meeting will include practical tips for parents and carers. This meeting has been organised in collaboration with Old Basing Infant School and Great Binfields Primary School. It is always helpful to get a few new tips on how to handle the challenging emotions our children display from time to time.

Thursday 27th February, 6pm – 7:45pm.

Please complete the attached form by following this link to register your attendance.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=ehrpnaGn_U-DffOAw45I2EsA8xCuGZREpmBSiYA03vIUODQxRjVBSzRGNEtMSjJNTkxaMVJaT1IzSy4u

Attendance

We are increasingly seeing children who are frequently off school one or two days either before, or after a school holiday. Moving forward, we will be monitoring patterns of absence like this to ensure the best attendance for all.

At the end of January whole school attendance was 97.2% with the number of persistently absent pupils decreasing, thank you all for your support with securing good attendance for your child.

Website

Thank you for your responses to our recent website survey. We are currently working with our provider to 'clean up' and update our website, with a new one planned for the near future! Your feedback has been really useful. Thank you.

Safeguarding

The Significance of Sleep

For children, sleep plays a crucial role due to the significant changes happening in their bodies and minds. Here are some key reasons highlighting the importance of sleep:

- **Physical growth and development:** Sleep triggers the release of growth hormones necessary for physical growth.
- **Brain development:** Quality sleep is essential for brain development, especially in areas related to decision-making, impulse control and emotional regulation.
- **Emotional well-being:** Sleep aids in emotional regulation, stress reduction and is closely linked to mental health.

Ensuring that children get enough quality sleep is essential for their growth, learning and overall well-being. The National Sleep Foundation recommends that children aged 5-12 get 9-11 hours of sleep a night. There are many reasons that children don't get good quality sleep. Some of these are:

- **Irregular sleep schedules**, especially on weekends, can disrupt a child's sleep routine.
- **Use of electronic devices** late into the night can be a significant barrier to a good night's sleep.
- **A noisy or brightly lit room** can make it difficult for children to fall asleep and stay asleep.
- **Consuming caffeinated or sugary foods and drinks**, especially in the evening, can impact on a child's ability to fall asleep.
- **Children might underestimate the importance of sleep**, leading to a reluctance to create good sleep habits.

Make a Difference at St. Mary's: Join Our Board of Governors!

St. Mary's thrives because of passionate people like you! We are looking for enthusiastic individuals to join our Board of Governors and help shape the future of our school.

Be a champion for our children's education. As a Board Governor, you'll gain valuable leadership experience, collaborate with inspiring colleagues, and directly contribute to the success of St. Mary's.

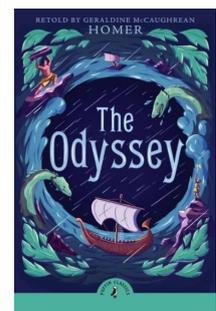
Please contact the school office for further information.

Sefton Lucas, Chair of Governors

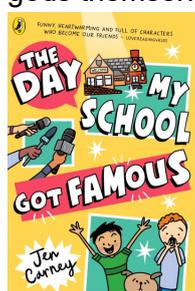
New Book Recommendations

The Odyssey, by Geraldine McCaughrean

After ten years of war, Odysseus turns his back on Troy and sets sail for home. But his voyage takes another ten years and he must face many dangers - Polyphemus the greedy one-eyed giant, Scylla the six-headed sea monster and even the wrath of the gods themselves - before he is reunited with his wife and son.



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(Age 9+)

The Day My School Got Famous Synopsis, by Jen Carney

Buckle up, reader! This book is packed with comic strips and cartoons!

Since Ferris Foster's dog got famous, life has taken a surprising turn:

1. Ferris's new foster brother, Nile, has burst into his life with a BANG, making Ferris worry that his mums might give up fostering for good.

2. Something HUGE, OLD and DANGEROUS has been discovered under Ferris's school, causing it to CLOSE DOWN! (For now.)

3. Ferris is still a cartooning genius, but between home schooling and Nile's dodgy science experiments, finding somewhere quiet to draw has become practically impossible.

Ferris' teacher presents the children with an arty competition, but can the boys put their differences aside, work as a team and win the once in a lifetime opportunity? Or will Nile's obsession with experiments have EXPLOSIVE consequences?

