



Dear Parents/Carers

Panto Trip – A message from FoSM

Just a quick message to say thank you. Firstly, to all the teachers and staff who managed to calmly navigate a very stressful situation again, arriving in the nick of time for the start of the performance! Thanks also go to all the helpers who were brilliant and enthusiastic!

The biggest thanks of all go to the wonderful children of Steam Mills Primary School. We had compliments again from the Manager of the Everyman, she said the children's behaviour and manners were exemplary and they are truly a credit to you all. They never let us down, even when the morning hadn't gone quite as smoothly as planned. We are so proud to represent them, they are the most incredible bunch of little people and to hear others compliment them proves that it's not just us being biased!



Term Dates 2023-24

Autumn Term
4th Sept —22nd December
Half Term: 30th Oct—3rd Nov

Spring term 2024
8th January—22nd March
Half Term: 12th—16th Feb

Summer Term 2024
8th April—22nd July
Half Term: 27th—31st May

INSET days:
22nd December, 24th May and 22nd July

Diary Dates

December

- 11th EYFS/KS1 Nativity Dress Rehearsal
- 12th EYFS/KS1 Nativity – 9:30am and 5:00pm
- 13th Pre-school Christmas Play Trip (details to follow)
- 14th Christmas Dinner
Christmas Jumper Day
- 15th FoSM Christmas Fayre
- 21st Christmas Party Day – non-school uniform.
Carol Service (details to follow)
- 22nd Inset Training Day
- 25th Christmas Holidays

January

- 8th Start of Term 3
- 24th Rags 2 Riches Collection
- 25th Reception and Year 5 NHS Health Screening
- 30th Reading Café

After School Club – Tuesday 12th December

With the EYFS and KS1 Nativity performance on Tuesday 12th December, we would like After School Club to finish at **4:30pm** on this day, if possible. 4:30pm is also the time that children need to be in school to prepare for the performance at 5:00pm. Please could any parents requiring After School Club beyond 4:30pm on that day, contact Miss Agg.

Cookery Club

Apologies for the cancellation of Cookery Club this week. We will continue the club next week on **Tuesday 12th December** and run the final session on **Tuesday 19th December**.

Nativity Performances – Tuesday 12th December

The tickets for the performances have now been issued and sent home with the children. There are still a few tickets available for the morning performance at 9:30am, please contact the school office if you would like any. A reminder that children will need to be back in school at **4:30pm** to prepare for the evening performance at 5:00pm and children attending after school club will be taken to class from there. Collection of children will be as follows: Pre-school from the library area, Class 1 from their usual outside area gate and Class 2 from the classroom.

FoSM will be selling raffle tickets, £1 a strip and Mince Pies, 50p each, at each performance.

Pre-school Christmas Show Trip – Weds 13th Dec

Pre-school will be attending their annual Christmas show at the Bacon Theatre, Cheltenham on Wednesday. Thank you to FoSM for part funding this lovely experience for the children. Please ensure your child is in at **9:00am** as the coach will be leaving shortly after. We hope the children have a lovely time and look forward to sharing some photos next week.

Christmas Lunch/Christmas Jumper Day – Thursday 14th December

A reminder to those that pay for school meals, to pay for a Roast main meal via ParentPay and pay the extra 96p fee for Christmas Lunch. The 96p extra fee also applies to those children who receive Universal Infant Free School Meals.

Thursday is also Christmas Jumper Day and the school will again support this Save the Children fundraiser. Please could children donate £1 and wear a Christmas Jumper instead of their usual school jumper, so that the rest of the usual school uniform is worn. Thank you.

Proposal to Federate – Soudley Primary School, Steam Mills Primary School & Woodside Primary School

We are holding the following online consultation drop-in sessions for parents/carers and any other interested parties to have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have and that have not been answered in this document to speak to governors and staff about the proposed federation.

Online Consultation Drop-In	
Weds 13 th Dec at 6:15 pm to 7pm	Thurs 14 th Dec at 5:15pm to 6pm

You are welcome to attend either of the above online sessions. If you do not have access to a device, please do not hesitate to contact the school. Please contact the school office to access the Teams meeting link if you would like to attend one of the sessions.



Star of the Week Certificates



Pre-school

Penny - for being kind and caring towards everyone around her.

