

St Michael's Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well, here we are again – the end of another academic year. It is always bittersweet as we say goodbye to our Year 6 children as well as some staff whilst also planning exciting things for the year ahead. Our Year 6 children have shown our values in abundance over the past year – especially *courage* and *perseverance* to adapt to new ways of learning. We wish them lots of luck on the next step of their journey to secondary schools and we can't wait to hear all about it.

As we head towards "Freedom Day" we must remember how hard we have all worked to keep the COVID risks minimised in school, and this is not the time to let our guard down, even if it is only for 3 days. As such, we will be keeping all current precautions in place until the end of term. We expect to receive updated guidance over the summer holiday so we will send out an update during the INSET day at the start of Term 1.

Thank you to everyone who completed the parent questionnaire. We have put an overview of the feedback and some of things we will be doing from September.

As we come to the end of our first year as Co-Headteachers at St Michael's we must also say some thank yous (don't worry, this isn't a Gwyneth Paltrow Oscar speech!). Firstly, thank you to **all** of the staff and governors; it is a pleasure and an honour to work with such a dedicated and hard-working team. Secondly to you as parents. We thank you for the opportunity to rebuild your trust in us as a school and for all of the support you have given us and your children over yet another challenging year. Last but not least, we must thank the children for all of their hard work this year, for rising to the challenge of remote learning and for showing our school values of courage, perseverance and respect in all that you do.

Dates for your diary

Wednesday 21st July – End of Term 6 (1:30pm finish)

Wednesday 1st September – INSET

Thursday 2nd September – INSET

Friday 3rd September – First day of Term 1



Have a lovely break,

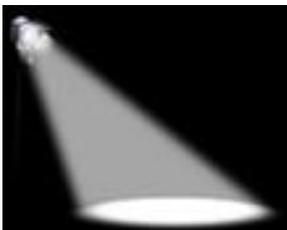
Hayley Leyshon-Brady and Grant Mottram

Co-Headteachers

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Spotlight On...Our Curriculum!



This year has been the first full year of our revised curriculum, the map for which can be found on the website. We have needed to adapt and tweak along the way due to the pandemic and some areas being less suited to remote learning than others. The children have covered a wide range of topics and learnt lots of new things.

However, from September it is time to knock things up a gear. Our focus for the next academic year will be about creating depth in learning in all areas of the curriculum, not just Maths and English. This means asking higher order, open ended questions that encourage reasoning and helps to make links between prior learning.

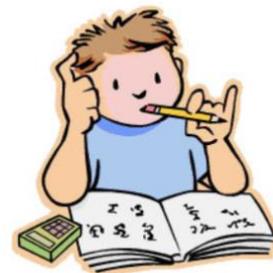
For example:

When learning about the Great Fire of London, surface learning will be learning facts to recall.

- When the fire started
- How the fire started
- What happened to stop the fire

Deep learning would be asking questions such as

- Was it the right decision to tear down houses?
- Do you think _____ was a good decision? Why?
- What would have happened if the decision had been different?



This approach to the curriculum, the ability to think critically, creatively and to apply their learning in different ways is one way we will provide challenge for children in all areas of their learning.

Look out of class newsletters, curriculum newsletters and – hopefully – curriculum open days in the coming year for opportunities to find out what this looks like in your child's class.

YV Big Sing!

On Tuesday 15th June, Years 1-6 took part in the Young Voices Biggest Sing!

We sung and signed Bill Withers classic 'Lovely Day' in our classes along with Billy Ocean, Yolanda Brown and Ruti, streamed live from the O2 arena. Over 350,000 people took part from all over the world, with nearly 100,000 singers appearing on the Zoom screens at The O2. We broke a Zoom world record for The Largest Children's Zoom Choir in the World and raised vital funds for the children's mental health charity, Place2Be. Thank you to all who donated and a huge well done to all the children who took part - you were brilliant! Mrs Drabble, Music Lead



Staffing Update

Goodbyes

Mrs. Sayers – Mrs. Sayers will be leaving us this term to return to her first career as a librarian. She took a career break from the library service to care for her children and then began working at Pre-School. 26 years later she is returning to Didcot library! Mrs. Sayers has been a wonderful asset to Acorn class, working extra hours during lockdown to make sure we could remain open to our youngest children. We will miss her immensely but know that she is only down the road! Thank you, Mrs. Sayers.

