



No: 7 - December 2020

UNCRC Article 1 – Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the convention. We have the responsibility to respect the rights of others.

Dear Parents

The last two weeks have been busy in school with all the children continuing to work hard and impress us all.

Year 6 are continuing to enjoy their Entertainment topic, particularly learning rock and roll dancing. Year 5 have been busy learning more about the Earth and beyond and in year 4 our children are approaching the end of their Viking topics. Year 3 children have enjoyed a new topic based on the book 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes, I have enjoyed seeing some of their own narrative writing.

This week in our Act of Worships we have introduced the theme of Advent. Advent is an important part of the Christian calendar. It means 'coming' and it's the period before Christmas, which celebrates the birth of Jesus. Miss Cosgrove has made us a beautiful advent candle wreath which will be lit and shared with the children at the start of each week as we explore the theme over the next few weeks. I am sure that at home you are all busy preparing for Christmas.

St Mary's News Edition 2

This year, we have started up a school magazine called 'St Mary's News' that comes out once every half term. Within the magazine, there are articles written by both children and adults in our school community. This magazine is an opportunity for us to celebrate the learning that goes on within our school and to encourage a love of reading and writing amongst our children.

Follow this link to find the latest edition - your child may wish to print off their own copy to enjoy.

<https://www.st-marys-jun.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Our+School+Magazine&pid=381>

Happy reading!
Miss Sherlock

Summer Reading Challenge

It was lovely to receive so many medals and certificates last week to distribute to pupils who took part in the Hampshire Library virtual summer reading challenge. I hope that there are a few books on Christmas lists this year!

Attendance

At the end of November, the school's overall attendance stood at 98.4%.

Congratulations to Paulet and Russell classes with the highest attendance of 99.1%.

Wellbeing

The lead up to Christmas is a fun and exciting time, but for some children it can be a very difficult time, and leave them feeling anxious, lonely or stressed. The following article on the Young Minds website, has some tips and things to consider if Christmas makes your child anxious.

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/how-to-help-your-child-if-christmas-makes-them-anxious/>

Christmas Events

A reminder from our last newsletter of our upcoming Christmas events.

Please do read and take on board all of these dates and arrangements for our festive celebrations.

• Carol Concert

We are currently putting together a virtual Christmas Carol Concert that we hope you will all be able to be part of towards the end of term. Links and details for this will be sent out later, it will be ready to view as a community on the evening of Wednesday 16th December.

• Christmas Cards

The children at St Mary's have traditionally loved using the communal post boxes to post cards to friends and staff. To reduce the risk of contamination this year, our post boxes will be slightly different! Should children wish to bring in cards, each class will have folders in which pupils can 'post' their cards to children or staff in their bubble and to those in different classes. Class teachers will then keep these in 'quarantine' before they are handed out to other classes. Therefore, all Christmas cards should be in school by Thursday 10th December so they can then be handed out during the week beginning 14th December.

• Christmas Panto

During the week beginning 14th December all classes will have the opportunity to watch an online performance of Dick Whittington. We are really looking forward to this new experience for St Mary's.

• **Christmas Parties**

The good news is that these can go ahead as usual! As our parties are held in classes, our class bubbles can still enjoy this afternoon celebrating together. All classes will have their Christmas party during the afternoon of Thursday 17th December. We ask for children to bring in their own individual small box/bag of 'party food' for them to enjoy during the party. This year we will not allow children to share food within their class. 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. Our annual Christmas lunch will be held on Friday 18th December.

Christmas Tree Festival

St Mary's Church will still be holding their Christmas Tree Festival this year over the weekend of 12th/13th December. It will be a little different this year as it will be taking place entirely outside in the churchyard, we hope many of you will be able to visit the Church grounds to find our school tree and see others contributed by families, groups and organisations from within the parish. There are lots of ways to get involved from making a fat ball to hang on our wildlife tree to sponsoring a star in memory of a loved one. (Contact Debbie admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk or see our Facebook page 'St Mary's Old Basing and Lychpit' for more information). All the proceeds from this year's festival will be split between St Michael's Hospice and St Mary's Church.

News from the Rainbow Room

Christmas Pressure

After an 'interesting' year, Christmas is on rather a pedestal. Decorations are going up earlier and we have all felt the need to be more organised with the pressures of lockdown and tiers. We might not be able to do some of our usual activities and visits; without doubt, our children will be picking up on this.

We all know that Christmas is an overwhelming time in 'normal' years and this year we may see this even more. Whilst we are all hoping that Christmas will give us relief, you might actually see some behaviours coming out that are challenging. Remember – this is normal. Kids are tired and excited. Kids are overwhelmed and sad not to see all their loved ones. Kids are managing in this strange COVID world amazingly – but they too know Christmas isn't the same.

