



## Church of England Junior School

**No: 5**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023**

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you all had a lovely half term break despite the wet weather! I think Autumn has been well and truly here this week. With that in mind please ensure your child comes to school with a waterproof coat – we like to get out at break and lunch time as much as possible.

This week started with an INSET day here at St Mary's. As part of staff professional development we had a training day led by Chris Bonello – Autistic Not Weird. His training was amazing and will really help us support our neurodiverse pupils and other children who will benefit from strategies he suggested and from the personal experiences he shared. It was lovely to receive a message from him following his visit in which he commented, *'Thanks again for having me yesterday- I really enjoyed the morning and it was so clear how much you all care about your children.'*

### Spotlight Christmas Toy Appeal

Once again this year we are supporting Spotlight's 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 (see the attached flyer for suggestions) We will start collecting donations from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November until 12<sup>th</sup> December.

Please do use the attached flyer to spread the word around different organisations and work places as anyone can use the school as a donation hub. Thanks in advance for your generosity – let's make it a really happy Christmas for everyone.

### Remembrance

Alongside Old Basing Infant school we have arranged for representatives from the school to lay wreaths 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 10<sup>th</sup> November with a special assembly and a minute's silence.

### Friendship Week and Odd Socks Day

The week commencing 13th November is our annual Friendship Week which coincides with National Anti-Bullying week. This year we will be starting the week with Odd Socks Day on Monday 13th 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 all pupils will take part in a wide range of activities and complete a joint project with Old Basing Infant School. Look out for information from this week after the event!

### Children in Need 2024

We will once again be supporting the Children In Need Appeal with a non-uniform day on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November. We would love to see as many people as possible celebrating the charities spotty theme by being 'SPOTacular'. Can you create your spottiest outfit to support this great charity?

### Governors' Corner

Hopefully we are all into the swing of the new school year by now - even with the well deserved interruption of half term - a chance to recharge on life's journey is always a good thing! Our lives are demarcated by milestones, achievements and success criteria - the things which we should be doing, should have achieved by certain times - the things which are 'success' criteria for those of us who fit neatly into the patterns that society creates for us. Many of us fall outside these patterns and can find daily life a bit of a struggle sometimes - doing things out of habit and the feeling that we 'should do this', with perhaps a constant worry of success/failure running underneath.

I am not advocating any form of mass rebellion - in fact, far from it! So please do not worry!

But what I am suggesting is that sometimes we need to take the time to figure out what it is that really makes each of us tick (for ourselves) and live in a way which is intuitive to us rather than trying to fit into patterns which are not intuitive and perhaps feeling a sense of worry and stress all of the time. This can be many things - wee routines which keep us grounded, particular friends who are good at upholding us, a walk or a workout, and yes - that bar of well earned chocolate!

Life is full of pressures and demands - we owe it to ourselves as individuals to find the ways that keep us grounded - this is how we help each other to work together. Life sometimes functions as though we were all the same - but we can make it more fulfilling by being the people we were made to be rather than thinking that we should be something different. This makes the world a much better place for everyone! My role in governance is one which carries all of the Governors' checks and balances - but I would be failing in my duty if that was all that it carried and I left 'Revd Jo the Vicar' at the door every time I entered a Governors' meeting. As Revd Jo I also have the unique role of being able to spend time listening, chatting, being with people - encouraging them to be the unique human beings who they were made to be - human beings of all faiths and none - for this is how we flourish in life - together.

Love & Blessings,  
Jo – Foundation Governor.

### **Safeguarding update – Online Safety**

As parents we often have many concerns we need advice or support with. This might be about how to cope with a crying baby; working out whether a child is old enough to walk home from school alone; or thinking about how to keep our children safe online. The NSPCC has a range of leaflets and resources for parents which may be of some help to some of you.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/leaflets/parent-leaflets>

### **Health and Safety - Timber Trail and Woodland Area**

Younger siblings must not use the Timber Trail or play in the woodland area while they are waiting for older siblings to come out of classes. We ask that all children brought onto our site are supervised by an adult at all times for their own safety. Thank you for your support in this.

