

SOUTH MARSTON



CHURCH of ENGLAND SCHOOL

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South Marston CofE Primary School Newsletter - 31st January 25

Head Teacher Update

Welcome to this edition of our Sway newsletter; we hope you enjoyed the new format last time and as ever this is a busy update too. Lots of key dates for your diaries so do take a look

through those as it is feeling like the final two weeks of this term will be very busy ones in school!

This term is certainly flying by with lots happening from our special visitors last week to all of the exciting learning taking place. By the end of term many of our children will have represented South Marston in various activities such as KS2 pupils performing at the Wyvern to football matches taking place at Supermarine. Not forgetting the incredible performance by our football team at the finals of the Wiltshire Cup recently.

As a school we actively seek opportunities such as these for our children knowing the immense benefits being part of them brings. We are very proud that in these moments our children carry with them our school vision of building each other up and supporting one another, not to mention our behaviour ethos of respect. Special thanks to both my staff and you for encouraging and supporting these opportunities and for always being there to cheer our children on.

Speaking of our school vision, Mrs Jones and the newly formed 'Prayer Development Team' have been working hard to build on the excellent work we did a few years back and write specific school prayers for us to learn and share. More to come in the coming weeks on this.

With some very wet and windy weather recently, I do hope this weekend is dry and pleasant for us all.

Very best wishes,

Mrs M Hendry



1 - Wrap Around Care At South Marston

Thank you to all who completed our recent Microsoft Form on wrap around need. We are currently reviewing the responses we have had and will be in touch next week with further information.

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/>



Value of the Term

Our Christian Value this term is 'Courage.' Through our acts of worship, we have been thinking about what courage means, what it means to step outside of our 'comfort zones' and also learning about Bible Stories which feature the message of courage.



History Workshops

On Friday 24th, the children took part in exciting history archaeology workshops. Over the coming months, these special guests will continue working with us as we explore the land next to the school. We're hoping the final visit will give the children an incredible opportunity to explore the site and experience hands-on archaeology. This is yet another way we strive to make learning truly come alive!



Open House - Parent Event

We are delighted to invite you to our Open House & Book Look Event on Wednesday 5th February. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to explore your child's progress and achievements so far this academic year. This will take place straight afterschool. Teachers will see classes out as usual and you are welcome to return back to your child's classroom.

During the event, you will have the chance to:

- View your child's workbooks, projects and artwork.
- Celebrate their progress and hard work.
- Speak with their teachers informally about the learning journey so far.
- Explore classroom displays and learn more about the exciting activities they've been engaged in.

This event is an excellent way to support your child's learning and stay connected with their educational experience.

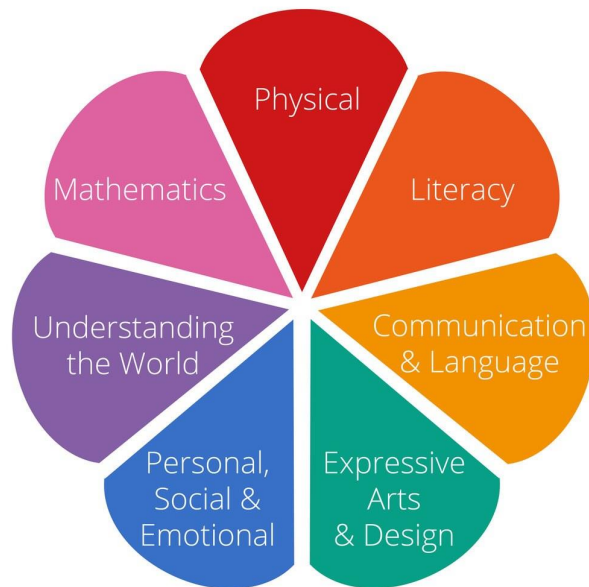
We look forward to welcoming you and sharing these moments of pride together.



Early Years Stay and Play - Parent Event

On Thursday 13th February, we invite parents of children in Pre-School and Reception to a 'Stay and Play' session. This is a wonderful opportunity to observe your child's learning in action, explore how the learning environment is designed to foster various skills, and support your child engage in a variety of activities. The session will last 40 minutes and will begin at 9:00am.

If you would like to attend this event, please email the school office at your earliest convenience to confirm your attendance.



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 - 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.

Class Attendance Update

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

Reception - 100%

Year 1 - 94.3%

Year 2 - 96.8%

Year 3 - 98.3%

Year 4- 92.7%

Year 5 - 95.0%

Year 6 - 97.3%

Pine Class - 96.5%

Willow Class - 96.8%

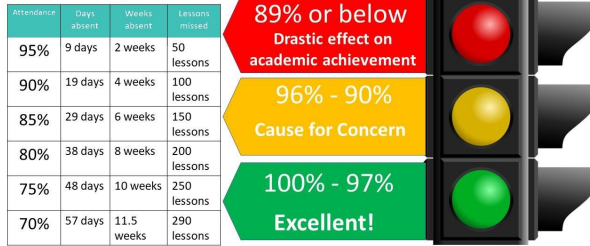
Silver Birch Class - 95.7%

Sycamore Class - 96.1%

Whole School Average - 96.3%

ATTENDANCE

Why is it important?



Pupil Leadership

We are so impressed with how our pupil leaders have represented our school in various roles this year. From our school council attending important meetings and sharing ideas about our school, to our librarians ensuring the library remains well-organised and welcoming, and our house captains helping to organise games and events—they’ve all done an amazing job!

Pupil leadership opportunities are a key focus in our school development plan this year, and it’s wonderful to see our children stepping up to these responsibilities. They are truly helping to bring our school vision and values to life.



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.



Children's Mental Health Week

Next week is the national Children's Mental Health Week with the focus of this week being 'Know Yourself, Grow Yourself.' At South Marston we place value and emphasis on positive mental health and supporting our pupils through time to talk, visiting our Lavendar Lodge (the well – being lodge) and teaching them coping strategies like breathing techniques for those times when they are needed. During next week we will be thinking about this in our Collective Worship and PSHE lessons.

More information - <https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>



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...

- **Monday 3rd February** - KS2 Performing Arts Dance Festival @ The Wyvern Theatre (leave school at 2:30pm)
- **Wednesday 5th February** - Open House Event for all parents (3:15pm)
- **Thursday 6th February** - Year 4 Multiplication Check (statutory assessment) Parent Meeting (3:15pm)
- **Tuesday 11th February** - Year 6 SATS (statutory assessment) Parent Meeting (9:00am -9:30am).
- **Thursday 13th February** - EYFS (Pre School & Reception) Parent Stay and Play Session (9:00am) - please email the school office to confirm your attendance.
- **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)
- **Tuesday 25th & Wednesday 26th March** - In Person & Virtual Parents' Evenings (more information to follow)