



# RAF Benson Community Primary School



## Newsletter

**Monday 22 November 2024**

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to a new half term - This one is the most exciting and magical as we head towards the end of term and to Christmas! We hope that you are all keeping warm and cosy in this very cold weather we currently have!

In our last newsletter, I mentioned that we had recruited to cover the vacancy in the office, and they would have started last week. However, I am sad to report that the person we appointed withdrew during the half term holiday. We are now in the recruitment phase again and I will keep you updated however your patience and understanding will be appreciated as we have Mrs Davies and Mrs Laidlaw sharing the office responsibilities ensuring that your questions and queries are answered. Please bear with us in getting things out to you or sorting out some crinkles that appear in the other web services that we use. We know some things recently have been a little short on notice and we truly apologise for that. Please do see the dates below for forthcoming events and activities.

You may also see a familiar face in Year 2 as we go forward through this year. We have recruited Mrs Nayacacalou (AKA Mrs Naya) to the post of TA in Year 2. Mrs Clarke will be moving to Year 1 but still be with Year 2 some afternoons. Thank you for making Mrs Naya welcome in her new role of TA!

Our school was represented in a number of ways during the period of Remembrance this year and all children were fabulous ambassadors. From the stunning service at Dorchester Abbey to reading out prayers at the Station act of remembrance as well as donning school uniform on a Sunday to join our wider community in remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice our children represented us well. Thank you and well done to them all.

Thank you for supporting our first parents evening event of this year. I know that the staff really appreciated being able to speak with you about how well your child has settled into a new class with a new teacher. Staff feel that this appointment at this part of the year is key in informing you of anything that they have spotted in terms of your child's education or welfare so that things can be put in place early so they have a greater chance of meeting or exceeding the end of year objectives. Staff really do value the time they have to speak with you, especially with those parents who we don't see very often as children walk to and from school independently. Our next parents evening is scheduled for Wednesday 12 March 2025 however, if you have any concerns regarding your child or their progress, please contact the class teacher who will be very happy to speak with you.

Here are a few dates of upcoming events and some notices for you.

### Dates and Events

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December – Chocolate Non-uniform Day** – Children to come in non-uniform in return for a bar of chocolate for the chocolate tombola – one of the most popular stalls at our Christmas fair! Thank you in advance for your donations.

**Wednesday 4 December - Christmas Fair** – We are looking forward to welcoming our community to this event in school where we will have the school choir singing carols, there will also be class stalls with high quality seasonal products, festive food, chocolate tombola, Christmas

games and hopefully (with help from some wonderful volunteers) a Santa's grotto! If you can help us pull this magical event together, please do email the school office.

**Monday 9 December – Festive Wreath Making** – Come and join us at 5pm – 6:30pm in making festive wreaths in a fabulous atmosphere with some bubbles and snacks. The session will cost £15 per person and we ask that this is in cash brought on the night. To secure your place, please book using the link below. Sadly, we are not able to accommodate children on this occasion.

Book your place here - <https://forms.gle/ami2Mjtqed2sH4LaA>

**Thursday 12 December – KS1 Nativity** – We are excited to say that we will be holding our nativity on 12 December in the Station Church, and this will involve all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

We are asking parents to select a performance to attend from either 10am or 5pm on this day and allocate **only two places per family**. After a conversation with the team reflecting on last year, we have made the decision to send out tickets this event. There will be **two** tickets per family and these will be issued to you in due course. This is so that we can accommodate everyone who would like to attend. If there are siblings, please do bring them and we ask that they either sit on the floor/laps of parents where they can see or stand at the back.

For the later performance, we keep the children in school at the end of the day, provide them with some snacks to keep their energy levels up and take them to the church for you to collect from the church at 5:45pm. More information will come out closer the time but please save this date in your diary!

**Friday 13 December - Christmas Jumper Day** – No money. No donations. Just for fun!

**Friday 13 December – Coffee Morning** - Our next coffee morning for this term will be on Friday 13 December. Come and join us and some of the community team in the school Wessex Room for a hot drink and a biscuit or two from 9am to 10am. Little ones are very welcome too!

**Wednesday 18 December – School Christmas Dinner** – Further to our app notifications, all orders should be in.

**Friday 20 December - Carols around the tree** – come and join us at 2pm where we will be singing carols and festive songs to finish the term in a very Christmassy way. Classes will be singing their own songs and, to give you some advanced notice, 'some' audience participation will be required....

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January** – Spring term starts – children return back to school at 8:45

## Notices

**Parent Helpers** – Thank you to those parents who have signed up to help! We are looking forward to having you as part of our volunteer team! If anyone else is interested in supporting activities in school, please send an email to the school office. We need your help!

**Children in Need** – A great day with school being filled with sport and superheroes! Thank you all so much for your generous donations. Whilst we didn't meet the £300 target, we raised £192 for this very important and worthy cause and as one supermarket has as its motto, 'every little helps!'. Thank you.

**School Facebook Page** – Please do keep an eye on the school Facebook page as we post whole school events and activities that the children have been up to during the term – why not give the page a 'Like' too! <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063451190152>

**School Closure for Snow/bad weather** – We all didn't expect the covering of snow that we woke up to this week! As a reminder the event of a school closure, we will notify you by via school app and via a pop-up on our website. The decision to close the school is not one that is taken lightly but a number of factors are taken into consideration such as site safety and whether we have enough adults to safely open the school Please note that a lot of staff have to travel in via car and their safety in travelling to/from is important. If school does have to close, teachers will put up activities on their class webpage for the children to do after they have had fun in the snow and had some warming hot chocolate! Please be assured we rarely close the school given the dedication of staff wanting to attend but please be mindful that this may be the case in adverse weather. Thank you for your understanding.

**Leave Requests** – Just as a reminder from our Attendance policy, we do not authorise holiday during term time unless it meets out exceptional circumstances as laid out in our school policy (<https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/rafbenson/UploadedDocument/efb3af0d-7bc3-48b4-8791-ac9a39c0d75a/attendance-policy-sept-2024.pdf>). If you are taking your child on holiday for 10 sessions (5 days) or more, the Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice Fine. The following is taken from the national document mentioned in the policy from the Local Authority: Working together to Improve Attendance:

*The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).*

The warning of this action was sent at the start of this year in September and you can find it at the link below for your reference. Please note, the school does not receive any money from the fine that the Local Authority processes. <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/rafbenson/UploadedDocument/ecc746fb-3316-4b79-a6f1-a706331d9071/penalty-notice-warning-letter-sept-2024.pdf>

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

**Christmas Cards for classes** – It is that time of year where we love to see cards coming into school for the children and being posted into our special Christmas post box to be distributed during the week by our little helpers. Due to GDPR, we are unable to issue class lists however please put the child's first name and class and we'll do our best to ensure that it arrives safely.

I think that is all for this month – we are now on the home straight to the magical time of year and we are all getting very excited!

Hope you are all staying warm and well and we all look forward to you joining us for some of our festive activities over the coming weeks.

Best wishes

*Steph Fawdry*

Steph Fawdry  
Headteacher