

St Mary's

Church of England Junior School

No: 10

26th January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Another two weeks has flown by – half term is just around the corner!

Hopefully we have seen the back of the really cold weather, I know I am looking for signs of spring when out and about. Please do continue to send your child into school with coats, gloves etc. for when the temperature does drop.

Over the last two weeks we have been treated to two sharing assemblies, well done Mitchell and Russell class for entertaining us! It is lovely to see children confident to speak in front of an adult audience and nice to hear what they have been learning about. This week our football team played Chalk Ridge Primary School, well done to all involved for showing great skill and sportsmanship.

Year 3 are enjoying their play rehearsals – I am enjoying hearing the all the songs! This week Year 4 ventured out for a walk around the local area looking at physical and human geographical features and Year 6 are looking forward to their movie night this evening! Thank you to F.O.O.B.S for organising this event.

The last two weeks of this half term are set to be busy, with Year 6 off to Woking Mosque, Year 3 working with 'Open the Box Theatre Company', Year 5 working with visitors from Southampton Art Gallery and our F.O.O.B.S 'Dare to be Different Day' to end the half term. Lots to look forward to!

Service for Rt Rev Philip Mounstephen – Bishop of Winchester

The new Bishop of Winchester officially took up office with a special ceremony on Saturday 13th January to which we were honoured to be invited to be part of. St Mary's was one of just 9, out of over 90, schools in the Diocese to be invited. The service began at the ancient church of St Lawrence in the city centre, where he made oaths and declarations. He was then met in The Square by the mayor of Winchester, Angela Clear, plus the Headteacher and a pupil representative from The Bishop of Winchester Academy in Bournemouth. With other Bishops of Hampshire, they walked to Winchester Cathedral, where Bishop Philip followed tradition by knocking on the West Door.

Mrs Lillywhite was joined at the service by Paul Skinner, our longest serving Foundation Governor, and three Year 6 pupils who represented the school amazingly. It was a wonderful service to be part of, and it was lovely to see so many traditions undertaken in such a beautiful building.



Holocaust Memorial Day

Holocaust Memorial day is on Saturday 27th, here at St Mary's we believe it is important to teach the children about prejudice and about how during WW2 the rights of many people were taken away. During the week, the children will explore an age appropriate book about The Holocaust and complete some work based on it. Our whole school Act of Worship on Monday discussed this year's Holocaust Memorial Day theme- 'Fragility of Freedom' and we considered how vital freedom is and how at times it can be taken away. We learnt about Anne Frank's freedom and the power of her diary. Below is the PowerPoint of this first Act of Worship for next week.

Internet Safety Day

Internet Safety Day is on Tuesday 6th February, we will have a whole school assembly on this and pupils will do some work around internet safety day during the day.

This will be an ideal opportunity for you to review use of devices and the internet at home. As a parent of Year 6 children who are dipping their toes into the online world with their own phones and devices, I know how hard it can be to monitor and restrict the use of electronics and online platforms.

This link will take you to the UK Safer Internet Centre website page for parents and carers. There are a few useful links and tips on this site as well the official 2024 Safer Internet Day film for parents and carers.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2024/parents-and-carers>

Adult Mental Health

1 in 4 of us will experience a mental health problem in any given year. Too many of us are made to feel isolated, worthless and ashamed because of this. And the combination of a relentless news cycle and cost of living crisis is only making it harder to look after our mental health. Talking openly and honestly about our mental health is good for our wellbeing and helps bust myths and break down barriers. And listening without judgement when someone opens up to you has the power to change a life.

Time to Talk Day - Rethink Mental Illness

On Thursday 1st of February 2024 it will be 'Time to Talk Day'. The initiative seeks to give us all a chance to be more open about our mental health, and talk about how we really feel. The celebration is given in partnership with the Co-Op and follows two subsequent years of successful 'Time to Talk' days. The organisation's site currently hosts resources, ways to get involved and stories about how opening up about mental health, has aided people up and down the country. To find out more, please follow the link below:

<https://www.rethink.org/campaigns-and-policy/awareness-days-and-events/time-to-talk-day>

Back to Basics

Empowering parents and carers to support their child's emotional wellbeing within the home.

Looking after your family's wellbeing is very important. Families all need some help from time to time due to life changes or events. As a parent or carer, you can take small steps to help your child's wellbeing as well as your own. You can do this by starting with the basics. We are delighted to offer you the opportunity to attend a meeting held at Great Binfields Primary School on Thursday 29th February, 9:30-10:30 led by Shelly Aldridge from Back to Basic, Hampshire County Council.