Mr. Grant – Mr. Grant joined us in April to cover Rowan class. He has brought stability and routine to the classroom as well as sharing his first love and passion – history. We are incredibly grateful to Mr. Grant for his work in Rowan class and wish him all the very best for the future.

See you soon...

Miss Clark – Miss Clark will only be leaving us temporarily as she will be starting her maternity leave at the end of this term. This is such an exciting time for Miss Clark and her partner, and we wish them lots of luck on their new adventure.

Mrs. Mulvey – The eagle-eyed amongst you will have spotted that Mrs. Mulvey is also expecting a baby! We are thrilled for her and her family and even more delighted that we get to keep her until October.

Welcomes

Mrs. Sibley and Miss Atkinson – Mrs. Sibley and Miss Atkinson will be joining the staff team at St Michael's from September. Mrs. Sibley will be teaching Year 4/5 in Ash and Miss Atkinson will be teaching Year 2 in Sycamore.

The House System

Through the parent feedback, another clear theme was for the children to take part in more sporting and community activities. As part of this we have decided

As part of a review of the rewards system used within school, from September we will once again divide the children into 'houses'.

The children will continue to earn Dojos and these will contribute to house points which will be totalled each week and the winning house named in our weekly celebration assembly. Dojos / house points will be awarded to the children for displaying the school values of courage, perseverance and respect. We also intend on having termly house meetings to discuss issues within school and allow the children to contribute their ideas to the school council. We also intend on holding regular intra-house sporting competitions throughout the year.

With this in mind, we would like to invite the children and their families to help come up with a set of four simplified house names that all the children in school know and will be able to remember.

Some suggested themes could include:

- Famous or historical people who inspire us / have demonstrated a school value
- Themed animals e.g. birds of prey
- Local or national places e.g. rivers, towns or other landmarks

The school staff will then draw up a short list of options which will then be put to a vote to decide the winner.

Please let us know if you have any questions or comments – your feedback is so helpful.

Parent Questionnaire – Feedback

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the parent questionnaire earlier in the term; 48% of families responded which is a great result. The feedback was open, honest and really constructive.

Headlines

- ⇒ 97% of parents said their child was happy
- ⇒ 96% of parents said their child felt safe
- ⇒ 96% of parents said the school was well led
- ⇒ 90% of parents said the communication was good
- ⇒ 92% of parents said they know and understand the school values

Areas that parents felt school did well

- ⇒ Caring
- ⇒ Communication
- ⇒ Make children feel part of a special community
- ⇒ Leadership
- ⇒ Staff know the children really well
- ⇒ Teachers are approachable and always ready to help

We feel incredible proud that these are the areas that you feel we do well. We have worked incredibly hard to develop and embed during the last year.

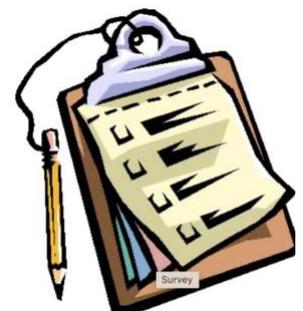
Areas that parents felt we could develop further

- ⇒ More homework
- ⇒ Greater challenge
- ⇒ More extra-curricular activities and community involvement

We have already spent time during the June INSET day looking at challenge in all areas of the curriculum.

Mrs. Satchwell, our English lead, and Mrs. LB have reviewed how English is taught at St Michael's and have spent time developing our vision for English. We will continue to develop a curriculum that is driven by diverse, rich and challenging texts and that regularly provide the children will opportunities for extended writing with a real purpose to help build stamina. We have also reviewed the teaching of reading in school. Children in KS1 will continue to have daily phonics sessions to help improve word reading skills and strategies to engage with texts. Phonetic Reading Scheme books will be used until a child is confidently reading within Phase 5. As the children progress and are confident we aim to build on the reading experiences already acquired. The aim is to develop independence, fluency and self-reliance. A greater variety of texts are made available to allow for more depth, choice and enjoyment. We will aim to expand the skills gained earlier in the school by keeping a teaching focus on reading, drawing attention to the structure of a variety of texts, helping pupils to adapt their style of reading to suit the purpose. As soon as children can read, we aim to support them in their need to become independent, helping them to develop fluency, expressiveness and critical awareness.