### **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 5<sup>th</sup> December

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> February

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July



### **F.O.O.B.S. news**

Hello from F.O.O.B.S! We hope you had a great half term and are looking forward to the exciting activities we have planned this term! Next week we are collecting your donations for the Christmas Markets. The children really enjoy selecting gifts for their loved ones so we very much appreciate your help in making this event possible.

Our Letter to Santa kits will also be on sale next week. Details will follow in a parentmail.

At the time of writing this, there are still a few tickets left for the firework event being held at Hook Junior School tomorrow evening. When purchasing your tickets, don't forget to select Old Basing Infants or St Mary's Juniors so F.O.O.B.S. receive a donation from the Hook Schools.

## **News from St Mary's Church**

### **8th/9th/10th December - Christmas Tree Festival**

Plans are now well underway for St Mary's Christmas Tree Festival. The theme of The Holly & the Ivy will be celebrated in a wonderful selection of Christmas Trees decorated by members of the Old Basing and Lychpit community and will be on display in the Church during our Festival weekend. All are welcome to enter a tree. For further information please contact Debbie, St Mary's Administrator on 07541 698235, email [admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk](mailto:admin@stmarysoldbasing.org.uk).

### **Friday 8th December, 7pm Christmas Sing-a-Long**

We will start the Festival with a rousing time amongst the trees singing a mixture of both traditional Christmas Carols and popular Christmas Songs during the evening in the Church.

Tickets (£5 adults, £2.50 children, £12.50 for a family of up to 4 children) are available from Debbie. Saturday & Sunday 11am - 4pm

Over both days of the festival there will be activities for all the family including a Christmas Market. Hot food and refreshments will be available including mulled wine and mince pies.

We look forward to the Old Basing Schools' choirs providing the musical entertainment on Saturday @ 11:30am – followed by Soak the Elf (Revd. Jo), with the Old Basing Royal British Legion Corps of Drums joining us at 2pm on the Sunday.

Please tell your family and friends and come along to start the festive celebrations.

*Reverend Jo*

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**

### **2023-24 INSET Days**

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024

19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

24<sup>th</sup> May 2024

### **Dates for your Diary**

7<sup>th</sup> November – Yr. 3 Church visit 1:30pm

7<sup>th</sup> November – Yr. 4 Anglo Saxon showcase to parents from 3:30pm

7<sup>th</sup> November – Yr. 5 Parents Calshot Meeting 6pm

9<sup>th</sup> November – White Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

10<sup>th</sup> November – Space Dome for Yr. 5 in hall

10<sup>th</sup> November – Yr. 4 Viking Day

13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> November – Friendship week

13<sup>th</sup> November – Odd socks day

16<sup>th</sup> November – Paulet Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

17<sup>th</sup> November – Children in Need Day – non uniform day (wear something spotty)

21<sup>st</sup> November – Yr. 5 Church visit 1:30pm

22<sup>nd</sup> November – Yr. 3 Iron Age day

23<sup>rd</sup> November – Nelson Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

27<sup>th</sup> November – F.O.O.B.S Christmas market

27<sup>th</sup> November – Yr. 5 Music trip to Winchester College (pm)

28<sup>th</sup> November – Yr. 2 parents open morning 9:30-11:00am

5<sup>th</sup> December – Coffee morning 9-10:30am

7<sup>th</sup> December – Dickens Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Tree Festival, St Mary's Church

14<sup>th</sup> December – Class Christmas parties – pm

14<sup>th</sup> December – Christmas Carol Concert at Church 6pm

15<sup>th</sup> December – End of term Church visits, timings tbc

15<sup>th</sup> December - Last day of term

2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 – INSET Day

3<sup>rd</sup> January – First day of new term