



Sageston CP School

Newsletter – November 2024



This Term's Values: Respect and Friendship; Self-belief and Kindness

We have reached that time of year where it seems almost everything we do is linked to Christmas; whether that's Christmas performance rehearsals, Christmas crafting with the FOSS, RVE lessons about the Christmas story, Christmas jumper days, Christmas dinner, our visit to the Torch for the pantomime, it seems difficult to escape the festive spirit in school! Of course, pupils do continue to work hard on their learning in plenty of other aspects of the curriculum, even though they might only be talking about Christmas when they get home!

There will be another newsletter at the end of the term in December where I will provide plenty of information about what has happened over the Christmas period in school, but also look forward to the new year and everything that will bring in school.

On a personal note, I would like to say a huge thank you to all of the kind comments I have received since informing you all that I will be leaving the school in April. It means a great deal to me to have had such thoughtful and heartfelt things expressed about my time here at the school

Upcoming Dates

December

Wednesday 4 th :	Whole School Visit to Torch Theatre for Pantomime
Friday 6 th :	Christmas Fayre – 3pm to 5pm
Monday 9 th :	Christmas Performance – 1.30pm
Tuesday 10 th :	Christmas Performance – 9.30am
Wednesday 11 th :	Christmas Performance – 5.30pm
Thursday 12 th :	Christmas Jumper Day
Tuesday 17 th :	Carol Service at St Mary's Church – 10.30am
Wednesday 18 th :	Christmas Dinner Day (pupils will be able to wear Christmas jumpers during the day)
Friday 20 th :	Final Day of the Term – Class Christmas Parties (pupils can come in non-school uniform and bring a toy or game to play)

January

Monday 6 th :	INSET Day – school closed to pupils.
Tuesday 7 th :	First day of the spring term for pupils.

Important Messages

Headteacher Recruitment

Governors have asked me to keep you updated with the recruitment process for a new Headteacher. It is anticipated that the advert for a new Head will be published by Monday 9th December. The application window will close at the start of next term and governors are hopeful that they will have appointed a new head by mid- to late-January. As soon as they have further information to share with you, then I am sure they will do so in a timely manner.

Christmas Events

As I've already alluded to, December is incredibly busy in school. We have lots of Christmas events to look forward to. Starting next week, we have our Christmas Fayre on Friday (3 – 5pm). However, possibly more exciting for the pupils will be our visit to the Torch Theatre to watch the pantomime earlier in the week on Wednesday morning. The following week we have our Christmas Jumper day and all of our performances. Moving into the final week of the term, we will be visiting St Mary's Church for a carol service and having our Christmas dinner. There's much more than these key events happening with end of term parties and a visit from Father Christmas (hopefully – if we've all been good!) also planned.

Please note the change of time for our visit to St Mary's Church for the Carol Service during the final week. It will now be at 10.30am rather than 2pm on Tuesday 17th December. Sorry for any inconvenience this change of time may have caused. A reminder that all parents and family members are welcome to come along. We would love to see you and I know Reverend Hannah is keen to fill the church!

Many thanks in advance to all parents and family members for supporting your child/ren in their preparation for the Christmas performances. Through helping them rehearse their lines, providing them with costumes and being enthusiastic members of the audiences for the performances, your support is paramount to the success of the shows.

INSET Days

We have already had three of our six allotted INSET days for the year. The first day of each of the next two terms will be INSET days (Monday 6th January and Monday 28th April). The final INSET day for the year will be on Monday 21st July and staff will be expected to attend twilight sessions over the next couple of terms to make this time up so that they do not have to come into school on that date.

Attendance and Lateness

A reminder that we are aiming to achieve 95% attendance as a whole school. At the end of last month our attendance was 94.8%. However, that percentage has fallen since then and is now closer to 93%. We appreciate that there are lots of coughs, colds and bugs going around the school at the moment, however, if your child has a cough or cold but is well enough to come to school, please make sure they are attending. If they are unwell during the day, we will ensure they are looked after and if we feel it is necessary, we will contact you to collect them.

If you are taking your child on holiday, then please ensure you complete a holiday absence request form (at least two weeks prior to your holiday) and read the criteria for having holidays approved – it will only ever be done once a year and only where a child has good attendance (over 95%) prior to the holiday. In addition, I will only ever authorise holiday absences for 5 days. If your holiday exceeds 5 days, your child doesn't have 95% absence in the previous academic year or term before your holiday or it is not your first holiday of the year, then absence due to holiday will not be authorised.

Finally, a number of children have been arriving to school late recently. As well as the disruption to your child's learning (10 minutes late each day leads to 50 minutes of lost learning time each week), it creates additional work for school staff who may have to reopen their registers to update them or make phone calls to the kitchen to ensure dinners are ordered when they should be teaching. School starts at 8.50am, when all pupils line up on the school playground – please ensure that your child arrives on time so that they can line up with their peers and have a settled start to the school day.

