

25th September 2020

The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's Schools

Newsletter

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.

Thursday 1st October – School Census

Wednesday 14th October - Harvest Celebrations

Tuesday 20th October – Mortimer St. Mary's Pupil Photos

Tuesday 26th October – Bag2School Collection

Monday 26th October to Friday 30th October - Half Term

Tuesday 10th November - Virtual Parents' Evening

Thursday 12th November – Mortimer St. John's Pupil Photos

Thursday 12th November - Virtual Parents' Evening

Wednesday 18th November – Nasal Flu Immunisations

Tuesday 15th December – Christmas Lunch

Friday 18th December - End of Term Mortimer St. Mary's 1:30pm, Mortimer St. John's 2pm

Tuesday 5th January 2021 - Back to School

SCHOOL CENSUS DAY – THURSDAY 1ST OCTOBER

On Thursday 1st October 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.

To promote school meals on Census Day the menu will have a Disney theme and will be as follows:

Mickey's & Minnie's Hot Dog
Tigger's Chicken Nuggets
Moana's Vegan Nuggets
Woody's Jacket Potato (choice of toppings)

The more children that have a school dinner on Thursday 1st October, 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.

PUPIL PREMIUM GRANT

If you are receiving 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 to claim. Thank you.



ATTENDANCE

This is James. He is in Year 2 and has 90% attendance. James thinks this is pretty good, so do his parents. Are they right?

90% attendance = 1/2 day missed every week!

90% attendance in one school year = 4 weeks of lessons missed!

90% attendance over five school years = 1/2 school year missed!

Each year there are only 190 statutory school days, which means that if your child has 90% attendance or below, they have missed at least half a day a week. Ofsted regards attendance below 90% as persistent absence.



SHARE YOUR LIGHT AWARDS

The following children have been awarded a Share Your Light Award by their class teacher

Butterfly Class - Finn Bargus and Isabella Green

Rabbit Class - Amany Kuffour and Tauren Harlow

Deer Class - Alice Prime and Ronnie Steele
Anna Firrisa and Jack Seton

Badger Class - Eleanor Grant and Jack Marks
Etta Thompson and Jagger Franklyn

Fox Class - Emma de Turberville and Mason Scutter
Cedrick Padurariu and Sam Stephen

Hedgehog Class - Ben Priestman and Harvey MacKenzie
Bella Walsh and Jessica Stewart

Jupiter Class - Joseph Randall and Hannah Davies
George Murphy and Alba Cairns

Saturn Class - Ruby Hayward
Esmie McKay and Niamh Goslin

Mercury Class - Evie Grover and Barnaby Goodwill
Isabella Williams and Louie Flowerday

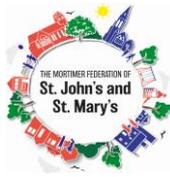
Venus Class - Clara Hackett and Erin Tyers
Emily Payne and Jack Harris

Neptune Class - Amelia Lambourne and Harry Taplin
Grace Fisher and Ellie Lee-Mohan

Mars Class - Gracie Lambourne and Eloisa Matthews
Savannah Nelson and Jack Nicholls

Gemini Class - Jake Cordwent and Alice Moran
Lily Price and Daryl Bartolome

Orion Class - Ben Carless and Ella-Mai Blackburn
Yasmina Kemp and Annabel Webb



APPLICATIONS FOR YEAR 3

We have received concerns regarding applications for year 3 place for September 2021. Whilst we are now a federation, Mortimer St. John's and Mortimer St. Mary's remain registered as two separate schools. Therefore, if your child requires a year 3 place you will need to apply via West Berkshire Council and complete an application form online, this can be accessed via the link below:

<https://info.westberks.gov.uk/primaryadmissions>

COVID TESTING

We recognise the difficulties families/children are having accessing a test. ***This does not mean there are lots of positive results at this time in schools.*** However, there appears to have been an underestimation of the amount of tests that would be needed with schools returning. We know children will have colds, coughs and other 'bugs' and particularly as we enter into the Autumn period. The advice is clear that if a child displays symptoms of Covid, the school is required to ask for the child to be tested and await the result before any entry back into school. This of course doesn't just affect the child but any siblings and the family as well who then have to self-isolate. We know that children in particular are often asymptomatic, so any suggestion of **any one** of the three main symptoms in children, should mean self-isolation and a test sought as soon as possible.

We understand that when booking online for a test 8pm in the evening and 10am in the morning are the best times to logon to try for a test centre closer to you. ***At 8pm they reset and open up appointments for the next morning. At 10am they open up appointments for the remainder of the afternoon on that day.*** So, for example trying to book a test at 8am or 9am in the morning is unlikely to be successful. If families have access to the internet then the online booking system seems to be the most effective way of securing a test, but perseverance is needed. The advice from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) is if people are unable to get any tests at a convenient time or location to wait and try again in a few hours when more testing slots will be released, people **should not turn up** to any testing site without an appointment.

