



## Church of England Junior School

No: 9

12<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

The term has started on a really positive note, your children have come back ready to learn and have started their new topics with enthusiasm.

On the first day of term St Mary's Junior school warmly welcomed Bishop Philip of Winchester into school today to lead an Act of Worship about Epiphany. The children learnt about the story of the three wise men following the star from the east, their journey to Bethlehem to meet Jesus and about the three gifts they delivered. As part of his visit, Bishop Philip 'chalked' the front door with the sign 20 † C † M † B † 24. This ancient tradition starts and finishes with the year 2024 and uses Latin C, M and B which stands for *Christus, mansionem, benedicat*. This translates to 'May Christ bless this house'.

In addition to Bishop Philip's chalking of the entrance of the school, each class chalked their own doors. Thank you to Philip Hiorns, one of our governors, for joining us for this special Act of Worship.

Tomorrow I will be attending 'A Service of Welcome to the Right Reverend Philip Mounstephen as the 98th Bishop of Winchester' at Winchester Cathedral with one of our governors and some year 6 pupils. We were honoured to be invited as one of only a few schools chosen to represent the schools for the Winchester Diocese. We look forward to sharing more news about this special service next week.

This week Year 5 started their swimming lessons as part of their PE curriculum. It was lovely to hear that those who had never swam before, or were apprehensive, had a great first session. We are all looking forward to the Year 3 Disco this evening – thank you F.O.O.B.S for organising it!

Finally, over the next two weeks, our theme in AoW will change to responsibility which will include us marking Holocaust Memorial Day (HMD) as usual, which this year falls on Saturday 27th January. We focus on the rights that were taken away from people and the lack of respect that was shown for people's rights. This is centred on the Bible quote from Genesis: 'God created human beings in his own image.' This year we will again be joining schools across the dioceses of Winchester and Portsmouth in marking this important day in a way that is age appropriate.

### Rainbow Room

We would like to thank the volunteers of the Village Cafe for their kind and generous donation which has enabled us to refurbish and repurpose the Rainbow Room. No longer Miss Bunkle's office, this is now a space that can be used by children working with adults to support them during times of worry and upset. It is now a lovely calming space for which we are really grateful. We look forward to welcoming in the amazing volunteers from the cafe to see it once the final little finishing touches are in!

### Clubs

Clubs have started back this week; it was lovely to see many children trying something new. We are constantly looking to further extend our club provision and we hope to offer a few more options in the summer term.

### Attendance

At the end of the autumn term whole school attendance was 97%. Well done.

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. Please be aware of the following extract about Penalty Notice's from Hampshire County Council's Attendance Guidance for parents/carers.

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/behaviour-attendance-parents>

*If you pay the Penalty Notice and your child has further unauthorised absences additional legal action may be taken. For example, in the event that a Penalty Notice has previously been served to you due to unauthorised holiday, should your child have any future unauthorised leave this may result in further legal action for you, such as prosecution or an Education Supervision Order.*

### **Discounted Spotlight Events**

Please see the attached flyer from Spotlight about local discounted events they have arranged for the young people of Basingstoke.

### **Governors' Corner**

Our governors often come in to observe and be part of our Act's of Worship in school. Last week one of our foundation governors, Philp Hiorns, joined us. We thank him for his time and comment that the worship was 'A good start to the term and the New Year.'

We are looking forward to working further with the governing body on areas of school improvement over the next term and to welcoming them to school events.

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

Happy New Year from F.O.O.B.S! A couple of dates for your diary for events happening this term: Dare to be Different Day, Friday 9th February and Quiz Night, Saturday 2nd March at Old Basing Village Hall. More details to follow.

We hope the Year 3's have fun at their disco tonight! The Year 6 movie night will be held on Friday 26th January, a Parentmail containing more details will be sent out next week.

### **Coffee Mornings**

It has been so lovely to welcome so many parents and carers to our regular coffee mornings over the last term. Our half-termly coffee mornings are an opportunity for parents to get together, share ideas and parenting challenges over a cup of coffee (and a 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 6<sup>th</sup> February  
Tuesday 12th March  
Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May  
Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July



### **Year 3 Applications for September 2024**

Just a reminder that the national deadline for applications to Year 3 in September 2024 is Monday 15th January 2024.

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**

19<sup>th</sup> February 2024

24<sup>th</sup> May 2024

### **Dates for your Diary**

16<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 6 Church visit 1:30pm

17<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 5 Swimming

18<sup>th</sup> January – Mitchell Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

23<sup>rd</sup> January – Yr. 6 SAT's info evening

24<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 5 Swimming

25<sup>th</sup> January – Russell Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

26<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 6 Movie Night F.O.O.B.S (details to follow)

30<sup>th</sup> January – Yr. 4 Church visit 1:30pm

31<sup>st</sup> January – Yr. 6 visit to Woking Mosque

31<sup>st</sup> January – Yr. 5 Swimming

31<sup>st</sup> January – Open the Box Theatre company visiting Yr. 3

5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> February – Yr. 3 Show week

5<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> February – No after school clubs this week

6<sup>th</sup> February – Coffee morning 9-10:30am

7<sup>th</sup> February – Yr. 5 Swimming

8<sup>th</sup> February – Southampton Art Gallery in to visit Yr. 5

9<sup>th</sup> February – F.O.O.B.S Dare to be Different Day

12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> February – Half Term

19<sup>th</sup> February INSET Day

20<sup>th</sup> February – First day of new half term

21<sup>st</sup> February – Y5 Swimming (last one)