Key Events and Visits

Remembrance Service

On 11th November, we welcomed local members of the Royal British Legion, including Mr John Brock MBE, as well as parents to our annual Remembrance Service. Following the service, our special guests enjoyed teas, coffees and biscuits, kindly organised by members of the FOSS, before heading to the Carew War Memorial to observe a two-minute silence alongside members of the school council. As always, council members also lay a wreath and crosses in memory of those young men from the parish who lost their lives in the world wars.

Special Assemblies

Towards the end of this month, we had two assemblies to celebrate impressive achievements within our school. Firstly, Lynwen Harries from LATCH visited the school to thank the pupils and school community for the incredible amount of money they raised earlier in the term. Secondly, Claire Sell and Christine Evans from PATHS, attended an assembly so that they could award the Model Pre-School Award to Mrs O'Leary, who has been leading the playgroup's work on the PATHS programme over the last two and a half years. More details can be found on the link below, which will take you to the 'School News' section of our website. I am hopeful that these articles may also be published by our local newspaper, the Tenby Observer, in due course.

[Sageston CP School - School News](#)

Other Key Visits/Visitors

Since my last newsletter, the following events have taken place:

Fran Evans, local artist, worked with Swan and Kingfisher Class to create artwork linked to the 'My River' project, which they engaged with last year.

A group of parents and pupils who had engaged with the FaCE project visited Manor Wildlife Park.

Wieke from Spectrum came to work with Robin and Swan Classes over the course of two days.

Reverend Hannah and Deacon Jon have both visited the school to lead assemblies.

Pupils engaged in online sessions organised by Octopus Energy about renewable energy.

Barn Owl Class visited Carew Castle to see how the Christmas lights are set up as part of their 'Light and Dark' topic.

Anna, a Marine Biologist from Sea Trust Wales, came to speak to Barn Owl, Swan and Kingfisher Classes about how we can look after our seas.

Children in Need

Finally, we have had more fundraising success. During our day of fundraising for Children in Need this month, we raised an impressive £211. Special thanks go to the pupils of Swan Class and Mrs Shatford for counting all of the 86 metres of loose change you had all kindly donated!

School Improvement

Last month, I shared our school improvement priorities for the year with you. These will form the focus of much of our staff development throughout the year and we will be adapting our teaching and learning to ensure that we see improvements in these specific areas.

I am going to share with you progress towards these targets each month and this month I will be starting with reading.

Over the course of the autumn term, we have adapted the way that we have been teaching phonics throughout the school. Each morning, pupils in Barn Owl and Robin Classes split into Read, Write, Inc. groups and they work on learning phonics to support their reading.

I have spent some time listening to learners about how they view reading. Overall, pupils were very positive about reading when they came to speak to me and there is some great evidence of pupils reading in class and at home.

Could I ask that parents record whenever they hear their child read, or indeed when they read with their child if they are one of the younger pupils, in the yellow Reading Record. It is important that children are bringing these records and their reading book home with them each day, and then bringing them back to school at the start of each new day. We would appreciate your support with this.

Ideally, all children should be reading at least 20 minutes each day.

School Council Priorities

As part of the Headteacher recruitment process, the school councils (and classes), under the guidance of Mr Davies, will be putting together a video advertising our school to potential candidates. This video will also provide anyone interested in the school an insight into the learning environment and the work that we do day-in-day-out in the school.

This video will be posted onto the school website at some point next week. Keep a look out and see if you can see your child making an appearance!

As mentioned in my last newsletter, we now have a different structure to our school council work, with the councils meeting once every fortnight. In next month's newsletter, this section will focus on the work that each council has undertaken so far this year, starting with the School Council.

The Latest from FOSS

Whilst it is a busy time in school for the staff and pupils, it is also a busy time for members of the FOSS. Already this half term, the FOSS have done an amazing job in decorating the school in time for the Christmas festivities (which included the decoration of my office whilst I was at a meeting – what a wonderful surprise!)

On Thursday 21st November, several members of the FOSS volunteered their time to come and work with each class to create items to sell at our Christmas Fayre as part of their annual Christmas Craft Day. They made a range of exciting decorations that we are excited to share with you at next week's fayre.

As well as volunteering their time for these important events – I know that the FOSS will be present in school over the next couple of weeks when they are running the fayre; selling raffle tickets at the performances; providing refreshments at the Carol Service at St Mary's Church and helping to decorate the hall and serve during the whole school Christmas dinner in the last week of term – they also provide brilliant financial support at this time of year. As you know, next week's pantomime visit is heavily subsidized by the FOSS (and the school in providing the transport). We hope that this gesture is appreciated by parents as you, like all of us, concern yourselves with getting ready for the Christmas period and the increased financial burdens this brings.

Celebration Videos

As you know, each week, we have a celebration assembly where we award various certificates earned in school. It is also an opportunity for children to celebrate their achievements outside of school. I really enjoy this chance to find out about all of the amazing things the children get up to when they aren't here in school with us. If they have won medals, trophies or certificates for these endeavours, please encourage them to bring them into school on a Friday so that they can be shared with all of us.

Here are the links to the celebration assembly videos for November.

[November 8th](#)

[November 15th](#)

[November 22rd](#)

[November 29th](#)

If you don't already know the password to access these videos, please contact me via the methods shared earlier in this newsletter and I'll be happy to share it with you.