

Friday 30th January 2026

The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's Schools

Newsletter

TERM DATES

Please see below a list of term dates which we trust you will find of use. Event details will be provided nearer the time.

Tuesday 27th January to Monday 2nd February

- Travelling Book Fair at Mortimer St. Mary's

Wednesday 4th February – Mortimer St. John's parent/carer coffee morning - 8.45am

Friday 6th February – Year 2 trip to the SeaCity Museum

Friday 6th February – Year 4 Cook Stars cookery sessions

Friday 13th February to Friday 20th February – Half Term

Friday 13th February - INSET Day

Monday 23rd February – Term begins

Tuesday 24th February – Year 5 trip to Winchester City Museum

Friday 27th February – Year 5 Cook Stars cookery sessions

Tuesday 3rd March – Year 6 trip to The Houses of Parliament

Wednesday 4th March – Year 4 trip to The Natural History Museum

Thursday 5th March – World Book Day – Year 6 to visit Year 1

Thursday 5th March – Mortimer St. John's Hot Chocolate and Story Time – 5.00pm to 5.45pm

Friday 6th March – Year 6 Cook Stars cookery sessions

Monday 9th March – Mortimer St. Mary's PTFA Spring Bake Off

Monday 9th March – Bag2School collection from the village

Tuesday 10th March – Bag2School collection from school

Tuesday 10th March – Mortimer St. Mary's parent/carer coffee morning – 9.00am

Tuesday 10th March – Year 2 Football and Netball Tournament – Wellesley Prep School

Friday 13th March – Foundation Stage (4.30pm to 5.30pm) and Year 2 (6.00pm to 7.00pm) PTFA discos

Monday 16th March – Parents' Evening virtual

Wednesday 18th March – Parents' Evening face to face

Thursday 19th March – Mortimer St. John's class photos

Friday 27th March – End of Term – Mortimer St. Mary's 1.30pm/Mortimer St. John's 2.00pm

LATENESS TO SCHOOL

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of children arriving late to school. At Mortimer St. John's the classroom doors open at 8.30am, ready for registration at 8.45am. At Mortimer St. Mary's the classroom doors open at 8.45am, ready for registration at 9.00am. A child who arrives late to school causes disruption to the class and leaves the child feeling unsettled. Any child who arrives after 8.45am/9.00am without leave of absence being authorised, in advance, will be marked as late. **If your child arrives late for school please ensure that you bring them to the school office and sign them in.** Thank you.

Any child arriving after 9.15am (Mortimer St. John's) or 9.30am (Mortimer St. Mary's) will be marked in the register as an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Please ensure if your child/ren are having a school lunch, that these are **ordered in advance** on SchoolGrid. An order must be placed by 8.55am (Mortimer St. John's) or 9.15am (Mortimer St. Mary's) to ensure the cooks within both schools are able to provide a meal. Unfortunately, an increasing number of children are requesting a school lunch and an order has not been placed. Thank you.

COFFEE MORNINGS

You are invited to join us again for a coffee morning, this time discussing anxiety. Whether your child is struggling with anxiety at the moment, you have been there and are coming through or you are interested to learn more, please come along and share together over a cuppa and a biscuit.

Mortimer St. John's (staffroom) - Wednesday 4th February, 8.45am until 9.45am.

Mortimer St. Mary's (The Oaks Building) - Tuesday 10th March, 9.00am until 10.00am

We look forward to seeing you there.

Mrs Cooper, Mrs Rook and Miss Pearson

WORLD BOOK DAY

We are excited to celebrate World Book Day across The Federation on Thursday 5th March 2026. Our focus for this special day will be on capturing children's imaginations and nurturing a lifelong love of reading and books. As a Federation, we have agreed to do things a little differently this year, so children **will not** be dressing up as their favourite book characters as they may have done in previous years. Instead, we are planning some new and creative ways to make the day truly special, centred around the joy of stories and reading. Watch this space for further information on the very exciting plans we have in store to celebrate this wonderful day!

STORYTIME AND HOT CHOCOLATE – MORTIMER ST. JOHN'S

All children who attend Mortimer St. John's are invited back to school on Thursday 5th March, from 5.00pm until 5.45pm, for story time and hot chocolate. The children will need to come back to school (to their classes) to hear stories, bringing their teddy bears and dressed in their pyjamas.

This is a free event, however, please reserve your child/ren's place on Classlist so we are able to ascertain the number of children attending. If you do not have access to Classlist, please email the school office to confirm your child/ren's attendance.

SECRET READER

Throughout the month of March, both schools will be welcoming 'Secret Readers' to share a favourite, age-appropriate story, chapter or extract with a class of their choice.

Parents/carers, governors and other members of our school community are warmly invited to take part – all kept top secret from the children of course! Our aim is to share our love of reading as a school community.

At **Mortimer St. John's**, 'Secret Readers' are invited to attend on a Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon at 2.50pm.

At **Mortimer St. Mary's**, 'Secret Readers' are invited to attend on a Friday afternoon either at 1.15pm or 3.10pm.

If this is something you would like to be involved with please contact Mrs Peters or Mrs Mallen in the school offices either by telephone (0118 9332242 or 0118 9332491) or email (officemsj@mortimerschools.org or officemsm@mortimerschools.org) who will make arrangements for you to be a 'Secret Reader' in a class of your choice!

NATIONAL YEAR OF READING

2026 is the National Year of Reading and The Mortimer Federation is going to Go All In! This year is about reconnecting reading with the things that already inspire us – from playlists and football matches to films, food and family time. Over the next year, we will be taking part in a vast array of different activities to fuel our children in learning about how joyous reading can be. Please see the attached information for further details.

CHILDREN'S MILK – YEARS 1 AND 2

Milk money for the second half of the spring term (Monday 23rd February to Friday 27th March) is £5.00 or 20pence per day. If you would like your child to have milk, please place the money in a named envelope and ask your child to give it to their class teacher.

Milk for the Foundation Stage children is provided free of charge.

COOK STARS COOKERY SESSIONS

On Friday 23rd January, Year 2 took part in a cooking workshop with Cook Stars organised by the PTFA. During the workshop they made delicious vegetable parcels filled with fresh vegetables, ham and cheese. It was a great chance for the children to practise the knife skills they had learnt during their DT lessons in the autumn term. They were all very excited to take home their pastry parcels and share them with their families.



"They said that I folded my pastry so well that I could go and work with them!" - Chester

"It looked like a rainbow with all of the different vegetables." - Abby

"I liked that we could chop the ingredients." - Violet

"I liked it because we can make it again at home and I am looking forward to eating it." - Cadan



Over the last few weeks Foundation Stage and Year 1 have also completed their cooking sessions. Foundation Stage made delicious Chinese Style rice and Year 1 made tasty stuffed peppers.

We are very grateful to the PTFA for organising this fantastic opportunity for all children across The Federation. What will be made in Key Stage 2?

SCIENCE AFTERNOON AT SHERFIELD SCHOOL

A small group of Year 6 children were invited to attend a science activity afternoon at Sherfield School. It was a fantastic afternoon with exciting and fascinating experiments. The children write:- On Friday 16th January, we were lucky enough to be invited to take part in many science experiments at Sherfield School. This included: maggot racing, using metals to change the colour of flames, dissecting a sheep's eyeball, making slime and making volcanoes erupt. We even got to set our teachers on fire!! We would all agree we had a great time.



ECO-WARRIOR PARTY PACK

Our Eco-Warriors are always working hard to make our schools more environmentally friendly. To help reduce the use of single use plastic, they have put together 2 Party Packs which are available to hire. The packs consist of 30 reusable plastic dishwasher safe plates, bowls, cups and 2 plastic jugs. If you would like to hire a pack, for a small charge of £5.00, simply email (officemsj@mortimerschools.org) with the date of your party and, if the date is available, we will reserve a pack for you. Collect the Party Pack from the school office at Mortimer St. John's and pay £5 (cash only) on collection. Please wash and return to school within two days. All funds raised will be used for our Eco-Warrior projects at both schools.



INTERNET SAFETY

Did your child receive a new tablet or device for Christmas? Do they have access to new games? If so, read below and access the links to support you to keep your children safe.

Internet Matters have really good, non-techie guides which you can follow as part of their ABC Checklist. ABC stands for:

- A – Activate parental controls
- B – Balance screen time
- C – Check and chat

Follow this link to find out more:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/abc-online-safety-checklist/>

Is your child an avid user of **Roblox**? Navigating parental controls on specific games can be tricky. Follow this link to support you to set Parental Controls in Roblox:

<https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/30428310121620-Parental-Controls-Overview>

Google has released new and updated Parental Control Information for **android phones**. Follow this link for more information:
<https://blog.google/products/android/android-16-december/>

FAMILY ADVICE – COMMUNICATION – EDUCATION (FACE)

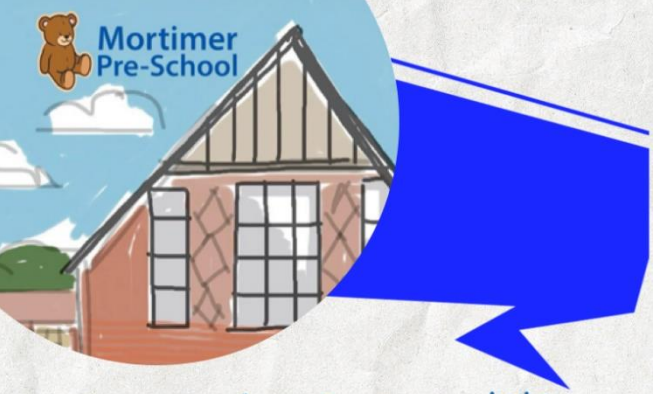
Please see attached the latest timetable from FACE. FACE provides practical, accessible and affordable support to parents/carers and professionals who support children and teenagers.

MINDFUL BRAIN – BIG FEELINGS, BRAVE MINDS

Please see attached information regarding a Big Feelings, Brave Minds family workshop from Mindful Brain. The workshop will take place on Friday 20th February in Englefield Village Hall.

JOB OPPORTUNITY - MORTIMER PRE SCHOOL

Mortimer Pre School are seeking practitioners to join their team, please see below for further information.



Pre school Practitioner
WANTED

MORTIMER PRE SCHOOL
ST JOHN'S HALL, WEST END ROAD

WE ARE LOOKING FOR:
EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR (LEVEL 3 QUALIFIED
OR HIGHER)
PERMANENT ROLE, TERM TIME ONLY
PART AND FULL TIME AVAILABLE

Please send your CV to chair@mortimerpreschool.org.uk and we will send you the application form

LOCAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Please see the attached information for local events and activities.