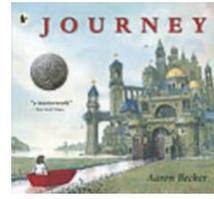
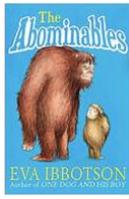
Look out in September for some more detailed information about our work around the English Curriculum and more!



The Book Nook!

“That’s the thing about books. They let you travel without moving your feet” Jhumpa Lahiri

Seeing as we can’t travel too far this Summer, this term’s book recommendations are all books about journeys.



Five for Twenty-Five!

As soon as the holidays arrive, children seem to need to eat constantly! Chef Ash Hamilton from the Curious Kitchen in Brixham is on a mission to empower parents to create healthy and nutritious meals for their kids on a budget. He is calling on supermarkets to create £30 food parcels with recipe cards included, enabling parents in receipt of food vouchers, and all families living on a budget, to make the most of their weekly food budget.

In this new series, Ash will be showing you exactly how you can feed your family for a week for £25, with no special equipment or extras required. Find the cook-a-long videos here:

<https://youtu.be/dVXnPYoT7HO> complete with the shopping list.

We would love to see any of the meals you make. Perhaps share a photo on your Google Classroom.

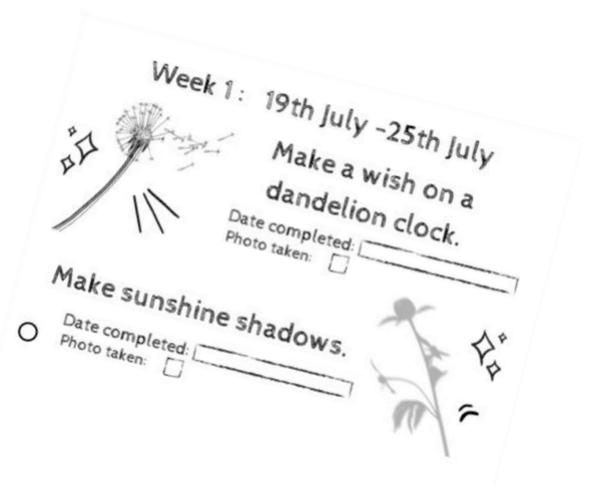


Big Summer Photo Hunt!

Following the success of Elm Class’ photography-based learning this term, the Big Summer Photo Hunt is a week-by-week photography challenge for children to take part in. Here is a link to the digital copies of the activities – we would love to see the photos you take.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/y0wimpga198n02j/The%20Big%20Summer%20Photo%20Hunt%20Free%20Schools%20Pack.zip?dl=0>

Please do share them with us via your Google Classrooms.



50 things to do before you're 5

Bring learning to life: 50 things to do before you're five

A free app is being launched just in time for the summer. Parents and carers of under-fives in Oxfordshire can now access a list of low and no-cost (local) activities to help promote early language development.

With information, guidance and supporting resources, you can build a memory bank of your child's special moments – from playing in the rain (#29 Pitter Patter), building dens (#33 Home from Home) to making potions (#17 Hocus Pocus Potions).

Find out more: <https://oxfordshire.50thingstodo.org>

Communication



Over the Summer we would ask that you do not contact your child's former or future teacher on their school Gmail accounts. They will not be checking these and so messages will be missed. If you have an issue that cannot wait until September or you need to get in touch with school urgently, please email Mrs. Leyshon-Brady and Mr. Mottram on head.3241@st-michaels-pri.oxon.sch.uk directly.

Please do not message any staff on personal emails or phone numbers, social media or catch them in public (e.g. the park) as their personal time and boundaries must be respected.

Pupil Premium Funding

What is the Pupil Premium?

Introduced in 2011, the pupil premium is a sum of money given to schools each year by the Government to improve the attainment of disadvantaged children.

This is based on research showing that children from low-income families perform less well at school than their peers.

