



Dear Families

Everybody sings "You'd better watch out, you'd better not cry, you'd better not pout, I'm telling you why, Santa Claus is coming to town!"

How many of you have heard your parents say, "You better be good, Santa is watching"? Why do we have to be good for Santa - if we are good he will bring us presents! What happens if we are on Santa's naughty list? Coal, rocks and sticks in our stockings!

John the Baptist is a lot like our parents. He keeps telling us to be good because Jesus, not Santa, is coming. Jesus will not be bringing us toys; he will be bringing us something much better that will make our lives even happier than toys. Jesus brings justice and peace.

How great would it be to live in a world where everyone is treated fairly, took care of each other, got along and felt loved? Take a minute to try to imagine life like that. Unlike being good for Santa who brings things for us on one day, being good in preparation for Jesus helps us become better friends with Jesus and being a friend with Jesus stays with us forever. Just as there is a down side to not being good for Santa there is also a downside to not being friends with Jesus. It means having a life without love, peace and fairness which doesn't sound like a very happy life to me.

So let's listen to John the Baptist, our parents, our teachers, and everyone else and be good so Jesus can come into our lives and be our friend forever.

With love and prayers, see you on Sunday – Fr Marcin

Advent



As you can imagine, there is much excitement at St Swithun's Primary school in anticipation of Christmas. Advent is spent preparing for Jesus' birth in all sorts of ways.

The tree is decorated in the hall. The youngest children are off to the panto as well as preparing their nativity. The infant children are busy getting into role as sheep, angels, wise men, the inn keeper, etc., practising their lines, learning the songs and, hopefully, learning to stand and face the audience on the stage. I'm sure that all brings back memories . . .

Our choir, as you can see from the photograph, enjoyed singing at Faith in Football's Christmas lunch for the homeless at Fratton Park.

The children learn that Advent is a special time of preparation and think about how they can improve their own lives. The older children learn about John the Baptist; one of our special award winners last week was Holly who wrote a fantastic piece about helping the homeless, inspired by John saying, 'Anyone with two shirts should share one with someone who doesn't have one and do the same with food.'

We do try to ensure the children enjoy the preparation for Christmas but also remain very much in touch with its true meaning. If you can, please join us for our carol service in the church at 1.45 pm on Tuesday 17 December.



Class Assembly

These are held in the School Hall every Wednesday afternoon. Please join us for your child's class assembly, which begins at 3.10 pm for which you may arrive at the School Office from 3 pm.

Wednesday Date	Class
11 th December	Leopards
8 th January 2020	Panthers
15 th January 2020	Ladybirds
22 nd January 2020	Gorillas
29 th January 2020	Starfish
5 th February 2020	Kangaroos
12 th February 2020	Wolves

These dates are provisional subject to change/addition. Please check the calendar on the school website for the latest information.

www.stswithuncatholicprimaryschool.co.uk

Class Liturgy

These will be held in class. Please join us at 9.15 am for your child's class liturgy.

Wednesday Date	Class
15 th January 2020	Starfish
5 th February 2020	Seahorses
12 th February 2020	Bumblebees
11 th March 2020	Ladybirds
18 th March 2020	Dolphins

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St Vincent de Paul Society Visit

On Monday, Jo and Diane came in to visit our Mini Vinnies. Jo and Diane are part of the St Vincent de Paul group at St Swithun's Church. They have asked the Mini Vinnies to help them decorate some paper bags for the homeless, which will be given to them at their Christmas dinner at the church. We really enjoyed making them!

May, Wolves

Festive Choir Events

Homeless Lunch



On the 2nd December, some of Key Stage 2 choir members went to sing for the homeless in Fratton Park organised by Faith in Football. This is an annual event which we have attended for many years. The children really enjoy attending this event as it gives them an opportunity to sing to those less fortunate than themselves. This is especially relevant this year as Years 5 & 6 have been focussing on homelessness in their RE lessons.

Lord Mayor's Coffee Morning & Carols



Then on 5th December, we sang for the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and some elderly people, who were having tea and coffee. This was in the Guildhall; we got to look at the Council Room and some of us even sat in the Lord Mayor's chair.

We are very grateful to Mrs Bacon and our adult helpers for taking us on these trips. We really enjoy singing for everyone.

Holly & Joan

What a fantastic performance from the children of the St Swithun's Choir this morning and what an amazing group of pupils. It was such a pleasure to meet them and to enable



them to have the experience of meeting the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress and to participate in the fundraising event.

