

From Mr Spens:

I'd like to start by wishing a very happy new year to all of our school community. We're excited about all that 2018 will bring and the children have made a brilliant start to the new term, even if coming back on the 2nd January did take a bit of getting used to! I've had the opportunity to show a number of visitors around the school this week and each of them has commented on the calm, focussed environment for learning and the politeness and enthusiasm of our children.

I'd like to say a big thank-you to everyone for the support in voting for the school reflective area development in Tesco at Thornbury. Voting finished on 1st January and we're waiting to find out how much money we have been awarded. On Monday next week, we're holding a planning meeting with a number of different members of our school community and an artist who will be helping to develop the project going forward. We'll share more information with you as the project unfolds.

Have a great weekend!

Attendance figures for Term 1 and 2 published by the Local Authority

I'd like to say a huge thank-you to parents for the support in improving our attendance so far this academic year. You may remember that as a leadership team, we set a target of **97%** attendance for this academic year. Last year, our attendance dropped to 95.8%, but the recent attendance figures published by South Gloucestershire Council, show our attendance at exactly **97.0%** which is a fantastic achievement.

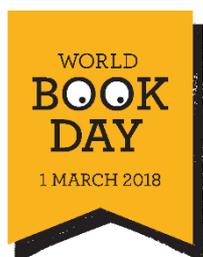
Exciting 'Fairy Tale' themed menu at St Helen's - Thursday 18th January

Next Thursday, our Reception class are holding their own Fairy Tale 'WOW day'. They wanted to share their excitement with the rest of the school and so have helped to plan a 'Fairy Tale' menu for everyone.

*Three Little Pigs (sausages) with Big Bad Wolf's puffy mash potato
or
Cinderella's Midnight Macaroni Cheese
Served with Rapunzel's sweetcorn and Jack's magic beans
Followed by Goldilock's creamy rice pudding or Runaway Gingerbread man*



Unfortunately, we were a bit too late to have the menu changed for Thursday on 'ParentPay', but if parents choose just the main meal or the vegetarian meal, then children will be able to have the right fairy tale feast! Salad bar and sandwich bar will be available as normal.



World Book Day – Thursday 1st March

As a school, we try hard to balance the number of dressing up days and in the last couple of years we've made the decision not to dress up for World Book Day.

But we want to give parents (and staff!) plenty of notice that this year we will be holding a 'Dress as your favourite book character day'. More details about the day will come nearer the time, but we hope that knowing in advance the children can start planning their costumes!

Year 6 looking forward to exciting 'STEM K-NEX Day' next week

Year 6 will be spending a whole day next week exploring STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). They will be taking part in a 'Knex Fairground Rides Computer Control Workshop' and will work in teams of three to design, build, programme and test Knex models. Keep a look out on our Twitter account (@sthelenspri) for photos from the day!

NSPCC 'Speak Out, Stay Safe' workshops for parents and children – Tuesday 27th February

We are delighted to be working once again with NSPCC to deliver assemblies to all our children and, in addition, workshops for Year 5 and 6 children. The aim of the 'Speak Out, Stay Safe' programme is to give the children the confidence, knowledge and understanding they need to stay safe from abuse. This is a highly successful national project and we will be writing to parents with more information shortly.

Free online safety workshop for parents and carers

As part of the NSPCC work, all parents, carers or family members are invited to a free online safety workshop at **9am on 27th February**. Our last session on online safety was in the evening and a number of parents who struggled to make it asked if we could run something at the beginning of the school day.

The hour-long workshop will help parents, carers and other adults understand their child's online world, build confidence to have those important conversations that can help keep children safe online and help you know where to go for help and advice.



We would really like to encourage as many parents as possible to attend this training.

Outdoor Learning – “Loose Parts Play”

As part of our plans to enhance outdoor learning and play, we would like to give the children more opportunities to invent, build things and have adventures! We will be introducing “Loose Parts Play”; this is where the children can get creative with all sorts of items which would otherwise be thrown away.



We need your help! If you, or your workplace, have any scrap items lying round, unwanted and destined for the tip, please bring them into school. In the future we hope to obtain a large shed or container for storage, but until then we can only collect things which can stay outside, probably under a tarpaulin, without getting spoilt. The sort of things we are looking for include rubber inner tubes, tyres, rope, wooden planks, guttering, pieces of drainpipe, logs, pallets, bin lids, buckets, cable drums, boats(!), crates and tarpaulins. Anything that might be fun to play with! Thank you.

Attendance update and attendance of the week!

Our school attendance this week is 95.3%; Sycamore class (Year 5) achieved 98.3% attendance.
Our school attendance last week was 96%; Ash class (Year 4) achieved 98.7%

Congratulations to our certificate winners last week and this week:

Cherry Class - Zack, Toby, Sebastian and Mia
Holly Class – Laura, Huw, Harry and Hudson
Beech Class – Lola, Harriet, Bouthayna and Sam
Oak Class – Will, Poppy, Alexander F and Alex W

Ash Class – Matthew, Josh L, Alice H and Alice M
Sycamore Class – Olivia, Cassy, Luca and Maisie
Elm Class – Peter C, Danny, Jackson and Peter H



Out of School Achievement:

- Harriet in Beech class has achieved the Level 1 swimming award and 5 metres distance swimming award.

Term dates:

Term 3: Tuesday 2nd January – Friday 9th February

Inset day: Monday 19th February

Term 4: Tuesday 20th February – Friday 23rd March

Term 5: Monday 9th April – Friday 25th May

Inset day: Monday 4th June

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL

REMINDER! – ADMISSION APPLICATIONS DEADLINE IS 15TH JANUARY

Children born between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2014 are due to start school in September 2018. The closing date for applications is **15 January 2018**. Please note applications received late may not get their preferred school even if they have a sibling already in attendance. For more information: www.southglos.gov.uk/admissions - 01454 868008.