Cottesmore St Mary Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Rachel Breen

6th November 2026

Dear parents / carers



Bishop Stephen Wang

As you know from my last newsletter, Bishop Stephen Wang was ordained as the sixth Bishop of Arundel & Brighton before half term. Highlighting the importance of service and accompaniment, Archbishop John said: *"A bishop is called to shepherd God's people in the footsteps of Christ, the Good Shepherd. I know Bishop Stephen will lead the people of Arundel & Brighton towards the Lord Jesus,especially by seeking out those who are lost, and walking together with those he will serve. May the Lord Jesus strengthen Bishop Stephen and guide him as he shepherds his people."* Bishop Stephen has said, "What a wonderful diocese we have. I'm truly grateful for the privilege of being your shepherd, your father, your brother... We have important work to do as a diocesan family: to grow in faithfulness and holiness, to care for those in need, and to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with those we meet." Words from St Paul's Letter to the Ephesians form the basis of Bishop Stephen's episcopal motto: "Veritas in caritate." Reflecting on their significance, he said: "'To speak the truth in love' is a phrase that has inspired my whole priesthood: the search for truth, and the conviction that truth and love can never contradict. If we love God, and love our neighbour; if we seek the truth and speak the truth in love; what more could God want from us, and what more could we hope for each other?"
For pictures from Bishop Stephen's ordination as well as more information about his life, please visit the Diocesan website page. https://www.abdiocese.org.uk/news/new-bishop-of-arundel-brighton





RSHE Consultation

As you know, we have adopted Life to the Full by Ten Ten Resources as our RSHE programme which is recommended by the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton. Through their programme, Ten Ten Resources understand the foundational role that parents have in educating and nurturing their children on these matters. Within the programme, they have built in resources which will not only keep you informed about what is being taught in school, but will also give you the opportunity to engage your children in discussion, activity and prayer. Our consultation period linked to your views on our approach to RSHE and in particular, on some of the key decisions we need to make regarding the teaching of specific topics has now closed. Thank you for your feedback and time spent on this.
Post this consultation, our curriculum map that shows the content currently taught across Reception to Year 6 is being updated and will be shared on the website by the end of next week. These topics will continue to be taught sensitively by trusted adults, using carefully selected resources and language appropriate to the children's age and stage of development. This provides pupils with a safe space to ask questions, address misconceptions and learn how to keep themselves safe. We are very grateful for your continued partnership and support.

Praying the rosary with Canon David

Thank you to Canon David for spending lunchtimes, over the month of October, praying the Rosary with children from Years 2 - 6. It was super to see so many children join him during their lunchtime and chose to spend time in prayer.



Newman Reading Buddies

Year 9 pupils from Cardinal Newman visited our Year 2 children to share some lovely stories. The Year 2 children really enjoyed the experience and loved having older children model reading and demonstrate excellent storytelling skills. It was a wonderful opportunity to enjoy stories together and inspire our young readers.









Wishing you an enjoyable weekend. Rachel Breen, Headteacher.

Targeted free school meals – HAF Free Clubs

Brighton & Hove's Winter HAF programme

Funded by the Department for Education, the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme provides fully funded activities over the school Christmas holidays for those in Reception to Year 11 who receive Targeted free school meals. All participants are also provided with a meal.

Winter HAF childcare and activity listings will be available to view over October half-term, to give families the opportunity to register interest and ask providers questions. **Bookings will go live at 10am on Tuesday 11th November.**

Everything available will be listed on Brighton & Hove's HAF online booking.

Dates available:

Week 1: Monday 21st, Tuesday 22nd, Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th December 2026

Week 2: Tuesday 29th, Wednesday 30th and Thursday 31st December 2026

Winter HAF is offering a little bit of everything. Choose from sport camps to playschemes, from art and drama activities, to family cookery workshops and Christmas celebrations, to theatre trips.

