



Stoke Mandeville Combined School

Caring, Inspiring and Achieving Together

Weekly Update Friday 14th January

Playground Design Competition

Dear Parents

We have been asked by the Parish Council to design a new play area with equipment for the park at Eskdale Road.

This is being run as a competition.

There will be two competitions: one for KS1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) and one for KS2 (Years 3-6).

Please could the children use an A3 piece of paper to draw their ideas on and include a simple guide describing the equipment. For younger children, the drawings will be sufficient but if children want to add a description they can. If you do not have A3 paper at home then please ask your child's class teacher to supply you with a page.

The prizes will be a £25 Waterstones book token for each winner!

Please return your competition entries in an envelope with your first name and initial of your surname and your class. Please bring in your entries to the School Office by **Monday 14th February**.



Attendance

Attendance continues to be a very tricky area for us as a school to manage. The government expectation is that attendance should be returning to normal levels, which means that school attendance should be 95% or above.

We monitor attendance each half-term and if your child's attendance falls below 95% you may be receiving a gentle reminder in the post shortly just making you aware. We recognise that this can be frustrating for families where their child is genuinely unwell, but it is important that we set a baseline somewhere and stick with this. We of course monitor this on a case by case basis and if there has been a genuine reason for sickness or the child has been advised by medical professionals to remain at home then we will take this into account before sending a letter home.

The reason for us being so strict with our attendance procedures is that attendance is a key safeguarding trigger and it is important to ensure that we have clear systems in place that allow us to identify any concerns. We never want to find ourselves in a situation where systems and processes have not been followed leaving a child at risk, therefore I hope you can understand our commitment to these processes.

We know that 99% of the letters we send will simply be a gentle reminder to parents with children who are genuinely unwell – however, that 1% might just be the key in making a difference.

Knowledge Organisers

Now we have started a brand new term the Class Pages have been updated with the Knowledge Organisers for Spring Term 1. Head to <https://www.stokemandeville.bucks.sch.uk/our-school/class-pages> and click on your child's class where on the landing page you will see the Knowledge Organiser at the bottom.

Toys in School

Please can we remind parents not to allow their child(ren) to bring toys into school. These can either cause arguments or get lost which causes a lot of upset within the class.

Vacancies

We have two current vacancies within the school. These will be released on the Buckinghamshire Council website shortly. Alternatively please get in touch with the School Office for a copy of the job description, person specification and application form.

Teaching Assistant <i>Closing date: Friday 4th February</i> <i>Interview date: Thursday 10th February</i>	Midday Meal Supervisor <i>Closing date: Tuesday 8th February</i> <i>Interview date: Monday 14th February</i>
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Break the Rules Day

We are very excited about our upcoming 'Break the Rules Day' next **Friday 21st January**. Our Break the Rules Passports will be coming home next week with your children and we will send further information out next week.

COVID Update

We currently have positive cases in Years 4, 5 and 6 at SMCS and the classes have been informed of these cases separately by email. Please do continue to carry out LFD (lateral flow device) tests on your children as often as you can. The majority of our children who have tested positive on these have been asymptomatic so please don't wait for symptoms before testing.

For classes where there is a positive Covid case then we would encourage you to test your child with LFD tests for 7 days after you have been informed.

From Monday 17th January, people who are self-isolating with COVID-19 will have the option to reduce their isolation period after 5 full days if they test negative with a LFD test on both day 5 and day 6 and they do not have a temperature. For example, if they test negative on the morning of day 5 and the morning of day 6, they can return to their education or childcare setting immediately on day 6. The first test must be taken no earlier than day 5 of the self-isolation period, and the second must be taken the following day. All test results should be [reported to NHS Test and Trace](#). If the result of either of their tests is positive, they should continue to self-isolate until they get negative results from two LFD tests on consecutive days or until they have completed 10 full days of self-isolation, whichever is earliest.

Behaviour

During our Inset Day at the start of term, staff were asked to identify what is working well and how we can improve. We want to make sure we are recognising all children who are working hard, meeting our expectations consistently and ensure they feel we are watching this great example.

With this in mind we are adapting the traffic light system and will constantly look for good examples of learning behaviours and conduct as well as high quality standard of work. Children who show this will be added to the Board of Recognition with the hope that over the course of the week every child will manage to have their name added for the target the class have been given. House points also remain a really positive way to engage and motivate our children.

A further addition to our existing behaviour management system is to recognise the children who consistently are good and work hard by inviting them to a 'Hot Chocolate Friday' with Mrs Stewart from next Friday. The children selected will be those who always do the right thing, always work hard and can be relied upon to show diligence and hard work. We want these children to know we have noticed and really appreciate they are working hard.

PE Kit

Further to our updates last week, please can we again ask that children come to school in PE kit which consists of their house PE shirt, plain dark joggers and a plain hoodie/sweatshirt. Please avoid sending your child into school in patterned tracksuits.

Separated Families

If you have recently gone through a family separation then please feel free to approach your child's teacher or the School Office to make them aware. We are happy to do what we can to support you and your child during any difficult circumstances that you may be facing.

Have Your Say on the new political map for Buckinghamshire Council

Tuesday was the start of a 12 week public consultation on proposals for new council wards and ward boundaries for the new Buckinghamshire Council unitary authority. The consultation will close on 4 April 2022. Please head to the Portal <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/have-your-say/29857> to find out more.

GameOn Football at Haydon Abbey

Please find attached a poster from GameOn with the details of a Saturday morning football club they are running at Haydon Abbey for children in Reception up to Year 3.

Spare Clothes

We are in desperate need of spare socks, tights, joggers and shoes (to fit ages 4 to 7 specifically) at school, particularly with the wet weather this week. Please bring any clean and good quality uniform donations to the School Office.

Replika – AI Chatbot

Replika is an artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot companion that its developers claim users can form an actual emotional connection with. Once users have created an account and chosen a 3D avatar, they select the type of relationship they want with the chatbot: friend, mentor or romantic partner. Using a neural network to hold an ongoing one-on-one conversation, Replika gradually becomes more like the user as it gathers data from their responses. It isn't the only AI chatbot app available, but Replika pushes the boundaries of the concept to offer a highly realistic conversational experience.

In the attached guide, you'll find tips on a number of potential risks such as possible addiction, inappropriate content and in-app purchases.

Letters Sent Home

Year 6: Warn and Inform – Covid case
Year 5: Warn and Inform – Covid case
Year 4: Warn and Inform – Covid case
Year 6 (Individuals): River Dart Deposit

Dates for the Diary (these can also be found on our website under 'Upcoming Events')

<https://www.stokemandeville.bucks.sch.uk/upcoming-events> (New dates are written in RED)

Monday 17 th January	3.15-4.15pm	First GameOn After School Football Club (Y5 to 6) – Booking via GameOn
Thursday 20 th January		Chartwells New Year Celebration Menu
Friday 21 st January		School Council: Break the Rules Day
Thursday 3 rd March		World Book Day

Class Updates

We know how much you enjoy finding out what the children have been learning in our Weekly Updates. This has been another fun packed week. You can find this information by selecting the link below to your child's class.

[Reception](#)

[Year 1](#)

[Year 2](#)

[Year 3](#)

[Year 4](#)

[Year 5](#)

[Year 6](#)