(Age 6+)

Governors' Corner

Governors have a responsibility to regularly meet with teachers, to which they are assigned, to review and monitor various aspects of the school curriculum. I was recently in school, for one such meeting with Miss Bennison, to discuss and understand the current objectives and primary focus for History.

One of the aspects of St Mary's school, that we are particularly proud of, is its broad and ambitious curriculum, of which subjects such as history play an important part.

The Horrible Histories books and TV shows, with their irreverent, gruesome and humorous take on history, have demonstrated that all children, if taught in the right way, love history. A key aim at St Mary's is to make history interesting, exciting and interactive.

Enrichment is a key aspect of our history teaching with external visits or visitors to the school aimed at bringing history alive for the children. These include key historical events being acted out and demonstrations of historical skills.

Each historical topic also has an artefact box filled with objects and pictures to stimulate questioning and discussion, such as what is it, who would have used it, why was it used etc.

Children are also given opportunities to immerse themselves further in their history topic by dressing up, role play etc.

While there is a lot of fun to be had, the children's history learning is also challenging as they learn the key aspects of historical events; their chronology, characteristics of each period, cause and effect, similarities to other periods and the significance of events.

By making history come alive, we aim to not only educate but also to inspire a genuine interest and enthusiasm for historical learning.

The dedication and creativity of our teachers, along with the support from governors, ensure that St Mary's continues to offer a vibrant and enriching curriculum.

Michael Wright, Vice Chair of Governors

F.O.O.B.S. news

Hello from F.O.O.B.S! We really hope the children have enjoyed Dare to be Different Day! We have certainly had some excited children amongst the F.O.O.B.S. team!

Planning is underway for our annual Easter Fair which will be held on Saturday 29th March so pop the date in your diary and tickets will be on sale nearer the time. See attached poster for more details.

Hopefully you saw the request sent out by the schools for a new lead for our Summer Fair team.

Unfortunately, we have had no one volunteer for this role yet. However, there is still (a little bit of) time so if you were thinking about coming forward we would love to hear from you! Please do get in touch via

friendsofoldbasingschools@gmail.com

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 1st April

Tuesday 20th May

Tuesday 8th July



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

Dates for your Diary

w/c 17th Feb – Half term

24th Feb – Inset Day

25th Feb – First day back (after school clubs start back this week)
26th Feb – Year 5 Swimming
27th Feb – Big Emotions Workshop 6:00-7:45pm here
5th Mar – Year 5 Swimming
10th Mar – Year 5 QMC visit
11th Mar – Year 5 QMC visit
11th Mar – Year 3 Church visit 1:30pm, parents/carers welcome
12th Mar – Year 5 Swimming
12th Mar – Year 4 French café
13th Mar – Austen class sharing assembly 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome
w/c 17th Mar – No after school clubs this week
18th Mar – Year 5 Church visit 1:30pm, parents/carers welcome
19th Mar – Year 5 Swimming
19th Mar – Parents Evening, details to follow
20th Mar – Parents Evening, details to follow
20th Mar – Davies class sharing assembly 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome
27th Mar – Wellington Class sharing assembly 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome
29th Mar – Easter Fair 1-2:30pm, 3-4:30pm OB infant school (see attached poster)
1st Apr – Parent & Carer coffee morning 09:00-10:30
4th Apr – End of term Church visits (am) timings to follow
4th Apr – Last Day of term

7th-21st Apr – Easter Holidays

22nd Apr – First day of new term (summer term after school clubs start this week)
25th Apr – F.O.O.B.S Year 4 Disco 5:00-6:30pm
1st May – Conan Doyle class sharing assembly, 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome
7th May – Eucharist Years 5/6 10:00am – parents/carers welcome
8th May – Brunel class sharing assembly, 2:45pm, parents/carers welcome
w/c 12th May Year 6 SAT's week
13th May – Year 4 Church visit, 1:30pm, parents/carers welcome
20th May – Parent & Carer coffee morning 09:00-10:30am
20th May – Year 6 Church visit 1:30pm, parents/carers welcome

23rd May – Inset Day

26th – 30th May – Half term

2nd June – First day back (after school clubs start back this week)
5th June – Sports Day
12th June – Reserve Sports Day
19th June – Whole Year 6 & Class Photos
6th July – Summer Fair
w/c 14th July – Year 6 Show week