



DATES

School Term begins
6th January

Y6 Evacuee Day
9th January

Y5 Sleeping with Sharks
Parent Information
16th January

Learning Webs sent home
16th January

SEND/Inclusion Parent Meeting
27th January

PTFA Quiz
30th January
7.00pm

Dear Parents and Carers

A very happy new year to all of our families. I hope the two week break has been a chance to refresh and spend time celebrating and spending quality times with friends and families. I've already had many children telling me all about their fantastic presents!

A new term acts a great opportunity to offer a few reminders about some new routines or some resets in expectations. In the weeks before Christmas I wrote to give you full details and the reasons why we are altering some things, so just a quick reminder below.

- Year 4 and Year 5 children will now be dismissed from the playground at the end of the day. Any parent that wants to change the end of the day collection arrangements should contact their child's teacher or school office.
- PE kit - white t shirt, with black shorts or black jogging/tracksuit bottoms or leggings and trainers. School jumpers should be worn if the children are cold.
- Mobile Phones/Smart Watches– only year 6 children can bring phones to school and parents must sign our contracts for this to happen. No Smart Watches are permitted for any child.

We've got other things to look forward to, with Year 5 children having the opportunity of an overnight stay at Plymouth Aquarium, when the Sleep with Sharks. Parents will receive an invite to a recording with all information on January 16th.

Jamie Sullivan
Head of School

School Champions

The following children received school awards in reading, kindness, maths and sustainability during the last month:

Writing: Kacper (5J), Ocean (4T)

Kindness: Freddie (5B), River (3B)

Maths: Alex (6P), Sarah (5G)

Sustainability: Betty (6B)



Year 4 Production

In the last week of term our wonderful and talented children in Year 4 treated to two brilliant shows. Each time a year group does a show, we ask the children what part they want to have in it. I was delighted that so many children wanted a speaking part and grateful to the teachers for adding in extra lines or splitting parts to ensure that all children could have their moment on stage. The singing and acting were superb and it's was made all the more spectacular by the amazing costumes that parents helped to provide. What a great way it was to end the term!



Young Writers

We were delighted to partner up with Sylvania Stores community group and work with one of their community educators, Pete the Poet. Aspiring writers and illustrators from year 6, joined a lunchtime club with Pete the Poet throughout December. The aim was to create and publish their own big books fit for a younger audience. The project came to a magical conclusion when the children shared their books and read them to the pre-school children at Sylvania Stores during a story time session.



Christmas Choir

The Federation Choir did a fantastic job of spreading joy and happiness in the community during a recent visit to two local nursing homes. The visit was very much enjoyed by the children and the residents. In this moment, we were able to take a little happiness from the best gift of all and rest easy knowing that giving time and a warm smile to others, really can make all the difference. The Junior Choir went on to spread more cheer at the dementia clinic and were rewarded for their efforts with a treat. Thank you to all those that took part.



Parent Mental Health Day

This month, we are marking **Parent Mental Health Day**, a valuable reminder that supporting children begins with looking after ourselves. Parenting can be joyful, but it can also be challenging, especially during busy times of the year. Taking even small moments to pause, breathe, and reflect can make a real difference to your wellbeing and your ability to support your child.

The theme this year focuses on strengthening family connections and recognising the importance of self-care. For helpful tips, resources and stories, please visit:

<https://stem4.org.uk/pmhd/>

By prioritising our own mental health, we help create a calmer, more positive environment for our children to thrive.

Family Lives Newsletter

Our brilliant Family Support Worker, Jo McCarthy has asked me to share this link to sign up for a monthly newsletter to support all of our families. There is a huge amount of advice covering so many challenges facing families.

https://www.familylives.org.uk/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=22125733867&gbraid=0AAAAA-m-4i1UJy0ziVlurq0qW67z7q75L&qclid=Cj0KCQiAqP_JBhD-ARIsANpEMxwTX7CsQaWT0X7jeqQfwYgj-GOaY7akBn9HZzegyNCxJuxe3BWS_EaAgsLEALw_wcB



We enjoyed taking part in Christmas Jumper Day to support the charity Save the Children this year. As always we had some festive jumpers, which were also worn on Christmas Dinner Day and the Winter Festival Event. We were able to offer second hand jumpers once again this year and so if your child has grown out of theirs, please feel free to donate yours. We'll store them away for next year. Just drop them in at reception.

Around the Junior School



So many events and learning experiences took place across the school in December. Here is just a small sample of some of the best bits!



School Council News

Something a little different for our back page this time. Our School Council have been interviewing 2 very important members of our Federation.



Spotlight on our School Caretakers

During a recent School Council meeting, we were delighted to welcome our school caretakers, Mr Hawkins and Mr Perry, to talk to us about their important roles at Stoke Hill. Although we see them around school every day, we thought it would be interesting to learn more about the work they do behind the scenes.

Mr Perry has been part of Stoke Hill for around a year, while Mr Hawkins has been here slightly longer. Before joining us, Mr Perry worked in ATM maintenance, but he shared that he has always enjoyed fixing and making things—skills he developed working alongside his dad when he was younger.

He explained that no two days are ever the same. Their tasks range from painting, fixing and making equipment, to hedge trimming, marking out the sports day track, and even repairing the toilets. One of the most unusual jobs Mr Perry has tackled was transforming the old Green Team shed into an office—complete with cutting out a hole and installing a brand new window!

A key part of their role is ensuring that both school sites remain safe. This includes checking the emergency lighting, monitoring the water supply, and inspecting the perimeter boundaries. Their working day lasts eight hours, with just a short half-hour break, but both caretakers enjoy spending time outdoors. The school field is their favourite space, and they shared an interesting fact with us: grass actually grows better when it's cut in more than one direction! Riding the lawnmower is another part of the job they both really enjoy.

Mr Hawkins and Mr Perry take great pride in keeping our school looking its best. They reminded us that we can help too—by putting rubbish in the correct bins and avoiding muddy areas whenever possible.

Some pupils were curious about whether more children might be able to help the caretakers during break times. They said they would love to involve more children, but it would need to be carefully managed to ensure fairness and safety.

Both caretakers told us how much they enjoy their roles at Stoke Hill and how proud they are to make a positive difference to our learning and school life.

The school council would like to thank Mr Perry and Mr Hawkins for all they do and for sharing their love of the job with us..