



SHINFIELD ST MARY'S CE (VA) JUNIOR SCHOOL AUTUMN TERM 2018 NEWSLETTER NO. 4 26th September 2018

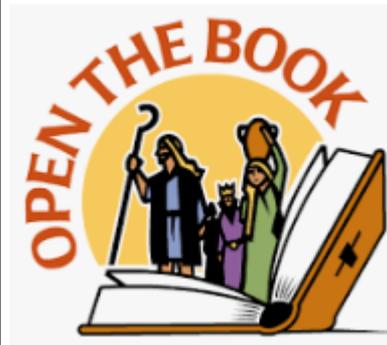


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Dear Parents,

I wish the weather would decide what to do: I'm sitting here in winter clothes as the sun is blasting down upon us: lovely!



Open the Book

For the last two weeks on Tuesday mornings we have been welcoming some new friends into our school to perform stories from the Bible. It is a lovely thing for our children to have drama performances and these are particularly special, centred as they are upon our values, and invoking reflection and deep thought from our children. Last week's story was about the creation of the earth according to the Bible, and this week's was about the story of Adam and Eve. An excerpt from the literature about this, called 'Open the Book', says,

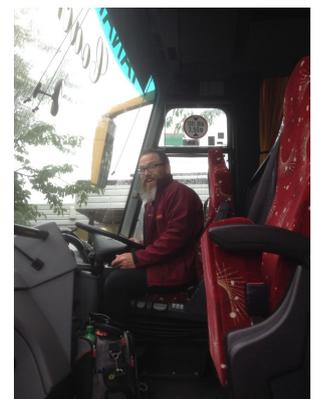
'This programme is about storytelling, not preaching or evangelising, so children of all faiths – and those with none – can watch and interact with the stories in their own way. The stories feature well-known characters but also include important values like patience, courage and trust.' We like this – it matches our ethos and values. It was lovely to see the children bowing their heads in reflection, recalling times when they have gone against the wishes of their parents or teachers, and how that made them feel, in relation to how Adam and Eve felt, in the Bible story of the Garden of Eden. If it makes them think, and if it helps them towards a deeper understanding of our values, it's all good!

We are very grateful to our friends from the Baptist Church, including our own Governor Mr Nathan Hunt, for this lively and interesting addition to our school provision – and the props are lovely, too.

Rhos y Gwaliau

I was delighted to receive back, safe and sound, 54 of our Year Six children on Saturday afternoon, as they returned from Rhos Y Gwaliau, full of the joys of their new experiences, all having challenged themselves to take part in activities that were way outside of their 'comfort zones'. Well done, Year Six!

On Sunday I sent off (in the pouring rain) the next group of children – 29 children with Mr Lappin, Mrs Sanders, Mrs Browne and Miss Bradley. The bus driver, Ben, phoned the centre in Wales just before they left and we were told that they would be greeted on their arrival by blue skies and sunshine. All is going well, and I am sure they will return this Saturday with as many stories as the first group – of daring deeds and new confidence. They all seem a bit taller on their return.



Reminders

Two weeks ago we sent out a request for permission for children to be interviewed by Miss Minesso regarding gender choices around colour, toys, art etc. Please return them if you are happy for your children to take part.

Family Quiz Night

You should now have received letters about this – please form teams and send them back into school with your money – or, if you are on your own and wish to join a team, either send in your slip and money with a request to join, or turn up on the night – we are bound to be able to find a place for you. Come along and try to beat the staff team!



Attendance for the week: 97.8%

Big News from our School and our PTA

On Monday Mr Knight and I were able to reveal to the children a fantastic piece of news. We told them about our biodome – a super piece of equipment that will enhance our curriculum for science, writing, PSHE and much more; will make a huge contribution to our community, and will enable us to help those less fortunate than ourselves. When I say 'biodome', think Eden Project, on a smaller scale – we will have one biodome, 6 metres across, large enough to hold a class of 32 children, with a six-week season to grow crops in – it will be so productive! The money raised from the selling of these crops will be used to support homeless charities.



Having paid a deposit for half the remaining amount, following the grant of £20 000 from The Prince's Trust, we are now trying to raise the money to pay for the rest of it. Our wonderful PTA has not only given us £3000 towards it but has also promised to raise the other £6500 too! This means we need all the help we can get in raising these funds. Please make sure you come to our Family Quiz Night, attend the Christmas Fair (Friday 30th November) and send your children to the disco (13th December)! The biodome itself will be arriving in the next few days, whether or not it has been paid for yet. I cannot tell you how much Mr Knight presently resembles a child on Christmas Eve, but I am absolutely certain that he will make the very best of this resource for our children. It is very, very exciting indeed.

Traffic Matters

Last week I sent an email to you all about the way in which cycling children are using the pavements around our school, but now I must once again ask you yourselves to change some of your own habits. Please don't park on the pavements – please especially don't be attempting to get two wheels up onto a kerb just as children are passing by – and please, most of all, try to keep your cars out of the crescent as much as possible! The residents are our neighbours, and we need to make sure that they feel safe, that they do not have to worry about children not being safe outside their houses, and that they are able to come and go as they please to and from their own homes. Similarly, I would like to ask those of you who drive into the area in front of their garages to keep your time there to a minimum, and to drive into this space as slowly as you can, as children are often walking there.



I must say that if I had a pound coin for every email I have had since making the polite request that children are asked to walk their bikes on the pavement around the crescent, telling me I should be telling people how to drive their cars, talking to traffic planners, putting somebody on the street to walk children into school, making a bid for funds to alter the paths in the area etc, I would have enough money to buy myself a waterproof reflective suit, and go and be a traffic warden. Having said all this, I'd like to turn my attention away from the roads and back into our marvellous school, trusting that you will all recognise that I have the safety and wellbeing of all the children at the heart of all I say and do, and will try to manage your children and cars as best you can in the area around us.

Church Meeting

Tomorrow night at 7.30 there will be a meeting at Shinfield St Mary's Church. This meeting will be to plan the celebrations of the fact that our church will be 950 years old next year! Do come along if you can – it will be interesting and exciting, and will lead to festivities on a large scale!



Dates for the Diary

Thursday 27th September – 7:30 to 9pm meeting at St Mary's Church re 950 year celebrations
Monday 15th October – Parents' Evening 1 for Year 6 only
Tuesday 16th October – Parents' Evening 1 except for Year 6 *** NO CLUBS TODAY ***
Thursday 18th October—School photographer in school
Thursday 18th October – Parents' Evening 2 *** NO CLUBS TODAY ***
Friday 19th October—End of the first half of term. School finishes at 3:30pm as usual
Monday 29th October – Back to school
Thursday 1st November – Theatre performance for Year 3
Friday 2nd November - November – Theatre performance for Year 4
Friday 16th November – Year 3 trip
Tuesday 4th December – Last Street Dance session
Wednesday 5th December – Year 5 first group to Ufton Court
Thursday 6th December – Last Drama session
Thursday 6th December – Year 5 second group to Ufton Court. First group return.
Friday 7th December – Year 5 second group return from Ufton Court
Friday 7th December – Flu immunisation for Years 3, 4 and half of Year 5