

SOUTH MARSTON



CHURCH of ENGLAND SCHOOL

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of E SCHOOL

South Marston CofE Primary School Newsletter

Head Teacher Update

A warm welcome 'officially' to the start of Term 3! It has been lovely to see the children return beautifully after the long Christmas break and make a brilliant start on the new topics they are learning this term.

As you will be aware, Mrs Smith started with us last week and is already proving to be a brilliant addition to the office team alongside Miss Townsend. In other staffing news I am delighted to share that Mrs Goward has joined Mrs Jones in Pre School this week, as our new Pre School Assistant. This is as a result of numbers in Pre School steadily growing recently and in the coming months. We are delighted to welcome both Mrs Smith and Mrs Goward to our school family and staff team.

This is a busy newsletter with lots of important information and key dates on so do please take the time to have a read through.

Please can I reiterate my thanks to you all for your patience and support recently as we continue to navigate the changes leaving one Trust and moving to another brings – all staff have lots to learn and get to grips with on a daily basis at the moment it feels (especially the school office!) so, your patience and understanding really is appreciated.

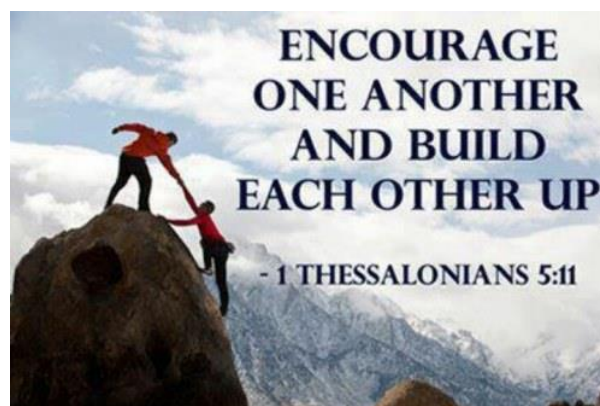
Finally a special mention for Silver Birch who started their swimming lessons this week. It was a pleasure to go and see them at the pool. The children were fantastic in terms of their behaviour, listening, their approach to water safety and overall effort in the lesson. Well done Silver Birch and thank you to our fantastic swim teachers!

I cannot end this without also saying how incredibly proud I am of our football team and how well they did on Wednesday at the County Finals. More to follow in this newsletter but they represented the school beautifully, carried our school vision with them and were a credit to our school and their families. Special thanks to Mrs Doughty and Mrs Hamilton - Gill for making this possible and to our brilliant parents who supported on the day. Well done footballers - you are our champions!

Wishing you a lovely weekend when it comes.

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/>



Parking

Please can we share a gentle reminder about parking safely both in the Rec car park and in the local community. We have had concerns shared with school over parking recently particularly on Thornhill Road where cars are parking, sometimes on the pavement. Whilst we appreciate coming by car is a necessity for some, where possible we encourage walking or walking some of the distance to school wherever possible. If you do need to drive, please consider others whether it be staff cars, other parents or the local community when dropping off/collecting your child/ren. Please refrain from blocking in staff/visitor cars or using the disabled bays without the appropriate badge. Thank you.



Children's Details

Kindly keep the office informed about any updates related to your child, such as changes in address, updated email information or allergies. Additionally, we are required to maintain emergency contact details for your child in case you cannot be reached. Please contact the school office if you would like to update or share further contact details with us.



Lunches

Please remember to order your child's lunches promptly. Recently, there have been several instances where parents have forgotten to place lunch orders. As school lunches are now prepared and delivered by another local school, it's important to note that children often cannot change their choices, and spare lunches are not always available. We are also aware of issues on the School Food United app from time to time and we appreciate your patience with this when the situation arises while we try to rectify issues as quickly as we can.

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.

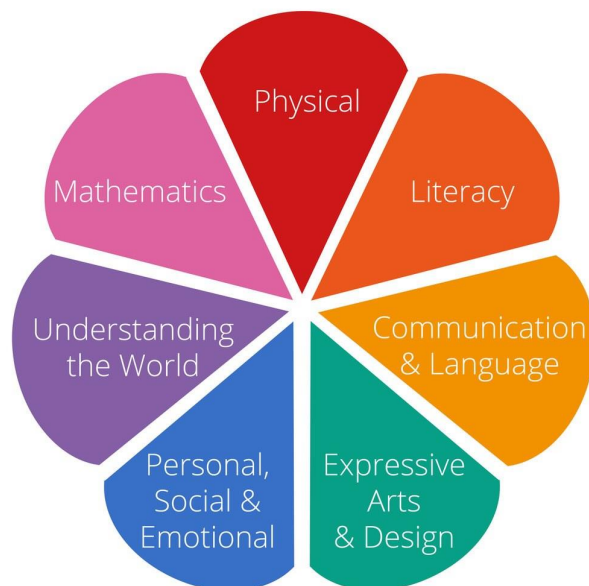
We look forward to welcoming you and sharing these moments of pride together.



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.



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- 92%
- Year 2 - 97%
- Year 3 - 98%
- Year 4 - 93%
- Year 5 - 97%
- Year 6- 94%

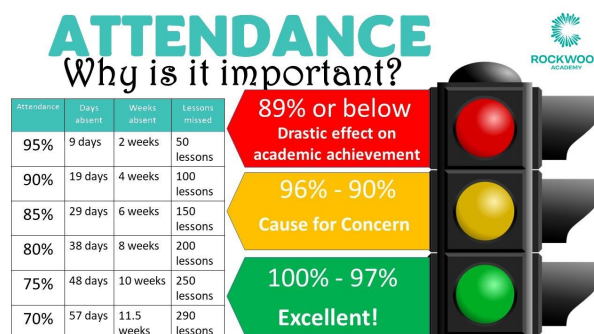
Pine Class - 95%

Willow Class - 97%

Silver Birch Class - 96%

Sycamore Class - 95%

SCHOOL AVERAGE - 96%



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.



Updates:

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



Football Match

What an incredible day for our talented team at the county finals in Devizes! Representing the school with such brilliance, we took a squad of nine players who gave it their all.

We were unstoppable in the group stage, winning every match and keeping a clean sheet—fantastic work, keeper Bodhi! On the attack, Leo was on fire, scoring multiple early goals in

nearly every game, while Reece made his mark with impressive goals in the 8th minute of both the second and third matches.

Ronnie was the epitome of calm leadership, proving to be a thoughtful and reliable captain, always putting the team first and distributing the ball with care. Reagan held strong in defence as always, showing dependability and grit. Felix and Tomek gave a tireless performance, showing versatility and unwavering effort throughout every game.

Special mention to Grace and Rosie, whose determination and fearless involvement in every match make them outstanding role models. They continue to make us incredibly proud!

Although we finished top of our group and reached the semi-finals, our journey ended there with a 2-1 loss. However, reaching the county finals is a once in a decade achievement! The last time South Marston were part of the finals day was 12 years ago! Nevertheless, the team played with heart and left everything on the pitch.

A big thank you to the enthusiastic parents who came along to support—it made all the difference!

What a fantastic afternoon—well done, team!



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)

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)