

SOUTH MARSTON



CHURCH of ENGLAND SCHOOL

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C of E SCHOOL

South Marston CofE Primary School Newsletter - 14th February 25

Head Teacher Update

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the final newsletter of this term and what a busy term it has been in school!

Whilst January might have felt incredibly long, February is positively flying by with preparations now in place for Term 4. In school we often feel like we are looking forwards, the anticipation of what is coming next, planning ahead, always aware of what is on the horizon but it is also important to take a moment to stop and reflect, taking a moment to look back too.

As I mentioned in my last piece two weeks ago, there have been so many wonderful opportunities this term for our children to flourish and grow both inside and outside of the classroom. As well as opportunities to share these times with parents. Whether you have attended Celebration Assemblies, our open house event last week, the EYFS stay and play yesterday or supported at one of the many sporting events this term we thank you for your continued interest, support and commitment to not only your child's education but to our school too. Having conducted many school tours recently, one of the key things I like to share with prospective parents is just how supportive the parent community here at South Marston is. We are very fortunate!

Next term, I anticipate will be another busy and fun term which will see us mark World Book Day at the start of March, children representing our school at the Young Voices Festival later on in March and key dates such as parents' evenings coming up too. There will be a list of key dates later in this newsletter for your information. And of course, we will finally get to share with you the outcome of our recent inspection – I know you are waiting as patiently as we are for this to come, and I am hopeful it won't be too much longer now.

Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish both our families and staff a wonderful half term break. We look forward to seeing the children return on Tuesday 25th February.

Very best wishes,

Mrs M Hendry

Times Table Rockstars

A reminder that children in Year 2 and above should regularly use their Times Table Rockstar accounts. Starting in Year 2, children will focus on counting in steps and solving problems involving 2s, 3s, 5s, and 10s. By Year 6, they are expected to confidently recall all multiplication facts up to 12 x 12. If your child needs their account reset or a new password, please contact their class teacher. Link: <https://trockstars.com/>



KS2 Dance Festival

A big well done to the KS2 Performing Arts Club children. They performed brilliantly in this year's Swindon Schools Dance Festival at the Wyvern Theatre. When the KS1 performance date is published, we will share this for the younger children.



Outdoor Play Donations

We're on a mission to make lunchtime even more fun and active for our children! Currently, we offer a variety of outdoor games and equipment, such as skipping ropes, tyres and outdoor Lego.

Do you have any outdoor play items, such as scooters or games, that you no longer need? We'd love your donations to help expand and enrich our playtime options.

Thank you for your support in creating joyful and active playtimes for our children!



Attendance

On the attendance page of our school website - <https://smcea.org.uk/parent-information/attendance/>, you will find a document named 'request for absence'. This form should be completed and handed into the office should you require your child to be absent from school for an exceptional circumstance e.g. - to attend a funeral.

Earlier on in the school year, information was sent to all parents on what happens when unauthorised absences occur - these have to be reported to Swindon Borough Council as per new guidance that came out in August 2024. Please remember that unauthorised absence from school can result in fixed penalty notices being issued by SBC. Again, further information about this can be found in the letter to parents sent out in the Autumn Term.

Class Attendance Update

Please see below this week's attendance figures by class (Pre - School are not counted in these figures).

Reception – 97%

Year 1 – 100%

Year 2 – 100%

Year 3 – 99%

Year 4 – 98%

Year 5 – 100%

Year 6 – 97%

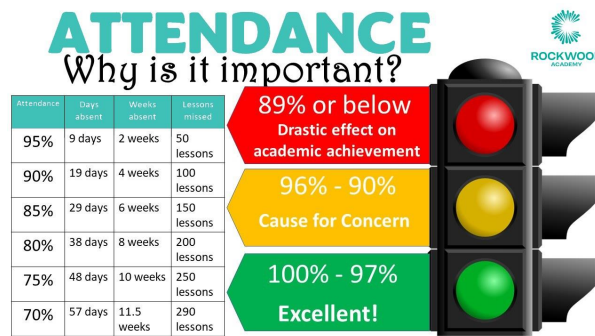
Pine – 99%

Willow - 100%

Silver Birch – 98%

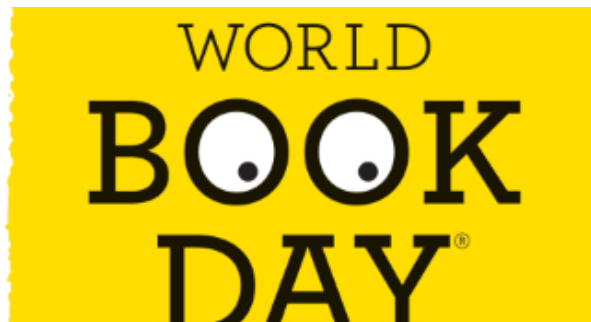
Sycamore – 98%

Whole School Average – 99%



World Book Day

On Thursday 6th March, we will be celebrating World Book Day. We are encouraging children to wear pyjamas and bring in their favourite book! Teachers will plan a variety of activities for children to enjoy throughout the day.



Tap Shoes

We're thrilled to announce that tap dance is being introduced as part of our PE curriculum—a unique and exciting opportunity that many schools don't offer!

A huge thank-you to our amazing PTA for purchasing some sets of tap shoes to get us started. If you have any tap shoes at home in good condition that are no longer needed, we'd greatly appreciate your donations to support our PE lessons.

Thank you for helping us bring this fantastic experience to life!



Reading Update

At South Marston, we aim for all our children to become fluent, confident readers who are passionate about stories and reading with your child at home just ten minutes each day can make all the difference! Reading can open doors to so many worlds while allowing your child to become an independent, life long learner.

For our Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children we recommend at least 5 minutes of daily reading time, or reading their Read Write Inc phonics books in full 3 times a week. This will greatly improve their reading speed and understanding of the text.

Children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 may be more independent with their reading, but listening to your child read is still incredibly important and so we encourage parents and carers to listen to their child read at least 4 times a week for 10 to 15 minutes.

All instances of reading should be logged by parents/carers via the Boom Reader website or app. BoomReader is regularly checked by staff so that we can see how your child is engaging with reading outside of school. If you need a log in for this, please speak to your child's class teacher.



EYFS Stay and Play

A huge THANK YOU to all the amazing families who joined our Pre-School & Reception *Stay and Play* session this week! It was wonderful to see so many of you engaging with your little ones and experiencing their learning journey first-hand. We loved having you and can't wait to plan another session in the future!



Updates:

For the latest information and updates, please continue to visit our school website and Facebook page. <https://smcea.org.uk/>



Dates for your diary...

- **Friday 14th February** - Last day of term 3 (usual finish time)
- **Monday 24th February** - TD Day for all Blue Kite Schools (school closed to children)
- **Tuesday 25th February** - Term 4 begins at 8:40am.
- **Friday 28th February** - Year 1 Phonics Screening Check (statutory assessment) Parent Meeting (3:15pm)

- **Thursday 6th March** - World Book Day
- **Wednesday 12th March** - Junior Voice Festival
- **Friday 21st March** – Disco (PTA event) more information to follow.
- **Monday 24th March** - Mother's Day Shop (PTA event) more information to follow.
- **Tuesday 25th & Wednesday 26th March** - In Person & Virtual Parents' Evenings (more information to follow)
- **Wednesday 2nd April** – Glamorose (PTA event) here after school.