Mortimer St. John's CE Infant School
The Street, Mortimer Common,
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Tel: 0118 9332242
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THE MORTIMER FEDERATION OF ST. JOHN'S AND ST. MARY'S

www.mortimerschools.org

Mortimer St. Mary's CE Junior School
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11th September 2026

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

Newsletter

Welcome back to the new term, and a very warm welcome to our new children and families who have joined us in Foundation Stage and across The Federation. We hope that you are already beginning to feel part of the school community.

The children have returned to school with news of their holidays and a smile on their faces. It has been lovely to hear about their adventures over the summer, and see their enthusiasm for starting a new term.

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.

Monday 14th September to Friday 18th September – Year 6 Residential, Osmington Bay
Thursday 17th September – PTFA AGM Meeting – Horse and Groom – 7.30pm
Monday 21st September – Nasal Flu Immunisations – Mortimer St. John's
Thursday 1st October - Individual Photographs – Mortimer St. John's
Thursday 1st October – School Census Day
Friday 2nd October – Individual Photographs – Mortimer St. Mary's
Wednesday 14th October – Mortimer St. Mary's Harvest Eucharist Service – St. Mary's Church – 11.00am
Wednesday 14th October – Mortimer St. John's Harvest Service – St. John's Church – 2.00pm
Thursday 15th October – Year 4 Fieldwork Trip
Friday 16th October – PTFA Quiz Night – St. John's Village Hall – 7.30pm
Thursday 22nd October - End of Term
Friday 23rd October – INSET Day
Friday 23rd October to Monday 2nd November – Half Term
Tuesday 3rd November – Term Begins

WEST BERKSHIRE LSCP

If a parent or carer has any worries or concerns regarding safeguarding, they can talk to someone about those worries. Parents and carers are welcome and encouraged to talk to the designated member of staff in school in the first instance. Our designated members of staff are Mr Martin Tinsley (Executive Headteacher), across both school sites, Mrs Gemma Rook (Head of School) at Mortimer St. John's and Miss Jeni Pearson (Head of School) at Mortimer St. Mary's. If you would like to speak to someone independent of the school, you can contact the NSPCC via the following link: NSPCC: https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/dedicated-helplines/

SAFEGUARDING INFORMATION: THE AMAZING DIGITAL CIRCUS (12+)

Concerns have been raised regarding a series called The Amazing Digital Circus, which is currently available on streaming platforms including Netflix. At first glance, the programme may appear to be aimed at young children due to its colourful animation, cartoon-style characters and playful title. However, the content is intended for an older audience and includes themes and scenes that many parents may find unsuitable for primary-aged children. The show carries a 12 rating on Netflix and includes content warnings for violence, language and drug misuse. Some episodes contain scenes that could be upsetting for younger viewers, including depictions of injury, threatening situations and other disturbing imagery presented in an animated format.

Please be aware that this series is rated 12+ and is not suitable for younger viewers.

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NEW SCHOOLGRID ALLERGEN DECLARATION PROCESS

Please see the attached information from SchoolGrid regarding an important update to the allergen declaration process within SchoolGrid, which may affect your child.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Please could all parents/ carers ensure that sweets, chocolate or any product containing any type of nut (including Pesto, cereal bars, Nutella, Peanut Butter or a similar spread,) are NOT included within the children's packed lunches. Thank you.

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. Thank you in advance of this.

SCHOOL CENSUS DAY – THURSDAY 1ST OCTOBER

On Thursday 1st October it is School Census Day. Since the introduction of Universal Infant Free School Meals, Mortimer St. John's School is now liable for the cost of providing school dinners. Although we receive Government funding, this is dependent upon how many children have school dinners on Census Day.

To promote school meals on Census Day the menu will have a 'Space' theme and will be as follows:

Chicken Meteor-Bite Burger
Venus Veggie Burger (VG)
Spaceship Sandwich Bar
Big Bang Baked Potato Bar (V)

The more children that have a school dinner at Mortimer St. John's on Thursday 1st October, the better the School is financially. This money can then be used for resources for the school towards the teaching and learning of your children.

LOCAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Please see the attached information regarding local activities and events.

CHILDREN'S MILK – YEARS 1 AND 2

Milk money for the remainder of this half term (Monday 14th September to Thursday 22nd October) is £5.80 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.

MORTIMER ST. JOHN'S - PLAYGROUND/PLAY EQUIPMENT

Due to Health and Safety requirements, please may we remind all parents and carers that bicycles and scooters are not permitted to be ridden on the playground. Please ask your child/ren to dismount before entering the school premises.

