

# Newsletter



Welcome back to school, we hope you all had a good Christmas. We would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a Happy New Year.

## TERM DATES

Please see below a list of term dates, which we trust you will find of use. We will give you information concerning each event nearer the time.

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January** - Chinese Workshops – Year 1.  
**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January** – Census Day.  
**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January** – P&F Meeting – Horse and Groom – 8pm.  
**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January** – Book Character Dress Up Day.  
**Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January** – Louis Taylor Road Safety Show – Foundation Stage.  
**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January** – Author Visiting School – Adam Guillain.  
**Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January** – Hot Chocolate and Story Time.  
**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February** – Whole School Miles Apart Parent Share – 2.30pm.  
**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February** – Old Folks Lunch Club.  
**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> February** - Half Term.  
**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> February** – Year 2 trip to SeaCity Museum.  
**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March and Tuesday 12 March** – Life Bus Visiting School.  
**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March** – Parents' Evening.  
**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March** – Old Folks Lunch Club.  
**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March** – Parents' Evening.  
**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** – Community Choir at Madejski Stadium.  
**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> April** – Easter Service – 2pm.  
**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April** – End of Term – 2pm

## INDIVIDUAL CLASS ASSEMBLIES

Below are the dates for each class assembly. You are invited to come along and watch the assembly. Each assembly starts at 9.00am and last for approximately 20 minutes.

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> February** – Fox Class.  
**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March** – Butterfly Class  
**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March** – Rabbit Class.  
**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March** – Hedgehog Class.  
**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March** – Deer Class.  
**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March** – Badger Class.

## SCHOOL CENSUS DAY – THURSDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY

**SCHOOL CENSUS DAY – THURSDAY 17<sup>TH</sup>** On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January, it is School Census Day. Since the introduction of Universal Free School Meals, the School is now liable for the cost of providing school dinners. Although we receive Government funding, this is dependent upon how many children have school dinners on Census Day.

On Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January, the menu will be changed to:

### Main Meal:

Hot Dog with a Choice of Healthy Toppings  
 Vegetarian Hot Dog  
 Allstars Broccoli and Cheese Pasta Bake  
 Jacket Potato with a Choice of Healthy Fillings

### Sides:

Chips  
 Garlic Bread  
 Rainbow Slaw  
 Garden Peas

### Desserts:

Sticky Toffee Pudding with Custard  
 Cherry Shortbread  
 Fresh Fruit Salad  
 Yoghurt

The more children that have a school dinner on Census Day, the better the School is financially. This money can then be used for resources for the school towards the teaching and learning of your children.

## BOOK CHARACTER DRESS UP DAY

The children are invited to come to school on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> January dressed as their favourite book character. We look forward to seeing a variety of costumes, however, please ensure that the children wear sensible footwear and come to school with a coat.

## ADAM GUILLAIN – VISITING AUTHOR

We are delighted to advise that Adam Guillain, author of the Bella Balistica series, will be visiting school on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January. He will be presenting an assembly and carrying out workshops with the children. There will be the opportunity to purchase signed copies of his books at the end of the school day.

## HOT CHOCOLATE AND STORY TIME – TUESDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY

Mortimer St John's Infant School, West End Road, Mortimer, Berkshire, RG7 3SY

Tel: 0118 933 2242 email: [office@msj.w-berks.sch.uk](mailto:office@msj.w-berks.sch.uk)

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All children are invited back to school at 5.30pm until 6.15pm on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> January for hot chocolate and story time. Children will need to come back to school (to their classes) to hear stories, bringing their teddy bears and dressed in their pyjamas.

### CHRISTMAS SERVICE

It was lovely to see so many of you at our Christmas Service. A cheque for the sum of £214.46 has been sent to Shelter

### VOLUNTARY DONATION

You will recall back in September we asked for a voluntary contribution of £30 per annum for each child at Mortimer St. John's. This was for enrichment activities to enable a variety of different curriculum experiences for the children. We have already used the funds towards Dance Workshops, Hot Chocolate and Story Time, a Chinese Workshop and the author Adam Guillain will be visiting the school. For those parents/careers that were willing to donate, we asked for the contribution to be made in either one payment of £30 or three instalments, ie £10.00 in October, £10.00 in January and £10.00 in April. We would again like to thank you in advance of your donation which has helped enrich the children's learning experience.

### AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

At the back of the newsletter is a list of after school clubs. All school run clubs will commence the week beginning Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January. **There will be no school run clubs or Bible club the week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> March due to Parents' Evening.**

If you would like your child to take part in a school run club, please put their name down on the lists which will be outside the office on Monday. Alternatively you can email your choice to the School Office. To make it fairer, can you please put your child's name down for one club. We will notify you by email if your child has been allocated a place on a club.

First for Sports, Stageability, Reading Football Club and Inkai Judo are run by outside organisations and incur costs.

### SCHOOL CLOSURE/SEVERE WEATHER

If the School has to close for any reason a text message or email will be sent in the first instance, with our Facebook Page also being immediately updated. If you do not have a mobile telephone could you please let the office staff know; we will then make a note to ring your home number. Thank you.