The children's singing was so beautiful and many of the guests at the event were seen to be dabbing their eyes as they were moved by the uplifting and joyful voices of your pupils. The Lord Mayor has particularly asked me to tell the children how much he enjoyed listening to them and how impressed he was by their impeccable behaviour - they were such wonderful ambassadors for their school.

His thanks go also to the staff team who run the choir activity and who took the time today to bring the children to the Guildhall. I hope you enjoyed the event and managed to get back in time for lunch.

Best wishes and kind regards,
Tracy, Secretary to the Lord Mayor's Appeal

IBM Robot Day



On the 25th November, year 6 had a visit from IBM. IBM is a company that controls lots of electronics like computers. They came in to teach and show us how to control and make a robot. First, we got into our teams; we had two IBM members in each group to help and explain things to us. We all had different roles: software engineer, designing engineer, commercial manager, technical manager, marketer and the designer. Every single job was very important. Next we had to decide a team name and what we would call our robot.

We worked hard on our tasks, trying to make our robots travel through a maze. When time was up, everybody watched how successful the robots were travelling across the maze. All the groups then presented to everyone, saying our robot name and why we chose it. Lastly,

we had the robot race! It took place in the hall and we raced four teams at a time with the winning four competing in the final race. The Positive Protons won with their robot, Wall-E.

We were given prizes for winning different categories; everybody received a prize. We all really enjoyed it, as we all thought it was really fun and would like to thank everyone from IBM who helped us.

By Kathryn and Sasha

Congratulations!

Isla who achieved a Merit in her Grade 1 clarinet exam and to...

Ting, Year 6, who achieved a distinction for her music grade 5 theory exam and a distinction for her flute grade 4.

An outstanding achievement for both children, well done!

White Gate Closure

With effect from Monday 9th December, the white gate between the pre-school and main school areas will be locked at 3.45 pm. This is to secure the whole site from unauthorised persons who are using the white gate as a thoroughfare between the sports centre and St Simon's Road. **All** families who are collecting children from after school care or an after school club will need to use the main school entrance in Taswell Road and park in the sports centre; remember Mr Olive has negotiated a 15 minute drop off/pick up period with BHLive.

Extended Day Discounts

Now that the new online booking system is running successfully, those families who would normally receive either a sibling or whole termly booking discount, will need to contact the school office to get the discount applied manually to the child's account.



Office News...



Letters sent home this fortnight:

- Year R & Sunbeams Nativity Letter
- Section 48 Report
- Children's Christmas Cards
- PGL 2020 (current Year 5's)
- Y5/6 Marwell Zoo trip
- Y1/2 Zoolab Visit
- Language Ambassadors Christmas Fair
- Create Club for Spring term
- Premier Sport for Spring term

All letters are now sent via email. If you have reason to receive a paper copy, please let the School Office know.

FOSSS Facebook Page

If you are on Facebook, **please** join the Friends of St Swithun's School Parents' Page (Southsea). FOSSS use this page to publicise their events, such as the two discos and the upcoming Christmas Fayre.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/501739426581565/?fref=nf>

By following this page you won't miss out on any FOSSS events.

Vacancies

We have a vacancy for a midday assistant to work in our Key Stage 2 playground from 12.15 pm – 1.15 pm, Monday – Friday, to start on Monday 6th January 2020.

If you are interested, please ask in the office for an application form.

Nasal Flu Vaccinations

The School Nursing Service has advised us of some dates for the Flu Mop Up sessions that parents can bring their children to if they were absent on the day of the flu session at school, if they were contraindicated (unwell) at the session and unable to receive on the day or if the child refused.

- Tuesday 10th December 3 pm - 4.30 pm @ Paulsgrove Family Hub, Cheltenham Road, PO6 3PL
- Monday 16th December 3 pm - 4.30 pm @ Buckland Family Hub, Turner Road, PO1 4PN

INSET Days

Please note that the dates on the Portsmouth City Council website **DO NOT** include our INSET days. These can be found here in our newsletters and on our website.

- 24th February 2020
- 29th June 2020

If you need childcare for these days, you can now book online via SCOPAY.COM, and select INSET DAY CARE.



School Holidays Childcare

Care is available for these dates:

- 17th Feb – 21st February 2020
- 6th April – 17th April 2020
- (Not available Friday 10th or Monday 13th April 2020)
- 26th – 29th May 2020
- N.B. No holiday care is available on 2nd or 3rd January 2020

Please email your requirements to sunbeams@st-swithuns.portsmouth.sch.uk