Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back after the half-term break. It has been lovely to see all the snowdrops and other signs of the imminent arrival of Spring, There are bulbs coming up all around the school grounds for the children to enjoy. Our snowdrop exhibition is still open in St James Church, do call in there to have a look at them.

**Parents Evenings – Bookings now open – Monday 4th March and Thursday 14th March, 3.30-6pm**

Please book up to meet with your children’s teachers in March.

You can book your parents evening appointment by logging in to the school website or the eSchools App which you can download onto your phone. The link to the school website is: [https://shaftesburyabbeycofe.eschools.co.uk](https://shaftesburyabbeycofe.eschools.co.uk/)

If you are struggling to book slots yourself, please ring the school office.

**World Book Day – Thursday 7th March**

We don’t want anyone to feel under pressure to dress as a book character, but encourage all children to either dress as a character or wear home clothes and bring a favourite book. As a guide, we’d like children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 to dress as characters from fairy tales or bring a book with a favourite fairy tale in it. Older children can choose a character from any book.

We might also be holding a Bedtime Story event back in school from 5-6pm, we’ll confirm this next week. Children would come in their WBD clothes, or in PJs, onesies, slippers and dressing gowns ready for bed. All the children would be invited to come and listen to stories told by staff and parents in the classrooms around the Hall.

Also on World Book Day, we will open our Book Exchange, based by the school office. It will be a place where you can come and find new books for home use, and leave others at the exchange. You don’t have to bring in books to take books, and we ask that any donated books are for primary aged children only, in good condition, and only left if there is space for them on the shelves.

**Reading Challenge**

All the children from Years 1-6 have been given a special reading challenge to try to complete this half term. Every child completing the challenge will get a little extra playtime at the end. Please encourage them to complete the challenge.

**Our Governors**

We are really fortunate to have an excellent Board of Governors at our school. As a Church of England primary school, we are required to have a majority of governors appointed by the local church, these are known as Foundation Governors. The other categories are the Parent governors, Local Authority appointed governor, Staff governor and the Headteacher.

Here is the full list of our governors:

Antony Streets Chair (Foundation)

Karen Ralph Vice-Chair (Parent)

Margaret Derrett (Foundation)

Jenny Duncombe (Foundation)

Katie Thompson (Local Authority)

Shane Shortman (Parent)

Lucy Jones (Foundation)

Charlie Marshall (Staff)

Michael Salisbury (Headteacher)

Lorna Eguizabal (Foundation)

Tim Hall (Foundation)

Karen Hudson  (clerk)

**Parentline information attached**

Please have a look at the attached information about the Parentline (07312 263131) which can help with issues around behaviour, development, healthy eating, weight management, emotional health, attendance and more.

**Reading the Land Festival**

<https://www.shaftesburybookfestival.com/reading-the-land-2024>

Click on the link to find out about the 2024 Shaftesbury Book Festival. The author of Archie’s Apple will be coming to talk to our Year 2 class on Friday 8th March.

Please see the attached details of events for children during the festival.

**Free workshops for children in Shaftesbury**

Please see flyer attached with details of two events happening at The Arts Centre and Shaftesbury Library in March.

**Sports Day Dates**

In the summer term, we will have our Sports Days for Key Stage One and Key Stage Two as follows:

KS1 – (Years R, 1 and 2) – Monday 17th June 1pm-3pm (reserve date 24th June)

KS2 – (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) – Tuesday 18th June 1pm-3pm (reserve date 25th June)

The KS2 children also have their Field events in the morning, but these are not open to spectators.

**Forest School – Wednesday afternoons**

Year 1 continue their three weeks of Forest School this Wednesday,  followed by Year 3 for two weeks from 6th March and Year 4 for two weeks from 20th March taking us up to Easter.

Children need to have trousers and long sleeved tops, wellies and a waterproof coat (with overtrousers if they have them). The Forest School philosophy is to wear the right clothing to go out in all weathers.

Michael Salisbury, Head teacher

**TERM DATES 2023 – 2024**

Autumn Term

Inset Day                                                        Friday 1st September 2023

Inset Day                                                        Monday 4th September 2023

Children start back                                       Tuesday 5th September 2023

Autumn Half Term                                        Monday 23 October – Friday 27 October 2023

Autumn term ends                                       Friday 15th December 2023 (1pm pick up if you can)

Christmas Holidays                                       Monday 18th December – Tuesday 2nd January 2024

**(Children return on Wednesday 3rd January 2024)**

Spring Term

Inset Day                                                        Tuesday 2nd January 2024

Children start back                                       Wednesday 3rd January 2024

Spring half term                                            Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February 2024

Spring Term ends                                          Thursday 28th March 2024

Summer Term

Summer term starts                                       Monday 15th April 2024

May Day Bank Holiday                                  Monday 6th May 2024

Summer half term                                          Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May 2024

Summer term ends                                        Friday 19th July 2024

Inset Day                                                          Monday 22nd July 2024

Inset Day                                                          Tuesday 23rd July 2024