Newsletter 20

Dear Parents and Carers

Newsletter 20 means we have passed the half-way point of the school year; it seems to have flown by! Our new Reception children are not so new now, and our Year 6 children are edging towards the end of their primary education with secondary school just over the horizon.

**NSPCC Numbers Day** – This Friday - 7th February – Non Uniform (Wear something with a number on it if you can, or a badge or hat with numbers on it perhaps) £1 donation to the NSPCC

The children will be doing some special Maths-related activities to celebrate Numbers Day during the day. Please send them in something with a number on it if you can, but any non-uniform is fine. Great if you can also wear a number at drop-off/pick-up that day, I’ll be on the lookout! Staff will be wearing numbers and challenging the children to calculate the entire staff total by the end of the day.  Thank you to the parents who have offered to come in to tell their child’s class about something they do with numbers in their job, home or hobby. It’s really inspiring for children to hear how numbers are used by adults. Please contact your child’s teacher if you can offer to do this. One class will be having a mock auction with one of our parents who used to be an auctioneer!

**Attendance**

We know there’s been a lot of illness around during the past two weeks, some of it taking a long time to clear the system of the child or adult affected.

Please make sure you contact the office when your child is unwell. We had several unknown absences on Friday and are required to record them as unauthorised if we cannot get through to families to check the reason. Please avoid this by leaving a short message on our answerphone or emailing the office first thing in the morning to let us know they won’t be in.

**Choir Club**

A reminder there is **no** choir club next Tuesday 11th Feb as Mrs Bastable is unable to run it that day.

**New Football club, Nerf club and Half term football days**

Not enough children were signed up for the football club to enable it to run last Friday. Please sign up for this, the Nerf club which will be at 5pm on Thursdays (if enough children are signed up), and the half term football days using the link below

[**www.tcwsports.co.uk/book-online**](http://www.tcwsports.co.uk/book-online)

**Craft Activities**

There are some interesting craft activities taking place in the half term week, please see the attached information to book these activities.

**Snowdrop Art and little children’s service in St James Church on Friday 14th February at 3.30pm**

The children are all invited to create a piece of art based on a snowdrop or snowdrops for an exhibition in the church as part of the Shaftesbury Snowdrop Festival. Art created at home should be clearly named and brought in to school by Thursday 13th February. All families are warmly invited to go to the short service after school on Friday 14th February to celebrate the snowdrop art in the church.

**Parents’ Evening Dates – 6th and 10th February, 3.30-6pm**

Parents evenings start this Thursday 6th February, and also take place on Monday 10th February.

To book, log 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.

Our SENCO (Mrs Howard), will be available during the parents’ evening on Monday 10th February if you would like to chat to her at that time.

**Tea-Time Church**

The next two dates are 23rd February and 30th March, for Tea-time church, a very informal gathering at 4pm in St James Church. See the attached information.

**Mental Heath**

We had outstanding support for the last mental health session we held for parents in our school Hall. Please come to this one.

As you will know from previous newsletters, we are taking part in a pilot project in Dorset for the national PINS (Partnership for the Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools) programme. As part of this we are holding a coffee morning from 9-10am on Wednesday 12th February, hosting Tamsin Pike, the project worker from the Dorset Parent Carer Council. She is looking to speak with parents about the support they feel their children need in school and how best our school can offer this. Please feel welcome to join us at this time for a chat.

Children’s mental health week 2025 takes place this week, 3-9 February. The theme for 2025 is Know Yourself, Grow Yourself, with the aim to equip and empower children and young people across the UK to embrace self-awareness and explore what it means to them. There will be a special assembly on Tuesday 4th February for all the children. You can find more details here [Children's Mental Health Week - Place2Be](https://www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/childrens-mental-health-week/) .

**Dental Health**

One of our local dentists is offering a special price for children to have a check-up in February. Dental health is vital for all our children. Please see the attached information.

**Cooking Club for Year 5 children**

We are absolutely delighted that Mrs Harris and Mrs Stone are continuing the tradition of offering Let’s Get Cooking to all Year 5 children in our school. In the past, every Year 5 child has taken up this offer, having the sessions in small groups through the year. The children love the sessions and always go home with tasty things they’ve made. What a perfect way to give them a life-long love of cooking and healthy eating. If your child is in Year 5, please encourage them to take part in the next sessions starting on Wednesday 5th March. If money is stopping you signing up, please have a confidential word with me. The PTFA kindly buy all the ingredients for the club.

**Shaftesbury Library event on 8th Feb**

There is going to be a very exciting visit to Shaftesbury Library from local author Angela McAllister (author of*Leon and the Place Between*, as well asmany other children's books) as part of the National Storytelling Week activities. She will be reading one of her stories and engaging with the children as storytellers on Saturday 8th February 11am - 12 noon.

Engaging with events such as this in our local library is one of the best things you can do for your children…and it’s free!

**Swimathon – Save the Date – Sunday 16th March at Coombe House pool**

This is an event for all of the children in our school who can swim a length or more. We’ll send details next week after we’ve talked to the children about it. We hope it will be an event that many of our children will take part in.

**Term Dates for next year (2025-2026)**

Please see attached the term dates for next year, including Inset Days.

**Forest School – Wednesday afternoons**

Staff have asked that all children wear really warm clothes (including thick socks) when the weather is cold during Forest School sessions.

Year Two are having their turn, then Year 1 from 26th February.

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 2024 – 2025**

Spring Term

Children  start back                                      Monday 6th January 2025

Spring half term                                             Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February 2025

Spring Term ends                                          Friday 4th April 2025

Easter holidays                                              Monday 7th April to Monday 21st April 2025

Summer Term

Schools due to start back                            Tuesday 22nd April 2025

MAY DAY Bank Holiday                                 Monday 5th May 2025

Summer half term                                          Monday 26th May to Friday 30st May 2025

INSET DAY                                                          Monday 2nd June 2025

Summer Term ends                                       Tuesday 22nd July 2025

INSET DAY                                                          Wednesday 23rd July 2025