Oak - for his expressive and imaginative ideas whilst role-playing.

Class 1

Robert & Calypso – for their hard work and progress with their independent writing.

Star readers:

Charlie, Harrison & Elliott

Class 2

Maddie - great understanding of 3D shapes, including cubes and cuboids.

Winnie - always having a great attitude to learning and super effort in maths.

Class 3

Isla D - for an excellent attitude and effort towards her learning.

Mollie - for always being a kind and helpful friend.

Class 4

Elsa - for creating a passive voice sentence independently.

Alyssa - for improving her positivity in class.

Christmas Fayre – Friday 15th December – 2:00pm-4:00pm

FoSM have asked for donations of cakes again this year for the school Fayre. Please could these be brought into school on **Wednesday 13th December**. When you arrive for the Fayre, you can collect your child/ren from their classroom and as soon as you are ready to leave, you may take your child/ren. Thank you.



Short Reports – Monday 18th December

There will be a short progress report for each child sent home on this day, please look out for these in your child's book bag.

Design a Christmas Jumper FOSM competition

FOSM are running a competition to design a Christmas jumper. Children can create their design in whatever medium they would like - pens, pencils, paints, glitter, etc. There is NO charge for this competition and there will be a prize for the winning entry. Please return entries to the class teacher by **Monday 18th December** for judging. Please write your child's name and Year group clearly on the front of their design.

Christmas Party Day/Non-school Uniform/Carol Service

Our last day of term for the children is **Thursday 21st December** and this will be a non-school uniform day (no donation as we are collecting on 14th December for Christmas Jumper Day – Save the Children). Each class will enjoy Christmas Party activities so children can wear party clothes, if they wish. There will be the annual Christmas Carol Service at **1:30pm** in the school hall, this usually finishes at approx. **2:15pm**, if you are attending, you are welcome to take your child/ren after the service, please collect from the hall or from their class.

Class Snippets - (Article 28- children have the right to an education. Article 29- Education should develop a child's talents, personalities and beliefs)

Pre-school – this week has been Christmas filled! We have been making Christmas trees and sprouts out of playdough, hole punching shapes into paper baubles that we are adding to a tree we have painted using stampers and rollers. The children have also done a variety of Christmas crafts, making their cards and calendars. We have been doing more play practise and the children are really excited to perform for their families next Tuesday!

Class 1 – what a week! Jam packed with lots of fun! We have been making our Christmas Fayre contributions, we have been to the panto (thank you very much FOSM) and we have been practising lots and lots for our nativity, ready for you next week. The children were very well behaved during our panto trip, especially Reception who have not been with the whole school before, so well done them! Reception sound this week is the long 'oo' sound for Cool Blue, found in words such, food and zoom. Our HFW's are that, this, them, then and said.

We also made fruit kebabs!!! To go along side our topic of looking after ourselves. It got very messy, but was lots of fun.

Class 2 – the year 1s have begun looking at 3D shapes this week. We discussed the fact that 2D shapes are flat and 3D shapes are solid. We have been repeating our stem sentences to help us to understand the differences between cubes and cuboids. They have all been working so hard this week! The year 2s have continued to persevere with their subtraction unit in maths and have been subtracting tens and ones from lots of two-digit numbers. Class 2 have also been working hard this week to write and perform their own poetry. We modelled a poem together and then the children chose their own verbs and feelings to create an individual poem. Some children were brave enough to read theirs to the whole class!

Class 3 have had a fantastic week! At swimming, the children have all progressed brilliantly and it is great to see their confidence grow in the water and swimming technique. The children really enjoyed the pantomime on Wednesday and they represented the school incredibly well. On

Wednesday afternoon, we made items to sell at the Christmas fayre next week and the children worked together as a great team to produce Magic Santa pens and reindeer food. Their cooperation skills and kindness to others made me so proud! We have also written some brilliant wanted posters this week, focusing on figurative language.

Class 4 - the children really enjoyed the pantomime this week so a big THANK YOU to FoSM for organising this trip. On Monday, the children really impressed Mrs Cotterell, our Science Lead from Woodside Primary with their investigation into crater sizes: the children tested either different spherical objects, or a spherical object from different heights and dropped them to see the size of the crater formed. They were then able to make conclusions on what had affected the crater size and use scientific vocabulary to explain their thinking.

