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Head Teacher Mrs E Sleightholme

November Newsletter from Winterbourne Valley First School

Dear Parents and Carers

As November draws to a close, I am delighted to share some of the wonderful activities our children have enjoyed throughout the term.

Tag Rugby Festival Fun



Our participation in the recent Tag Rugby Festival was a fantastic opportunity for our Silver Birch pupils to develop essential skills such as teamwork, resilience and sportsmanship. Held on 17th November at Dorchester Rugby Club, the event offered a wonderful platform for the children to challenge themselves and grow in confidence. Watching them work together and celebrate their achievements was truly heart-warming. The festival not only promoted physical fitness but also nurtured a strong sense of camaraderie, reinforcing the importance of collaboration both on and off the field.

Art at the Station

As part of the Art at the Station project, Silver Birch painted local landmarks with guidance from Lizzie from Art in Poundbury, Annie from Dorset Arts Society and Charlotte Beare, parent of Elizabeth and Robbie along with a visiting artist. Their expertise and support helped the children explore new techniques, express their creativity and celebrate the local area's rich history. It was wonderful to see the children's enthusiasm as they brought their ideas to life and we are extremely grateful to the artists for inspiring and supporting our young creatives. We look forward to seeing the art in situ on platform 1 at Dorchester South Railway station.

Historical Adventures



Beech Class enjoyed an enriching visit to Shire Hall on Thursday, where they learned about the Great Fire of Dorchester as part of their Great Fire of London topic. The trip helped bring their learning to life, giving the children the chance to explore real historical events and deepen their understanding. The stories and activities sparked plenty of curiosity and conversation, helping the children make meaningful links between the past and the world around them.

Supporting Children in Need

We are also very proud of our fundraising efforts for Children in Need, which reflect our commitment to empathy and community support. The children looked great in their spots and we held a very successful cake sale and thanks to the generosity of our children, parents and staff, we raised an impressive £100. It is heartening to see our children recognise the value of giving back and it helped reinforce the importance of compassion and social responsibility.

Coffee and Cake Event

A big thank you to all the parents who joined me for our Coffee and Cake event on Thursday. It was a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and discuss ways to improve communication between home and school.

During the session, we explored Arbor, our Management Information System (MIS), which will be rolled out to parents in the new year. Arbor will make it easier for parents to stay informed about their child's attendance and school activities, as well as book and pay for extended schools, trips and clubs.

We also introduced The Engagement Platform (TEP), a survey tool that allows parents to share their views on the school. This is a valuable opportunity to tell us what we do well and where we can improve, helping us shape an even better educational experience for our children. The survey is completely anonymous and participation is optional. Details on how to access the survey will be sent next week when the census window opens.

We look forward to welcoming parents to our next Coffee and Cake event, continuing these conversations and strengthening our school community.

Promoting Respect and Kindness

Odd Socks Day will take place on Wednesday 3rd December.

This week and next, we are taking part in anti-bullying lessons, activities and assemblies to reinforce our commitment to a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all our children. Throughout these sessions, we have been promoting our school values of **respect, kindness and courage**.

We believe that addressing bullying is a shared responsibility and we encourage families to reflect on these themes at home. By working together, we can ensure every child at Winterbourne Valley First School feels safe, valued and confident to be themselves.

A highlight of our activities will be Odd Socks Day, where pupils are invited to wear mismatched socks to celebrate individuality and uniqueness. We are very much looking forward to seeing some fun combinations on Wednesday 3rd December!

PTFA

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the PTFA for their hard work and continued support this term. The Gingerbread Making Workshop and the Wreath Making Workshop were both a great success and we are so grateful for the time and creativity that went into organising them.

We are now looking forward to the Christmas Film Afternoon for Preschool and Reception, as well as the Christmas Film Night for Year 1 to Year 4 on Thursday 4th December. The PTFA will also be raising funds by serving refreshments at our Nativity performances.



Additionally, the PTFA have organised a Christmas raffle! A flyer with all the details will be attached, and we encourage everyone to take part for a chance to win some festive prizes. We are extremely appreciative of the PTFA's ongoing efforts to support our school community and make these special events possible.

Dates for our Festive Celebrations

As the festive season approaches, we are delighted to share our upcoming Christmas events. These occasions provide a wonderful opportunity for our school community to come together and celebrate.

- **PTFA Christmas Film Afternoon for Blossom and Cherry:** Thursday 4th December, 2:15–3:00pm.
- **PTFA Christmas Film Night for Beech and Silver Birch:** Thursday 4th December, 5:45–6:30pm.
- **Christmas Experience at St Martin's Church:** Children from Reception to Year 4 will enjoy this special visit on Friday 5th December (more information to follow).
- **Nativity Play:** Join us for one of our heart-warming performances on Tuesday 9th December at 9:30am, or Wednesday 10th December at 9:30am or 5:30pm.
- **Christmas Jumper Day:** Wear your favourite festive jumper and support *Save the Children* on Thursday 11th December.
- **Silver Birch Christmas Carol Concert:** St Mary's Church, Winterbourne Abbas, Thursday 11th December at 6:00pm.
- **School Christmas Dinner:** Wednesday 17th December. Parent helpers welcome to help serve. Please let the office know if you are able to help.

Thank you for your support. Here's to a joyful December filled with learning, laughter and festive fun!

Best wishes,

Mrs Sleightholme