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

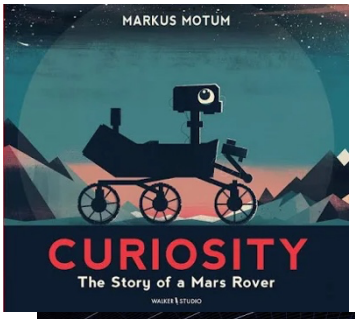
Telephone: 01295 263026
Email:office@banburystmarysschool.co.uk
Web: www.banburystmarysschool.co.uk

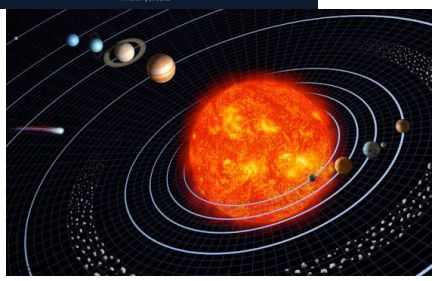
Executive Headteacher: Mrs Victoria Woods
6th November 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our Autumn 2 term! The Owls have kicked off the half term wonderfully, returning with cheerful smiles and an excellent enthusiasm for learning. This part of the year is always a magical one—full of imagination, discovery, and a hint of winter sparkle. We have plenty of exciting adventures ahead as we dive into our new topic, *Curiosity*, exploring new questions, fascinating ideas, and the wonderful mysteries of the world around us. It promises to be a lively and joyful few weeks!

Curriculum – Curiosity





This term, our topic is Curiosity. In science, children will explore Earth and space, discovering the wonders of the solar system, planets, and beyond. Alongside this, in DT, children will be getting hands-on in the kitchen with cooking, developing essential culinary and preparation skills. In computing, they will apply their technical skills to quiz creation, while in music, they will experiment with electronic music and sound design to compose unique soundscapes. In RWV, children will reflect on the big question 'What would Jesus do?', exploring Christian values and decision-making, while in PSHE, we will cover important life lessons on substance misuse. Our topic learning will be brought to life through a range of exciting opportunities across the curriculum, encouraging children to be creative, curious, and enthusiastic learners. We look forward to a busy and enjoyable term filled with fascinating discoveries, creativity, and plenty of fun.



Class rewards
The class have voted to choose their marble rewards for this term; children will be praised for demonstrating our vision in action and working hard on their learning journey. We look forward to collecting our marbles and enjoying the treat as a class, ask your young Owl what they are working towards this term.

Learning, Transforming, Growing.

ODST Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust
SCIAB Safeguarding Children In Banbury
Ofsted Good Provider



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.

Our current class story is 'The Kid who came from Space' by Ross Welford.

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. If you need suggestions for age-appropriate books please visit: https://www.booksfortopics.com/booklists/recommended-reads/year-6/

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.

Learning, Transforming, Growing.

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.

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.
- **Outdoor Clothing** – As the weather turns cooler and wetter, please ensure your child comes to school with a warm, waterproof coat each day, along with appropriate outdoor footwear, so they can stay comfortable during outdoor play times.

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:
e.nijhuis@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,

Erin Nijhuis

Learning, Transforming, Growing.