Members of staff from St Mary's will be present and this parent meeting is open to parents/carers from Great Binfields, St Mary's CE Junior School and Old Basing Infant school.

Details and a link to the booking form can be found on the letter sent out via Parent Mail on Monday.

Outdoor Play Equipment

We are currently looking at our provision for active breaktimes and the equipment, balls hoops etc that we have for the children to use during break and lunchtime play. We are also looking into purchasing some small storage containers where any new equipment could be stored – this will obviously come at a cost to the school. If there are any local businesses that would be able to sponsor some new equipment or storage cupboards for us, please contact the school office.

Defibrillator

As you may have seen already, Redrow Homes kindly donated a defibrillator to the school last term. This has now been installed on the external wall outside the school reception doors where it can be accessed by the public as well as by school staff.

This defibrillator has been registered and codes to open the case can be obtained from the emergency services if needed. We obviously hope this will never be needed, but it is a valuable life saving device we now have available.

Calshot Residential Trip 2024

For those parents paying by instalments, just a reminder that the next payment of £60 is due on 1st February.

Governors' Corner

This is my first contribution to the school Newsletter since handing over the role of Chair of Governors to Sefton Lucas at the start of the school year. It is fair to say that Sefton has entered into his new role with his typical enthusiasm and humour.

This has obviously been a period of change in the leadership of the school with Mrs Lillywhite and Mr Gibbs taking on their new roles as Head and Deputy Head respectively. As a governor it has been great to witness Mrs Lillywhite and Mr Gibbs making their own mark on the school whilst striving to improve on the schools already high standards.

I was recently in school to meet with Chris Brooks-Martin, from Hampshire Education Services, as Chris conducted his annual review visit to the school. During the visit, as well as meeting with Mrs Lillywhite and Mr Gibbs, Chris observed lessons being conducted in each of the classes.

The verbal feedback from Chris was positive and he will produce a written report for the school leaders and Governors. As governors we conduct our own ongoing monitoring of the schools progress, throughout the year, but this review from the Local authority is invaluable to us as it provides a completely independent assessment of progress. It also helps identify any support that may be required from the Local Authority over the coming year.

Michael Wright
Vice Chair

F.O.O.B.S. news

Hello from F.O.O.B.S!

Dare to be Different Day will be held on Friday 9th February. More details to follow next week on the ways in which children will be able to express their individuality!

Don't forget you can purchase second hand uniform at a cost of £2 per logoed item and £1 per non-logoed item by contacting us on friendsofoldbasingschools@gmail.com . If you have any uniform to donate, particularly larger sizes for infants or juniors, it is always appreciated.

We hope the year 6's have a great time at their Movie Night tonight!

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 6th February (joint with Old Basing Infant School)

Tuesday 12th March

Tuesday 7th May

Tuesday 2nd July

Gemma Lillywhite
Headteacher

2023-24 INSET Days

19th February 2024

24th May 2024

Dates for your Diary

26th January – Yr. 6 Movie Night F.O.O.B.S

30th January – Yr. 4 Church visit 1:30pm

31st January – Yr. 6 visit to Woking Mosque

31st January – Yr. 5 Swimming

31st January – Open the Box Theatre company visiting Yr. 3

5th-9th February – Yr. 3 Show week

5th-9th February – No after school clubs this week

6th February – Coffee morning 9-10:30am

7th February – Yr. 5 Swimming

8th February – Southampton Art Gallery in to visit Yr. 5

9th February – F.O.O.B.S Dare to be Different Day

12th-16th February – Half Term

19th February INSET Day

20th February – First day of new half term

21st February – Yr. 5 Swimming (last one)

21st February – Eucharist Yrs 5 & 6 (parents welcome)

27th February – Yr. 3 Church visit 1:30pm

28th February – Yr. 4 French Café (in hall)

29th February – Davies Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

2nd March – F.O.O.B.S Quiz Night (further details to follow)

4th-8th March – Book week

5th March – SRE meeting (Yr. 6 parents) 3:30pm

7th March – Yr. 6 Shakespeare workshop (pm)

8th March – Yr. 5 Disco (F.O.O.B.S) 5-6:30pm

12th March – Coffee morning 9-10:30am

12th March – Yr. 5 Church visit 1:30pm

13th March – Parents Evening (details to follow)

14th March – Parents Evening (details to follow)

15th March – Red Nose Day

21st March – Austen Class Sharing Assembly 2:45pm

23rd March – F.O.O.B.S. Easter Fair (details to follow)

27th March – End of term Church visits (pm) details to follow

28th March – Last day of term (normal finish time of 3:25pm)

29th March-12th April – Easter Holidays

15th April – First day of new term