### FIXED PENALTY NOTICES

The West Berkshire Council Code of Conduct in relation to Fixed Penalty Fines (FPFs) legislation states that the headteachers **may not** grant **any** leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Where an FPF is issued, payment will now be £60 if paid within 21 days. If not paid within 21 days the Penalty is automatically increased to £120 if paid within 28 days. If payment is not made within 28 days, the Council will proceed with formal legal action which may result in a fine of up to **£1,000 and a criminal record**.

The full Code of Conduct is available to view on the Council's website at [www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk).

### PARENT HELPERS

If you have any spare time and would like to help in the School, please see your child's class teacher. There are lots of things you can do from helping with cooking, gardening, listening to readers or being an extra adult on a village trip. We would be delighted to see more dads and/or granddads within the School! We do, however, require you to complete a DBS Disclosure Application, so please call into the School Office to collect the guidance notes. We ask for a contribution of £10.00 to cover the cost of the DBS. If this would cause you a problem, please see a member of our office staff. This is, however, your certificate to keep and can be used in other establishments. Thank you.

### MILK MONEY – YEARS 1 AND 2

Milk money for the remainder of the first half of the Spring Term is £5.00 or 20 pence per day. If you would like your child to have milk please send the money into school in a named envelope and ask your child to give it to their class teacher.

### FOUNDATION STAGE SNACK

For snack time could you please send your child in with a small piece of fruit or vegetable only. Thank you



### ROAD SAFETY

We are delighted that Louis Taylor will be returning to Mortimer St. John's on 27<sup>th</sup> February to present the Road Ranger Road Safety Show to the Foundation Stage children. He will be reinforcing the message of how to cross the road safely in a variety of ways including magic, drama and puppets.

### PUPIL PREMIUM GRANT

If you are on income support or job seekers allowance, the school may be able to obtain extra funding or support to help your child.

Please contact the School Office or West Berkshire Council on [www.westberks.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals) to claim. Thank you.

### PARENTS AND FRIENDS' MEETING

There will be a P&F Meeting in the Horse and Groom on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January at 8.00pm. Everybody is welcome, it is always nice to see new faces.

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The P&F run many successful events including the May Fair, Bonfire Night and Kids on the Catwalk. We are really proud of our P&F and are extremely grateful for the time they give to run many exciting events to raise much needed funds for the school.

### **READING AT HOME**

Daily reading is crucial to children's learning and development, with a direct impact on spelling and writing. As we know, there is a lot more to reading than just reading! Here are some tips to help during reading sessions with your child at home:

What is happening? Talk about what is happening in the pictures before you read the text. What do you see? Discuss alternative words. For example 'big'. Ask your child to think of another word that means the same, e.g. huge, enormous (use a thesaurus).

Make predictions. What do you think will happen next? What makes you think that? Where is the story set? Have you read another story with the same setting? For example, "We're going on a Bear Hunt" by Michael Rosen and "The Gruffalo" by Julia Donaldson are both set in the woods. Discuss feelings. Why is a certain character feeling this way?

Fact or fiction? Is this book a story book or a non-fiction book? How do you know? Discuss the resolution. How was the problem solved? Is there another way it could have been resolved?

#### **During reading**

Encourage children to use expression when reading, especially for the voices of different characters. Discuss the punctuation on the page, for example, exclamation marks. You don't always have to read the entire book every night. You may choose to focus on a few pages and talk about the characters, setting and plot in a lot more detail.

### **PIANO LESSONS**

Piano teacher, Hannah Mordecai, currently teaches one-to-one piano lessons for children in years 1 and 2 during the school day. While spaces are currently full, Foundation Stage children are encouraged to register on the waiting list for next September. Places for lessons and the waiting list are allocated on a first come first served basis. If you would like register your interest please contact Hannah at [hannah.mordecai@icloud.com](mailto:hannah.mordecai@icloud.com). Thank you.

### **PARKING OUTSIDE SCHOOL**

Could we please politely request that at all times you do not park in front of the school gates or within the Church designated parking area. Also, can you please not allow your children to run around unattended in these areas. Thank you.

### **MAY FAIR PRIZES AND DONATIONS**

Do you or someone in your family work for a company that would be willing to donate a prize for the May Fair? Do you have your own business and would be willing to make a donation? Any item that could be used for the raffle or silent auction will be gratefully received. Please contact Alison Harlen ([ally@allyandrich.co.uk](mailto:ally@allyandrich.co.uk)).

### **JOB OPPORTUNITY**

#### **LUNCHTIME COVER - PERMANENT – TO START ASAP 5 hours per week – 12.15pm – 1.15pm - Grade B**

We are looking for a friendly, calm and cheerful person to join the staff of our infant school. You will also need to be energetic and enthusiastic! The successful candidate will need to relate well to children and adults, work as part of a team and be able to adapt to a varied routine. Responsibilities include assisting in the supervision of our children while they are eating their lunch and during lunchtime play. Please call into the School Office for an Application Form and any further details.

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