I just wanted to say as a parent – 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, from the children, holding a glass firmly... Both are just fine. In the future, your children will look back fondly, and all the Christmas' will blur into happy memories.

Make sure you look after yourselves. Happy parents mean happy children. If you are feeling overwhelmed by your children's behaviour remember, you're not the only one. You are not alone. Don't forget to look on our well-being page for links to useful websites that can offer advice and support.

<https://www.st-marys-jun.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Emotional+Well%2Dbeing&pid=326>

Miss Bunkle, Inclusion Manager

F.O.O.B.S

Hello from F.O.O.B.S! We have lots going on between now and the end of term! The eagerly anticipated Letters to Santa Kits will be distributed this week via the classrooms. They must be written and returned to school by Friday 11th December at the latest. The replies from Santa will be returned to parents/guardians in plain envelopes via the classrooms in the last week of term for you to share with your child as you wish.

Entries are still open for the Winter Windows trail and should be sent to

friendsofoldbasingschools@gmail.com by Sunday 6th December to be included on the map. Tickets for the trail map go on sale from 11th December

via www.foobs.weebly.com

Finally, today is the last day to purchase the Snowman Lantern craft kits

via www.foobs.weebly.com. Collection of the kits will be Thursday or Friday 10/11th December from outside the Infant School reception.

From the Governors

The Autumn Safeguarding visit aimed to gauge to what extent safeguarding across the school, and our relationships and dependencies upon external agencies and bodies, was impacted by the disruption caused by Lockdown.

During the period since March 2020, all of the available evidence substantiates a claim that Safeguarding standards and the prevailing culture across the School have remained of a very high standard. This is further supported by the summary views from other relevant visits from external stakeholders who continue to hold the school in high regard as a role model, and seek support from the school to help enrich the safeguarding approaches of other schools.

The Governors wish to express their thanks and admiration to our staff for all they continue to do to maintain a healthy and supportive environment for both the pupils and each other.

Rob Wilson

Parent and Safeguarding Governor

Dinner Money

The office is spending an increasing amount of time chasing for unpaid dinner monies, please can you ensure that your child's account is up to date with payments.

Break time Snacks

Just a reminder that the children should bring in a healthy fruity snack for break time.

Home Learning and Skills Cards

Don't forget that in addition to the work set on Google Classroom each week children can log into their Education City or Mathletics accounts at any time at home to practice their key skills. It is great fun playing live against other people too and this encourages speed and accuracy!

Some of you may have seen a 'skills card' sent home with your child. Please do not worry if your child has, or hasn't had one! These are provided to give pupils some additional practice of a concept that may have been covered that day or week in school. These are generally very short activities that can be completed quickly at home with the support of a parent. Research has shown that quick intervention if a misconception has occurred can really help children's understanding and the use of these cards can also help build confidence and prepare children for the next step on their learning journey. If you have any questions or concerns about a skills card that has been sent home with your child, please do speak to their class teacher. We thank you all for your continued support with learning at home.

Hampshire Healthy Families

Please find below a link to the Hampshire Healthy Families website which contains lots of useful information on health for under 5's up to teens.

www.hampshirehealthyfamilies.org.uk

Is someone close becoming a stranger?

It can be hard to know what to do if you're worried someone close is expressing extreme views or even hatred, which could lead to them harming themselves or others. Working with other organisations, the police protect vulnerable people from being exploited by extremists through a Home Office programme called Prevent.

They have now developed a website to support both family and friends to raise concerns:

<https://actearly.uk>

Dates for the Diary

12 th /13 th Dec	St Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival
w/b 14 th Dec	On-line Christmas Panto
16 th Dec	Virtual Christmas Carol Concert (details to follow)
17 th Dec	Christmas Parties (non uniform/Christmas jumper day)
18 th Dec	Christmas Lunch
18 th Dec	Last day of term (normal finish times)

21st Dec-1st Jan Christmas Holidays

4 th Jan	Start of new term
6 th Jan	Y6 Science Dome (in hall)
13 th Jan	Y4 Walk round Old Basing 09:00-11:00 Paulet/13:00-15:00 Nelson
14 th Jan	Y4 Walk round Old Basing 09:00-11:00 Wellington
14 th Jan	Y5 Southampton Art Gallery visit (in school)
15 th -19 th Feb	Half term break
22 nd Feb	Inset Day
23 rd Feb	First day of new half term
23 rd Mar	Y5 Gordon Brown Centre White class
25 th Mar	Y5 Gordon Brown Centre Brunel class
26 th Mar	Y5 Gordon Brown Centre Mitchel class
22 nd -26 th Mar	Y6 Calshot residential trip

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

and see the school's Facebook page if you need to check events on the go.

Caroline Welch
Headteacher