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| Headteacher: Mrs Victoria Woods  19th November 2023 | St Mary’s C E Primary School  Southam Road  BANBURY  Oxfordshire  OX16 2EG  Telephone: 01295 263026  Email:[office@banburystmarysschool.co.uk](mailto:office@banburystmarysschool.co.uk)  Web: [www.banburystmarysschool.co.uk](http://www.banburystmarysschool.co.uk) |

Dear Families,

It is certainly Autumn, with wet and windy days a plenty! This doesn’t stop us enjoying the outside as much as we can at St Mary’s, with OPAL play, Forest School, PE and Co Joe’s sessions all being held outside unless the weather is absolutely awful. Most families have done a great job making sure the children have warm waterproof clothes and wellies for Forest School, OPAL and Co Joe’s. If you have not sent warm, waterproof clothes into school or your child does not have a named pair of wellies, please try to organise as soon as possible – your children are missing out on all the fun. If you are struggling to provide these, please speak to us in confidence. We do have some provision, kindly donated to us, to support families struggling to provide equipment and we can lend it to you child.

PE kit is a really important part of our uniform. In the Autumn and Winter, children can wear a pair of warm joggers and a hoody over their shorts / leggings and T-Shirts. Children must get changed for PE sessions, it is sometimes unsafe and often rather smelly to do a physical PE session in your ordinary every day clothes. Having a proper pair of PE shoes to change into is also a requirement. Again, if this is an issue, please speak to your class teacher in confidence.

**Curriculum**

There is lots going on already this term. In sport our Y5/6 children competed in the Sports partnership Hockey tournament and this week the Y3/4 footballers will be competing. Every class knows about their new projects and class books and Kingfisher Class went on their trip to the play village whilst Y4,5,6 experienced the Virtual Reality of life in the Roman and Greek Empire’s. We have the choir combining with Wroxton to perform at the Oxfordshire Music Service “Big Christmas Sing’ in a few weeks and all that before we even begin to think about the other Christmas festivities. It is a very busy time of year!

We have been working hard to look at how we can share the children’s learning and life at school in as many ways as possible. We were thrilled to have so many of you come and share the EXPO at the end of term where we were treated to artwork, puppet shows, dance and more. We know not everyone can make these sort of events – we as teachers never can for our own families for example, so we do understand the conflict of being working parents. Hence as part of our improving communication and sharing, we are enhancing our social media presence through our new Facebook page and ‘X’ (formerly Twitter) feeds and we are also updating and adding to the school website over the coming weeks.

**STAFFING**

Mrs Taylor has been working with us since September joining us in a swop with Mrs Di Giorno from Wroxton where she has been Assistant Head for 10 years. Mrs Taylor has actually been a teacher for 33 years and has decided she is hanging up her school bag at the end of December and retiring. This is a tremendous length of service and we will be celebrating and wishing her well at the end of term. In the meantime, Mrs Smith will be taking much of the teaching responsibility in Y6, ably supported by the rest of the team.

**VACANCY**

We are currently advertising for a teaching assistant at Wroxton school. Here is the link.

<https://jobs.otsa.org.uk/jobs/287777219-teaching-assistant-at-wroxton-ce-primary-school>

If you know anyone who may be interested, please let them know.

**We may also have TA hours at St Mary’s, please get in touch with Ms Bailey if you would like to find out more.**

**Admissions for RECEPTION September 2024.**

Just a reminder that applications for places in our Reception class are open. We only have 30 places and this year we were very oversubscribed. If your child is in our Nursery now, you still need to apply for the Reception place through the Oxfordshire website <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/apply-school-place/reception-applications>

If you need help with this, the Fledglings team and the office ladies will be happy to help.

If you know people who want to consider St Mary’s for their child next September, please ask them to call us and arrange a visit, we would love to show them around and explain what we can offer them.

**NURSERY Admissions**

We currently have a few places for children who are already 3years old or will become 3 years in the coming months. To apply for these places, please speak to our office. Your child can join our Nursery from the half term after they are 3. Please share this information with friends and family who may be interested.

**Changes to MONEY**

**In the coming weeks we will be changing how we collect money from you.**

**We will be making our money system the same as our other office systems.**

**This will mean everything will come to you from ARBOR.**

**Please look out for these changes, you will need to change your APP to ARBOR, we will send instructions, don’t do anything yet!**

**With this change you will get emails, messages, and payments all in one place.**

**Thank you for your support and patience whist we make these changes, there are bound to be some issues, we trust in your understanding whilst we sort them out.**

**Attendance.**

Michelle has been working really hard to support everyone being in school as much as possible and this has included sending out invitations to Parent Contract meetings for a lot of people who have attendance levels that are below the expected level. Thank you for your proactive support and engagement with all this hard work, we can see that lots of you are really trying to get your children into school more and also showing us clear and acceptable evidence of why they may not be. Our attendance to date is **93.6%,** still well below the average expected of at least 95%, but better than it has been.

Michelle will continue to support and challenge poor attendance. Remember, if you are struggling to get your child into school, we can help. If we don’t know what is wrong, we can’t help and have no option but to follow our Attendance Policy sanctions.

**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** | |
| Friday 24th October  2.45pm | **Year 3** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm | |
| Week of 27th November | **Bikeability Training** | Children on the programme have details. Please make sure you bike and helmet are ready | |
| Tuesday 28th November | Choir performance at  **‘Big Christmas Sing’** Oxford | Letter shave been sent to the choir. Ticket details to follow. Please remember, children need collecting from the event on Oxford | |
| Friday 1st December  2.45pm | **Year 2** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm | |
| Tuesday 12th December | **Afternoon Christmas performance** | Robins, Y2 and Starlings, Y3 will be performing ***“ Christmas with the Aliens”*** Details to follow | |
| Wednesday 13th December | **Early Evening Christmas performance** | Robins, Y2 and Starlings, Y3 will be performing ***“ Christmas with the Aliens”*** Details to follow | |
| Thursday 14th December | **Y2 and Y3 Trip to Waddesdon Light Trail – evening trip** | Details to follow | |
| Monday 18th December | Christmas Dinner and party in school | Get you party clothes on!  Order forms will be coming your way very soon | |
| Tuesday 19th December | Christmas Service at Church | Join us in a **Wandering Nativity** in Church at 2.00pm. Children can be collected direct from Church | |
| 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 January  2.45pm | **Year 1** Celebration Worship | In the Hall, please arrive between 2.30 and 2.40pm | |
| Monday 29th January | Residential to Kilvrough Manor |  | |
| Friday 2nd February  2.45pm | **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 March  W/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 11th  Tuesday 12th  Wednesday 13th March  Thursday 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 Term  PLEASE NOTE THS IS A **THURSDAY** AND MAY DIFFER FROM OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS | | |
| **TUESDAY** 6th June 2023 | Summer term 2 starts  School OPENS 8.35am  PLEASE 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 |