In addition, if you have to apply for a postal test please ensure you post the test back in a **priority post-box**. This is included in the instructions but some people in the country are not using the correct post-box and there is no guarantee then that the results will definitely get back to you in good time or even at all. If a test is needed for a child, ***only try to get a test for the person or persons with symptoms - not the rest of the family.*** This will help the overall system too.

Thank you to our families who, whilst inconvenienced, have done the right thing and worked with us in following the guidelines for all of us.

FACE MASKS

We would like to support any parents/carers who wish to wear face coverings when dropping off and collecting their children from school. This extra precaution is to protect everyone and will hopefully reduce transmission of Covid-19 in the community.

ECO COUNCIL – MORTIMER ST. MARY'S

Next week, the new Eco Council will be launching! In their classes, children will be watching a short video, compiled by last year's councillors, talking about their experiences and what the role involves. If the video inspires your child and they would like to apply to be a member of the Eco Council, they need to complete an application form which can be collected from their class teacher. The completed form will need to be returned to school by Friday 2nd October. The children that are successful with their application will become a member of the new Eco Council for 2020/2021. We will announce the names of the successful applications in a future newsletter.

ECO WARRIOR LEADERS – MORTIMER ST. JOHN'S

On Monday and Tuesday, this week, the year 1 and year 2 children took part in class assemblies on "An introduction to being an Eco Warrior". All children at Mortimer St. John's are encouraged to be an 'Eco Warrior' and to do everything they can to look after our planet. This can involve recycling, composting, reusing, reducing their use of single use plastic or picking up litter at school and at home.

Children from year 1 and year 2 were invited to complete an application form if they wanted to apply to be an Eco Warrior Leader. This involves being part of an Eco Warrior school committee. If your child took an application form home, please can you help them to complete and return it to their class teacher by Monday 28th September. Interviews will be held in school, on Monday 5th October. We will publish the successful candidates in our newsletter.

Eco Warrior monitors

Eco Warrior monitor roles in each class are rotated weekly. Their jobs include checking lights are switched off when everyone leaves the classroom, taps are turned off, waste is put into the correct bin, scrap paper trays are used and any 'dead' pens are collected and sent off to Terracycle for recycling.

Eco Warrior of the Month

We encourage every child to be the best Eco Warrior they can be and send in photos of themselves 'in action', or show us letters they have written to encourage others to make a difference to our planet. We love to see what the children have achieved and such children have the chance of being awarded an "Eco Warrior of the Month award"!



THE "NEW" SCHOOLS FEDERATION WEBSITE

We are delighted to advise that the new combined website for The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's is now live (www.mortimerschools.org). To celebrate our schools, we also have new Facebook and Instagram pages, these can be accessed via the links at the bottom of the home page. We will be working really hard to keep the website current and up to date and we hope you enjoy having a look around!

A big thank you Mrs Hambly for all of her hard work. We think the new website looks amazing, we hope you do as well.

THE OAKS CHILDCARE

The Oaks are seeking to appoint three new directors. These appointments are likely to be from within our parent, school, neighbourhood and possibly wider community. Please see the attached letter for further information.

SCHOOL CLOSURE

If the School has to close for any reason an email will be sent via ParentMail in the first instance, with our Facebook and Instagram Page also being immediately updated. If you have not received your invitation to sign up to ParentMail please let the office staff know. Thank you.

NASAL FLU IMMUNISATIONS

Nasal flu immunisations are due to take place in school on Wednesday 18th November. Further information for Parents/Carers and consent forms will follow in due course.

WINNING WISDOM WAYS - MORTIMER ST. MARY'S

Attached you will find the new Mortimer St. Mary's Winning Wisdom Ways which were designed by children in years 3, 4, 5 and 6. The purpose of these is to promote and develop children's skills when learning. We will be using these regularly in school to promote metacognition and also independence. We are sure you will agree that the designs the children have created are fantastic and link really well to how the children will show these skills.

LEARNING GEMS – MORTIMER ST JOHN'S

To help develop the children's attitude and skills towards learning we use a 'Learning Gems' reward system at Mortimer St. John's. There are six gems in total each representing a different skill that the children will learn. A chart containing information about each gem and what they represent is attached to this newsletter.

SEESAW

Due to the current situation with possible further lockdowns we have reinstated our See-saw Learning platform. The passwords were sent out this week if you didn't receive it please can you speak to your child's class teacher.

SOCIAL MEDIA

It has been brought to our attention that some children are using apps such as Whatapps, Tiktok, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram. These are under the identified age and is regarded as a safeguarding concern and may be reported to Children's services