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|  Headteacher: Mrs Victoria Woods 25th September 2023 | St Mary’s C E Primary SchoolSoutham RoadBANBURYOxfordshire OX16 2EGTelephone: 01295 263026 Email:office@banburystmarysschool.co.uk Web: [www.banburystmarysschool.co.uk](http://www.banburystmarysschool.co.uk)   |

Dear Families,

We have had a fantastic first few weeks back, with lots of new children, great trips and some brilliant learning – Y5 shared this with us in our first Celebration Worship last Friday. We have also been awarded our OPAL Platinum Award and had a refresher session with Commando Joe, so that these lessons and our Forest School for Early Years and KS1 children will be even better this year.

**Everyone has their new reading books and phonic sounds** and activities to practice and everyone knows what their teachers need them to do at home to help them learn to read quickly and accurately. If you want to know what your child is learning, how you can help them and some homework support, make sure you go to the school website. Helping your child with their learning is really important and whatever small help you can give them will make a difference. Here is the website: <https://www.banburystmarysschool.co.uk/>

**Website and consent.** You will also find all the information about uniform, Houses, members of staff, how to get help and many other things on the website. Recently we asked you all to confirm the photos we can take of your children. Thank you for the massive support – most of you are happy for us to celebrate your children’s achievements on the website and our social media. However, quite a few said ‘No’ to “teaching and learning photos and videos”. This is a problem because, even though you are happy to have social media pictures posts, we won’t have any photos of you children at all because you have said ‘No’ to pictures in lessons. The teachers and team will be catching up with you in the coming days to just check if you perhaps need to amend your permissions because we didn’t explain it clearly enough.

**Wet weather and outdoors.** We will be playing and learning outside throughout the Autumn and Winter and the children are likely to get wet and muddy at various times. Our curriculum actively encourages outdoor activity and adventure, and we need the children to always have warm, waterproof clothes in school. They will get dirty, and you may need to pop an extra jumper or leggings in their bag too for these times. Wellies are important – you can’t have fun in the rain and mud without them. Please make sure your children have outdoor kit in school, all named and in a bag for their peg every day. It can stay in school and when it gets too muddy, we will send it home for a wash.

**The same applies for PE KIT. ALL chidlren need PE kit.** The details are on the website and the office will tell you which colour T-shirt your child needs to represent tehir house. PE is a National Curriculum subject, including Swimming for the older children. It is not optional and the Government say children must do it for at least 2 hours per week. To do this safely and well, they need the correct PE kit.

**Pupil Premium, Free School Meals and Funding.** The trips and activities we do in school do cost money and we for contributions towards them. All these trips are already subsidised from school budget by using the Pupil Premium Grant. This is money we receive based on the number of children eligible for means tested free school meals. The grant total is then available to support all the children and families across school and not just those in receipt of benefits; hence how we support everyone to have subsidy to school trips and events.

If you think you may be eligible for means tested free school meals, please speak to the office in confidence. The just need your name, DOB and NI number and can check the eligibility. Then, if your child is in Y3-6 they can have school dinner without paying and our PPG is increased. If your child is in Reception-Y2, they get universal free meals but if you are eligible, we still get the uplift in our PPG – giving more money across school for us to work with.

If you ever feel that you need some support, such as a reduction in payment for an activity or trip or a longer time to plan to make payments, please speak to myself or Sara Bailey and we will always see what we can do to ensure that all children are included in activities.

**Attendance.** This year we are challenging ourselves NOT to have some of the worst attendance in our Trust and Banbury. Last year nearly 15%, about 30 children, were persistently absent. This is amonst the worst in the whole country. We want the children to come to school, even with a cough or a sniffle, if they are not well, we will call you to collect them. We will be making daily checks on families who do not attend and especially where there are patterns of brothers and sisters being off on the same day or always having Fridays and Mondays off. It is the law in the UK that children have an education and if they are enrolled in a school they must attend. The target is 96% attendance, that is no more than 10 days per year off. Attached to this letter is another from Michelle, our attendance Champion. We will have to take robust action this year when children are not attending enough. This can be avoided, simply by sending you children to school each day.

**Times of school day.** In order to meet DfE expectations of the length of the school week, we ned to extend the day by 5mins. Therefore, in January, the gates will open at 8.35 and the children will need to be **IN THE SCHOOL by 8.45am – 5 minutes earlier than now.** This will be a great new Year Resolution for us all – get up 5 minutes earlier and get to school on time!

**Parking.** We are really sad to see all the cars in Compton Rd, Bluecoats Close and School Lane. Cars must NOT come down here to park. **There is NO parking.** You need to park safely and legally away from these roads and walk to school. The PCSO’s will be looking out for illegal parking on the yellow lines and it will be dealt with by them. We want all your children to be safe, and by having cars where they should not be, you are putting other people’s children, as well as your own, at risk.

**Expected Dates for the year.** Below is a really long list of dates. Some may change and there will certainly be more added, but this is the start to a busy year and should keep your diaries full.

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| **Date and times** | **Event** | **Notes** |
| Monday 25th September | **Y2/3** trip to **Crocodiles of the World** |  |
| Friday 29th September2.00pm | **Year 6** | **Falcons** Class invite you for tea, coffee cake and a chat in return for a donation to this important charity. All welcome. |
| Friday 6th October2.45pm | **Year 4** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm |
| Monday 9thTuesday 10thWednesday 11th OctoberThursday 12th October | Parent Consultation Evenings | Details and booking information will be sent shortly |
| Thursday 12th October | Flu Vaccinations | Please make sure you register your child. We can help if you can not get online, just ask. |
| Thursday 19th October | **EXPO Afternoon** | Come and see your children in action, from 2.00pm |
| Friday 20th October 3.15pm | School CLOSES for Half Term |
| **WEDNESDAY** 1st November | School OPENS at 8.40am PLEASE NOTE THS IS A WEDNESDAY AND MAY DIFFER FROM OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS |
| Friday 17th November | **Children in Need Day** | Details to follow |
| Friday 17th October2.45pm | **Year 6** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm |
| Friday 24th October2.45pm | **Year 3** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm |
| Tuesday 28th November | Choir performance at**‘Big Christmas Sing’** Oxford | Details to follow |
| Friday 1st December2.45pm | **Year 2** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm |
| Tuesday 12th December | **Afternoon Christmas performance** | Details of classes, times and tickets to follow nearer the time |
| Wednesday 13th December | **Early Evening Christmas performance** | Details of classes, times and tickets to follow nearer the time |
| Monday 18th December | Christmas Dinner and party in school  | Get you party clothes on! |
| Tuesday 19th December | Christmas Service at Church | Times and details to follow |
| Wednesday 20th December | Songs and fun around the tree | Times and details to follow |
| Wednesday 20th December | LAST DAY OF TERM SCHOOL CLOSES AT **1.30PM**There will be **NO AFTER SCHOOL CLUB TODAY** |
| MONDAY 8th January 2024 | Spring term 1 starts – note changes to school day.School OPENS **8.35am** Registration is at 8.45am after this you will now be late |
| Friday 26th January2.45pm | **Year 1** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm |
| Monday 29th January | Residential to Kilvrough Manor |  |
| Friday 2nd February2.45pm | **Early Years** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm |
| Friday 9th February | Shrove Tuesday Races | Fun and games with pancakes. All welcome, details to follow |
| Friday 9th February 3.15pm | School CLOSES for Half Term |
| Monday 19th February | School OPENS at 8.35am  |
| W/c 4th MarchW/c 11th March | **S.T.E.M Weeks** | A focus on science and engineering curriculum. Event details to follow |
| Thursday 7th March | **World Book Day** | Details to follow |
| Monday 11thTuesday 12thWednesday 13th MarchThursday 14th March | Parent Consultation Evenings | Details to follow |
| Tuesday 26th March | Easter Service at Church | Times and details to follow |
| Wednesday 27th March | **Year 6** trip to Swan Theatre (Stratford) to see Romeo and Juliet  | Details to follow |
| Thursday 28th March | LAST DAY OF TERM SCHOOL CLOSES AT **1.30PM**There will be **NO AFTER SCHOOL CLUB TODAY** |
| MONDAY 15th April 2024 | Spring term 2 starts School OPENS 8.35am |
| Wednesday 1st May | **Year 4 and 5** Trip To **‘Aladdin’** @ MK | Details to follow |
| Friday 3rd May | May Day Revels | Details to follow |
| Monday 6th May | BANK HOLIDAY | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| Monday 13th – Thursday 16th | **Year 6** SAT Tests | NO requests for absence can be authorised this week |
| **THURSDAY** 23rd May, 3.15pm | School CLOSES for Half TermPLEASE NOTE THS IS A **THURSDAY** AND MAY DIFFER FROM OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS |
| **TUESDAY** 6th June 2023 | Summer term 2 startsSchool OPENS 8.35amPLEASE NOTE THS IS A **TUESDAY** AND MAY DIFFER FROM OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS |
| Friday 14th June | SPORTS DAY | Details to follow |
| Monday 17th June | RESERVE Sports Day | Reserve if weather bad on 18th |
| W/C 1st July | Banbury Schools Y7 Transition | Please liaise with the secondary school directly for exact details. Each school is slightly different. |
| Friday 12th July | Art EXHIBITION | Annual chance to see your children’s amazing artwork. Details to follow |
| Friday 19th July | Annual Reports sent home. These will contain details of the next year regarding classes and teachers |
| Friday 19th July  | CO Jo’s, OPAL, Forest School, PE Family Day | Come and enjoy all our outdoor learning opportunities with your children |
| Monday 22nd July | Music SHOWCASE | Annual chance to hear your children’s amazing music. Details to follow |
| Tuesday 23rd July | Service of Thanksgiving for our Leavers at St Mary’s Church | All welcome to join our service.  |
| Wednesday 24th July | LAST DAY OF TERM SCHOOL CLOSES AT 1.30PM There will be **NO AFTER SCHOOL CLUB TODAY** | Year 6 Families, only, are invited to attend the fun leavers assembly at 12.15am  |