Forest Foodbank – Christmas Opening Hours

During the Christmas week the only centre that will be open will be Cinderford on the 28th December at the Forest Community church 1-3pm. It doesn't matter which centre a voucher has been issued to, people can still collect their food from Cinderford. Lydney and Coleford distribution centres will be closed on 26th and 27th December.

To get help look on our website <https://theforest.foodbank.org.uk/get-help/>

New Year offer from Prostars



The poster is blue with white snowflake patterns. At the top, it features the Prostars logo on either side of the title 'Prostars HAF Holiday Club'. Below the title, it states: 'Prostars are delighted to announce that our Winter Holiday Kids Club Camps are returning. FREE HAF places will be on offer for children who receive benefit related free school meals, fully funded by Gloucester County Council and Hereford County Council.' The central text reads 'We are delivering at:' followed by six school names with red location pin icons: St White's Primary School, Cinderford; Ashfield Park Primary School, ROW; Primrose Hill Academy, Lydney; Dene Magna School, Mitcheldean; Shurdington C of E Primary; and Queen Margaret Primary, Tewkesbury. Below this, it says 'Bookings are LIVE!' and provides three booking links: Tewkesbury (https://gloucestershirehaf.com/tewkesbury-haf/children-young-people-activities-tewkesbury-haf/), Forest of Dean (https://gloucestershirehaf.com/forest-of-dean-haf/), and Herefordshire (https://eequ.org/experience/5615). The dates are 'Tuesday 2nd - Friday 5th January 2024'. A note says 'Kids club days involve a range of fun sport & active games alongside craft activities. Snacks, lunch and drink options will be provided during the day but children are welcome to bring their own.' At the bottom, there are logos for Gloucestershire HAF (holiday activities & food) and 'HERE FOR HEREFORDSHIRE HOLIDAYS'.

Pre-school Charge

We are having to increase the cost per hour of the Pre-school setting to £5.50 per hour for all non-funded hours from **January 2024**. This is in-line with Gloucestershire County and the Steam Mills/Woodside Federation. We hope that you find this increase still offers excellent value for money and reflects the high level of provision that the school provides.

Children's Fund – Free School Meal Holiday Scheme

Applications for holiday FSM vouchers for December 2023 winter holiday will be open from midday 28 November until midday on 12 December. Voucher emails will be sent from week commencing 18 December. Please check junk/spam folders during this period as sometimes the vouchers end up there. If parents have not received their vouchers by 20 December, please email childrensfund@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

This winter holiday period, Gloucestershire County Council will provide families in receipt of Free School Meals, who sign up to this offer, with vouchers to assist with food costs during the school holidays. The vouchers are funded through grant funding we have received, and they are separate to that of term time free school meals.

The scheme is for children in reception to year 11 who receive Pupil Premium (benefits-related) free school meals and attend a school in Gloucestershire. **We are unable to consider college and sixth form students, nor children who receive infant free school meals (available to all children from reception to year 2) - they are not eligible for this scheme.**

Families who have signed up to the scheme or who are already registered will receive a total of £15 per child. To find out more about the scheme and to apply, parents can visit our [FAQs | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

Families who have signed up previously do not need to re-register for December 2023 holiday vouchers- they will already have been included. Families that have previously signed up will need to contact us with any changes to their circumstances (e.g. if the number of children eligible increases or decreases). To ensure we reach all those who are eligible, we are encouraging parents that have not previously signed up, to sign up as soon as they can.

Please note we check eligibility for the scheme by cross-referencing with the term-time free school meal register. Parents can register by visiting the [apply for free school meals](#) page.

Using vouchers – vouchers need to be used will only be awarded once the parent has registered for the scheme and cannot be backdated. Vouchers are valid for 6 months, although should be used in the holiday period in which they are awarded. If vouchers are not claimed and have expired, they cannot be re-issued. Vouchers not received should be queried via email to childrensfund@gloucestershire.gov.uk by the end of the holiday period.

For any parents wishing to update details of an existing application, please email childrensfund@gloucestershire.gov.uk so they can update the account, as details are not automatically updated.

As always, please do let us know if you have any questions or queries. We do also encourage parents/carers to let us know if they have any suggestions of events or activities that you would like to see in school.

Our Safeguarding, Behaviour, Complaints and other policies are available on our school website