The Adventure Playground is only for use during school times when a member of staff is present. Please do not allow your child/ren to play on this equipment when dropping off or picking up from school.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

As part of our Harvest celebrations, The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's are collecting donations for a West Berkshire Foodbank.

With the continuing rising costs and current climate, together with the approaching colder weather, an even greater demand is expected to be placed on foodbanks. If you are able to bring in an item to help the foodbank, they would be extremely grateful.

Please bring any donations into either school office between Monday 12th October and Thursday 15th October.

Please see the attached information for details of the most needed items. Thank you.

THE WILLINK SCHOOL OPEN EVENING

The Willink School will be holding an Open Evening on Thursday 17th September from 5.30pm until 8.00pm (Headteacher's presentation 6.00pm to 7.00pm). Please see the attached information for further details.

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PTFA NEWS

The PTFA will be holding their next PTFA meeting and the Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Thursday 17th September at 7.30pm at the Horse and Groom. Everyone is invited to attend, new energy and ideas are always welcome, so please join us for our first meeting of the year. There will be some formal AGM things to complete, then brain storming and planning for the year ahead. We look forward to seeing you there.



The PTFA are actively seeking a new chairperson. After two incredible years of leading the team of dedicated volunteers Helen are Louise are stepping down due to work commitments. Are you keen to help support raise funds for the Mortimer Federation and are ready to take on a new challenge, then please get in touch – contact details above.

SAVE THE DATE – The PTFA will be holding a Quiz Night on Friday 16th October at 7.30pm at St. John's Village Hall. Further details, including information regarding the purchase of tickets and donating raffle prizes, will be available on Classlist shortly.

YEAR 4 TRIP TO ROMAN SILCHESTER

On Monday 7th September, Year 4 had a fantastic day exploring the Roman ruins at Silchester! The children walked from school to Calleva Atrebatum using the maps they had drawn to help them find their way. Once there, they explored the impressive amphitheatre and Roman town walls, imagining what life might have been like for people living in the town nearly 2,000 years ago. The children shared some fantastic ideas about what the amphitheatre may have been used for, who might have attended events, how it was built and what they might have seen and heard there. They also thought about the Roman street layout, the forum, baths, homes, crafts and trade, and why the town was eventually abandoned. After a well-earned picnic lunch, everyone continued exploring before beginning their walk back to school. The day was a brilliant opportunity to bring Year 4's Roman learning to life, with lots of thoughtful questions, discussions and observations along the way.



Well done all of Year 4 for your enthusiasm, curiosity and excellent walking!

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.

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PARKING

Please may we ask all parents and carers to park considerately when collecting your child/ren from our schools. We understand that parking is limited, however please refrain from parking across driveways, parking in private roads, parking on double yellow lines, or parking on the zigzag lines at the front of the schools. This helps to ensure the safety of children, parents/carers and residents.

Staff Car Park at Mortimer St. Mary's

Parents and carers are not permitted to use the car park, unless you have prior agreement with the school. Only Blue Badge holders are permitted to come on site, and this must be with advance agreement. **This includes parents/carers dropping off or picking up from The Oaks.**

Parking spaces for people with disabilities are reserved for Blue Badge holders only, please do not park in one of these spaces if you are not in receipt of a Blue Badge.

Thank you for your co-operation.

VOLUNTEER HELPERS – CAN YOU HELP?

If you have any spare time and would like to help at either school, please speak to your child's Class Teacher or the school office staff. There are lots of things you can do from helping with cooking, gardening, listening to readers or being an extra adult on a school trip. We would be very grateful to hear from you.

Please note that all volunteers are required to complete a DBS Disclosure Application and Volunteers Checklist. For a copy of these forms and the guidance notes please email the school office.

All volunteers supporting PTFA events such as school discos are also required to complete a DBS application and a Volunteers Checklist.

If you are registered with the DBS Update Service, a separate application may not be necessary. In this instance please speak to a member of office staff.

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 school days. All funds raised will be used for our Eco-Warrior projects at both schools.



THE BIG FUTURE

For the first time, hundreds of thousands of children will be eligible to vote in the next general election at age 16, the biggest change to the franchise in half a century – yet just one in five children say politicians listen to them. That is why Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner for England, is carrying out a survey, 'The Big Future', to talk to a million children, to listen to them and to find out about what it is like to be a child today.

Dame de Souza is asking children about the changes they want to see in their communities, their biggest concerns, and their hopes for the future. More than anything, she would like to know what they think a good childhood should look like, now and in the future.

Please could you support your child/ren to complete the survey via the following link by Friday 23rd October 2026. Thank you.

http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigfuture