Newsletter 4

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a wonderful time we all had in the Shaftesbury Carnival on Saturday afternoon. So many of our children and families took part in the afternoon procession, with Henry T from Year 4 and Holly from Year 6 leading the way in the royal carriage!

The PTFA were out in fabulous numbers, guiding a fabulous group of 60 or so children and adults through the town in our Abbey School of Rock entry, which won a trophy for the third year running!

Thanks to everyone who took part and cheered on the entries, a great time was had by all. What will we do next year?!

**Harvest Festival – 1st October in St James Church**

We will be taking the whole school to St James Church this Wednesday, 1st October to hold our Harvest Festival in our beautiful church with our Vicar and Stories from the Bible group. We absolutely fill the church, so are unable to accommodate families at this service. Please could you send your children to school with an offering to bring up to the front during the service. Please send them with something that will be donated to the Open House food bank in Shaftesbury after the service.

**Parents evenings**

Bookings are open from 1pm today for the following parents evenings:

**Thursday 16th October**- All year groups from Rec - Year 6 from 3.30 - 6pm

**Monday 20th October** – Rec, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 5, Year 6 from 3.30 - 6pm

**Tuesday 21st October** –Year 4 only from 3.30-5.30pm

You can book your parents evening appointments 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.

**Christmas Shoebox Appeal 2025**

We are taking part in the Christmas shoe box appeal again this year. It’s a wonderful thing to do with your children. Details of what can be put in the boxes can be found here:

<http://www.wessexrotaryshoebox.org.uk/>

Thank you to everyone who has requested a box or more than one box. They were sent home on Friday. There are plenty of spare boxes in the office if you missed the date

We need to have the shoeboxes ready for collection in school by Thursday 23rd October at the latest. Please send them in as soon as they’re ready.

**Christmas Dates**

For those of you who like to plan ahead, here are some dates we have in place in the run up to Christmas

28th November – Christmas Fayre, 3.15pm

9th December- Year 1 and 2 Nativity Performance, 2pm

9th December – Year 5 out to Larmer Tree pageant

11th December - Year 1 and 2 Nativity Performance, 2pm

11th December – Christmas Jumper Day for Save the Children

15th December – Christmas Pantomime trip for the whole school, 11.30am-4.30pm

16th December – Reception Nativity, 2pm

17th December – Carol Service, 2pm in St James Church

18th December – Circus Performance, 1.45pm

19th December – Last Day – Pick up at 1pm

**No Dodgeball Club on Wednesday 8th October**

Due to a football tournament, there will be no Dodgeball Club on 8th October

**Little Wandle Phonics reading books**

We are missing a number of books from the sets that we have for children to read while they are learning their phonics. Each book we have to replace costs the school £7. Please have a look at home for any books that say Little Wandle on them and return them to the school office or classrooms. We will need to charge individual families who have lost these important books.

**Parent and carer comments please**

During this year, we are expecting our SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools). It looks at how well we are working as a church school over a range of areas including the way we live out our vision (Being the Best we can Be, Living and Learning in tune with God), our Christian values – Caring, Community, Confidence and Creativity, how well we do Collective Worship (assemblies and church services) and how well we teach Religious Education. There are three questions on the survey below, which will help us collect evidence for some of the areas of the inspection. This newsletter has examples of some of the things we do as a church school such as events with our local church community and supporting charities such as the shoe box appeal or children’s cancer charities. Please have a look at the three questions and answer one or more of them if you can.

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=JL1ZvEsvOUSih0_sDC0CtWpXICym8w1NoiYCXomrRuhUOTVWVDk0R0lJR1BWTElKN01KVjQ3RUo1Ry4u>

**Shaftesbury Young Performers Festival – see flyer attached**

Please consider entering your children for this brilliant new festival of music which is in it’s second year in the Arts Centre.

The young performers festival is a chance for young people to come together and celebrate music. It is a competitive festival but the emphasis is on encouraging music making in all forms. We have many different categories for solo, duet and group singers/ instrumentalists.

**Singing opportunity for children in Y5 and 6**

We have been contacted by the Gillingham Singers to see if some of our children in Year 5 and 6 would like to be involved in a concert they are putting on in St James Church on November 22nd. If interested, the children would attend some rehearsals at Wyke School at 7pm on Mondays for 30 minutes or so to get ready to sing part of *On Christmas Night*with the adult choir at the concert. Parents and carers would be welcome to stay and watch these rehearsals. On the concert day there would be a rehearsal in the church in the afternoon before the concert at 7.30pm. Please email the school office if you’d like your child to take part, we will then pass your email on to the organiser to make further arrangements.

**Applications for secondary school and starting primary school in September 2026**

Please see the attached information and remind friends and family to apply in good time. The secondary school date is coming along very soon! It is very important that these applications are received by these dates. You stand a much greater chance of securing a place in one of your preferred schools if you apply on time!

For Secondary school starters in September 2026 (current Year 6 class), the closing date for **on time** applications is the 31 October 2025.

For Primary School starters in September 2026, the closing date for **on time** applications is the 15 January 2026.

**Forest School – Tuesday afternoons**

Our Forest School day has changed to Tuesdays for the year ahead. It will be Year 4 for the next three weeks then Reception from 21st October.

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

**Parking**

It does get really busy around the school entrance at peak times, we love it when families park a little further away and walk the last part to school. It’s a really healthy start to the day for adults and children to do this. Parking in the road outside the front of school blocks the traffic for other road users and families. Please avoid parking in this area.

It is not possible to drive on to the site to park unless you have a blue badge or have applied to the school for a permit, which we issue in exceptional circumstances.

**Attendance**

Good attendance and punctuality remain a top priority for us this academic year. This is because regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

We work hard to ensure that your child is supported in school to feel safe, to be the best they can be, and to develop a sense of belonging both with their peers and as part of their wider school community. Regular attendance really does matter.

As a parent it is your responsibility that your child attends school each day. We recognise that at times some children and young people can find attending school less easy than others. We are here to help. If your child is experiencing difficulties, please do get in touch as soon as you can. We welcome you taking the lead on starting conversations at any point about supporting your child as we want what is best for them too.

As parents/carers you can best support your children to secure regular attendance and punctuality by:

* Ensuring they arrive at school on time every day by 8.50am at the latest. The gate shuts at that time so please come in time to deliver them to the classroom door and be out of the gate by 8.50am.
* Arranging dental and medical appointments outside of school hours where possible
* Informing the school if your child is too unwell to attend. (To assist you in deciding whether your child is too ill to attend school, the NHS have produced a weblink you mind find useful: Is my child too ill for school? - NHS ([www.nhs.uk))](http://www.nhs.uk/)
* Taking holidays during school holiday periods only. Fines are issued by Dorset Council for holidays in term time.
* Attending parents’ evenings and school events
* Discussing any problems or difficulties with the school as soon as they arise – staff are here to help

Our attendance policy is available to read on our school website. This explains how we monitor attendance and follow up absence. If you have any difficulties accessing our policy, please let us know so that we can provide it in an alternative format.

Thank you for working with us and continuing to support us in maximising your child’s attendance to help their learning, well-being and future success.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Michael Salisbury, Head teacher

**TERM DATES 2025 – 2026**

**Autumn Term**

**INSET DAY                                                     Wednesday 3rd September 2025**

Children start back                                       Thursday 4th September 2025

Autumn Half Term                                        Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October 2025

Autumn Term ends                                      Friday 19th December 2025

Christmas Holidays                                       Monday 22nd December 2025 – Friday 2nd January 2026

**Spring Term**

**INSET DAY                                                     Monday 5th January 2026**

Children start back                                       Tuesday 6th January 2026

Spring half term                                            Monday 16th February to Friday 20th February 2026

Spring Term ends                                         Friday 27th March 2026

Easter holidays                                             Monday 30th March to Friday 10th April 2026

**Summer Term**

**INSET DAY                                                     Monday 13th April 2026**

Children start back                                       Tuesday 14th April 2026

MAY DAY Bank Holiday                                Monday 4th May 2026

**INSET DAY                                                      Friday 22nd May 2026**

Summer half term                                         Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May 2026

Summer Term ends                                       Tuesday 21st July 2026

**INSET DAY                                                       Wednesday 22nd July 2026**