St Mary's C E Primary School
Southam Road
BANBURY
Oxfordshire
OX16 2EG

Telephone: 01295 263026
Email:office@banburystmarysschool.co.uk
Web: www.banburystmarysschool.co.uk

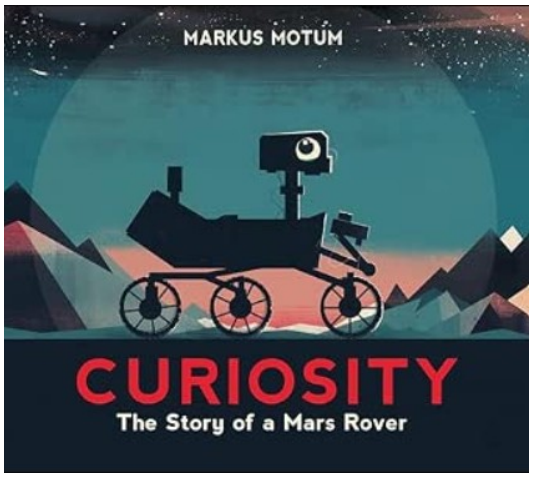
Headteacher: Mrs Victoria Woods
6th November 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! I hope you have all had a lovely break. It is wonderful to begin another exciting term with our Swifts in Year 5. As the days grow shorter and we look ahead to the winter months, there is something rather special about this time of year. It is a lovely opportunity to embrace new learning, enjoy the excitement of the season and make more special memories together. We are looking forward to another busy and rewarding term, filled with curiosity, creativity and plenty of opportunities for our children to spread their wings!

Curriculum – Curiosity

This term, our English topic is *Curiosity,* where we will be reading the exciting adventure *Curiosity - The story of a Mars rover* by Markus Motum. Through this fascinating book, the children will explore the wonders of space and follow the launch of a Mars rover, inspiring their own writing and imagination.



In Science, our topic is Earth and Space. We have already launched our learning in spectacular style with an extraordinary planetarium experience delivered by Science Oxford! The children had a wonderful opportunity to explore the mysteries of our solar system and develop their understanding of space.

In DT, we will be exploring the world of food, learning about nutrition and discovering how to adapt recipes to make them healthier and more nutritious. In Music, the children will unleash their creativity by composing and developing their very own pieces of electronic music.

Swimming lessons will take place every Wednesday this half term. Please ensure that your child comes to school with their swimming kit on this day, including appropriate swimwear.

It promises to be a fascinating term, full of discovery, creativity and exciting new challenges. We can't wait to see our Swifts' curiosity take them on new adventures as they continue to learn, grow and soar together!



Class rewards

The class will continue to collect marbles in the jar to work towards different rewards. The marbles will be rewarded for working together in class, follow classroom expectations and represent our school values in the classroom.

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Reading

We want to create a culture that values and supports reading for pleasure and we will commit to the following;

- adults reading aloud regularly
- informal book talk, including recommendations from peers and adults
- encouraging library use, including the local public library
- providing time to read
- sociable reading environments – I have developed a book nook in the classroom and this will continue to develop over the course of the year.

Children will have a reading book which they have selected themselves. We recommend that the children regularly read at home as it is a great way to cover a wide range of authors and genres. It will also allow them to understand and use a wide range of vocabulary.

They should aim to read on at least four occasions in any one week for a minimum of 10-15 minutes at a time. We ask for you to listen to your child read as much as possible during the week to support their reading progression. Please encourage your child to record their reading activity in their reading record. I guarantee it will make a difference to their progress across the curriculum.

Homework

Our homework enables all pupils to make sure they have chance to practise and recall things like spellings and their times tables, to read regularly and also complete a weekly piece linked to our project. Over the half term the work the children complete can then be combined into a final project piece. I can't wait to see what the children create and bring in to share with the class.



Our homework books will be sent home every **Thursday** and should be returned to school on the following **Tuesday**. Good pieces of homework and great effort will be rewarded through the school reward systems.

PE Kit

All children should have indoor and outdoor kit e.g. shorts, house coloured t-shirt and plimsolls for indoors and trainers for outdoor sessions. **PE kits should be brought into school every Monday and taken home on a Friday to be washed for the following week.**

Please note pupils are not permitted to take part in PE lessons whilst wearing earrings (unless they have been pierced within the last six weeks in which case they are permitted to tape them up until six weeks has passed**.) Staff are not permitted to assist pupils with the removal or insertion of earrings**. If pupils are not able to manage earrings independently, they should not wear them to school on days when PE is timetabled to take place but remove them, with assistance, at home.

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL)

As you are aware, the staff and children have been developing their play through OPAL. As part of this, the children will be encouraged to have fun in our outside areas throughout the year and in all types of weather therefore it is important that the children have outdoor learning clothing in school every day. They will need a pair of welly boots to use so that their school shoes remain dry and clean.

Please name your child's boots - as it can be hard to reunite lost clothing and equipment to the right child if it is not named. If you have any old welly boots that your child has grown out of, we would really appreciate you sending them in so we can pass them on to someone who needs them.

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When the weather is particularly wet, children will need a waterproof coat and waterproof trousers. Again, please ensure these are named to avoid them going missing.

Birthday books

To support your child's dental hygiene we ask that you do **not** bring in sweet treats on your child's birthday. Instead, if you would like to, you are welcome to donate a book to the class. This could be a picture book, information book, a collection of poems or a loved story.

Reminders

- **Water Bottles** – please make sure children have a water bottle with them every day (separate from any drink in their lunch box) as this allows them to access water as and when they require it. To improve the oral health of children, only water is permitted in class. If your child brings in a bottle filled with something other than water, we will provide them with a cup so that they can access water during the day.
- **Snacks** – Children may bring in a **healthy snack** for mid-morning break. Suitable choices include fruit, cheese, yogurt and vegetable sticks. Do let us know if your child has any food allergies or intolerances.
- **Absence and sickness** – please let the office know if your child is not attending because they are ill. Also please note that Health Protection Agency guidance states that children should not return to school for 48 hours after the last episode of either sickness or diarrhea.

My Child at School (MCAS)

We are now using the My Child at School App to send information to you and to allow you to easily make online payments. If you have not done so already, please sign up by visiting the following website: https://www.mychildatschool.com/MCAS/MCSParentLogin

School code: 15144

Contact

Should you need to contact me about any matters arising, you may email direct using the following address:

b.hoyer@banburystmarysschool.co.uk

Please be aware that any messages sent may not be seen until later in the school day or after school as I may be busy with classroom duties and teaching earlier in the day. In all cases I will endeavour to reply to you within 2 working days. Obviously if the matter is more urgent, for example about attendance or changes to the routine of collecting your child then you should contact the school office.

I look forward to working with you and helping your children achieve our vision; Learning, Transforming and Growing.

Best wishes,

Birte Hoyer