Often, children who are entitled to pupil premium face challenges such as poor language and communication skills, lack of confidence and issues with attendance and punctuality. The pupil premium is intended to directly benefit the children who are eligible, helping to narrow the gap between them and their classmates.

Is my child eligible?

All children who currently qualify for free school meals based on their family circumstances are entitled to pupil premium. This applies if you receive any of the following benefits:

- Universal credit (provided you have a net income of £7400 or less)
- Income support
- Income-based jobseekers' allowance
- Income-related employment and support allowance
- Support under Part IV of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of state pension credit
- Child tax credit, provided that you are not also entitled to working tax credit and have an annual gross income of £16,190 or less

Children who are or have been in care, and children who have a parent who is or was in the armed forces, are also entitled to pupil premium.

In addition, pupils who have qualified for free school meals on the above grounds in the past, but are no longer eligible, continue to receive pupil premium for the next six years.

If your child qualifies for free school meals or has at any point in the past six years, it's important that you let us know – even if they're in Reception or KS1 and receive universal school meals for infant pupils or are in KS2 and take a packed lunch – as this enables us to claim pupil premium to support your child in school.

I think my child is eligible, what do I need to do now?

Please speak to a member of the office team if you think your child may be eligible for Pupil Premium funding. They will be able to provide you with additional information and let you know of any documents required.

Safeguarding – What you can do



Parents and carers play a vital role in safeguarding children in their community. If you have any worries or concerns about a family or child, no matter how small, you can raise it with the school safeguarding team, contact the office or get advice from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This safeguarding hub seeks to enable the sharing of information so that risks to children can be identified at an early stage.

It is a link between universal services, such as schools and GPs, and statutory services, such as police and social care. If you have a concern about a child during the holidays, please email Mrs. Leyshon-Brady and Mr. Mottram on head.3241@st-michaels-pri.oxon.sch.uk or if you feel the matter is urgent, please call MASH on 0345 050 7666.

This website is a useful place to find out about lots of support and information about a range of issues that may be worrying you:

https://fisd.oxfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/oxfordshire/directory/practitioner_toolkit.page

As a school we not only have a duty of care to the children in school but to their families too. If a child mentions something to an adult in school, please do not be alarmed if we put in a call to you. We are not judging, snooping or passing comment – we are there to offer support and ensure that we are doing our best by you. Remember – it takes a village to raise a child, we are part of your village.

Pick up and Drop off

Please do not think us rude if we do not send your child to you straight away at the end of the day or if we ask you to wait for your child to come into school. Teachers have a duty of care to the children and must make sure they come into school and leave school safely. Therefore, please follow the end of day routines set out in the individual class newsletters.

With the children in Willow, please allow teachers the time to greet the children and welcome them into school. This is an important time and allows a calm and smooth start to the day.

Please do let the office know if someone different is collecting your child at the end of the day. This is vitally important as we must ensure that children are collected by the appropriate people. We will be unable to release a child to someone different without a phone call or email to the office. Please don't be offended if we call you to double check – your child's safety is paramount.

Breakfast Club Opportunity

We are really fortunate to have a thriving Breakfast Club at St Michael's. To this end we are looking for a new member of the team to work on a Wednesday morning 7:30-8:45 with the possibility of more should our numbers grow further.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please email the office office.3241@st-michaels-pri.oxon.sch.uk



We also have a growing after school club. If you would like to book a space for your child then please contact the office on the email above for a booking form.

Breakfast Club

(7.45 – 8:50)

- Breakfast
- Games and puzzles
- Colouring and crafts
- Outdoor Play

After School Club

(3:15 – 5:30pm)

- Snack and a drink
- Homework
- Reading with a Buddy
- Games and puzzles
- Outdoor activities
- Crafts and free time

Community Notices

Please see below for any community events that are coming up

Swim

Jane Brooks **Lessons**

Venue: The Causeway, Steventon

When: Monday evenings 3.45-5.45pm

Small group swimming lessons for children from age 4+ years. Each lesson is 30 minutes and has a maximum of 6 children per group. For more information or to book onto a course, please visit

www.swimmingoxford.co.uk/contact-and-address-information