Each eligible participant can be booked on up to four HAF places over the school Christmas holidays, with one activity per day.

For children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND):

All HAF providers are expected to be inclusive and where reasonably possible accommodate individual's additional needs.The following providers have HAF specific tickets with 1:4 support in place for those with SEND where higher staff ratios might be beneficial:

- Activ8 for Kids at Bevendean and Mile Oak Primary Schools
- Artpod at High Street, Rottingdean
- House of Culture at Orange Row, Central Brighton

Brighton & Hove City Council's Childcare Inclusion Fund is available to support those with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for children, to make additional funding available where additional staff (one-to-one) or resources would make any HAF provision more accessible.

Please visit www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/HAF to learn more about HAF, or contact HAF@brighton-hove.gov.uk with any questions.

To subscribe to the HAF mailing list for direct updates, please email HAF@brighton-hove.gov.uk with either **Subscribe to the HAF mailing list** in the subject title.



Parents' Coffee Drop-In - Supporting Children with Autism

You are invited to join us for a friendly and informal coffee morning at Cottesmore St Mary. Come along, meet other parents, enjoy a cup of coffee and hear from the Brighton & Hove Inclusion Support Service (BHISS). Our guest speaker, Rachel Milton, Specialist Teacher: BHISS Autism and Language team will share helpful resources, practical advice and strategies to support children with autism, with an opportunity to connect with other families and ask questions.

Monday 9th November. 1.45 pm – 2.45 pm

Reception September 2027 – please encourage new families to visit our school in November



If you are currently a member of our school family and have a younger child due to start school in September 2027, don't forget that, in addition to completing the online Brighton and Hove admissions form, you must also complete the school Supplementary Information Form (SIF). This can be found on the school website and is required to be delivered to the school office.

We encourage you to complete the SIF form sooner rather than later.

A reminder that the deadline for Reception applications is 15th January.

Please encourage families who are new to our school to visit one of our open days. The dates and times of these are:

- **9am – 10.15am Monday 9th November 2026**
- **9am – 10.15am Tuesday 10th November 2026**
- **9am - 10.15amMonday 16th November 2026**
- **9am – 10.15am Wednesday 18th November 2026**
- **9am – 10.15am Monday 23rd November 2026**
- **9am – 10.15am Wednesday 25th November 2026**

Families can email admin@cottesmorestmary.org with their preferred date/dates and their full name, the name of their child (who they are considering enrolling at the school) and mobile number. In the meantime, you may wish to re-watch a video that we created when parents were unable to visit the school. Please do share this with friends. https://player.vimeo.com/video/4827743099

The Admissions Page of our school website also contains a range of helpful information.

https://www.cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk/page/admissions

Please spread the word about Cottesmore and encourage friends and families to get in touch. We look forward to hearing from all prospective parents and are here to help in anyway. If schools don't fill, they loose vital funds so getting as many applications as possible is vital.



Pelican Parcels

Pelican Parcels is Brighton & Hove's Baby Bank, providing essential items for babies and children aged 0 to 16 to families who need support. Their vision is a community where every family has the essentials their children need to grow, play and thrive. Pelican Parcels are encouraging people to be Secret Santa for a local child this Christmas. For many families, Christmas can be an incredibly difficult time. The expectation of 'Santa' can bring additional worry and stress when household budgets are already stretched to breaking point. They aim to help make Christmas special for local children while easing some of the stress their families face. They hope to ensure more children experience the excitement of Christmas morning and more parents start the new year without taking on additional debt.

In 2025, 1,748 children received Christmas gifts and stocking fillers through Pelican Parcels and 766 parents and carers received a gift of their own. 15,000+ gifts and stocking fillers were donated by supporters. In 2026, they're aiming to reach even more families through additional donation drop-off points and extended opening hours at their warehouse in Hove. This year they're also taking part in the Big Give Christmas Challenge 2026. From 1st to 8th December, donations to Pelican Parcels through the Big Give will be doubled. You can donate brand-new toys, books, craft kits, games and toiletry gift sets at their warehouse or at one of their donation drop-off points across Brighton & Hove. To help keep Christmas affordable for families, they particularly welcome gifts that don't require batteries or additional purchases to be enjoyed. To ensure donations are suitable for as many children and families as possible, they ask that gifts are not overly personalised. They also ask that donations avoid clothing, jewellery, make-up and perfume. The exceptions are pyjamas, hat-and-scarf sets and socks although we'd ask that these don't have Christmas-themed designs. Financial donations are also welcome and can help cover the costs of running their Christmas campaign and enable them to support even more families. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps bring the magic of Christmas to local children. For more information gift ideas as well as Amazon wish list, please follow the link.

https://www.pelicanparcels.org.uk/our-services/christmas-campaign/?fbclid=PAdGRzdgVF9E5leHRuA2FlbQIxMQBwZG9mAnNydGMGYXBwX2lkDzU2NzA2NzM0MzM1MjQyNwABp_VD58wrKYFL1SNjb3PfQbWEgH0J4JEMDOVGfGsfCiGJ3JZJ7QMO0GZXDBRp_aem_6qP0KpkScrl-xhP-O0DLlQ



PTA Curry and Quiz Night – 19th November

Please see the poster below for more information. To book tickets, please use the following link.

https://www.ticketsource.com/focpevents

If you would like to attend this event and your child is in receipt of targeted FSM or if you have financial challenges at the moment, please reach out to the school as we would like to be able to help so that as many people who would like to attend this fun evening can do so.



Year 5 and 6 Film Show – 20th November

Please see the poster below for more information. To book tickets, please use the following link.

https://www.ticketsource.com/focpevents/t-yzpdlrl

If your child would like to attend this event and is in receipt of targeted FSM or if you have financial challenges at the moment, please reach out to the school as we would like to be able to help so that as many children who would like to attend this fun evening can do so.



Children in Need – 13th November

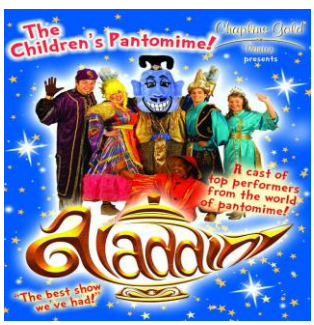
We will be supporting **BBC Children in Need** by inviting all children to come to school in their own clothes and help raise money. Over the past five years, our school community has raised over £5000 for Children in Need and we would love to build on this amazing achievement. Every donation will make a difference and is entirely optional. Across the UK, schools will be coming together to have fun, spread positivity and raise vital funds to support children and young people who need it most.
Thank you, as always, for your generosity and support. We look forward to sharing our fundraising total and photos of the day with you. If you would like to donate online, please visit our **JustGiving page:** https://www.justgiving.com/page/cottesmore-st-mary-hove-10?utm_medium=FA&utm_source=CL



Dick Whittington Pantomime for KS1 On Thursday 10th December, The Rainbow Theatre are coming to school to perform an interactive Pantomime for all children in KS1 (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2). All children will enjoy watching the show and some will even have the opportunity to be part of the show, which will retell the story of Dick Whittington (those wanting to take part will be randomly chosen on the day by the theatre company). h As this show will form part of an immersive day for Reception children, they are invited come to school either dressed up as a Fairy Tale / Pantomime character or they can wear any other home clothes should they prefer. Children in Year 1 and Year 2 are to wear school uniform / PE kits as usual. The voluntary contribution required, in order for the theatre show to go ahead is **£3.30.** Please pay via Parent Pay by **27th November** at the latest, though as soon as possible is appreciated.

Aladdin Pantomime for KS2 On Wednesday 25th November Chaplin's Christmas Panto are coming to school to perform Aladdin to KS2 (Years 3 – 6). *'Packed solid with comedy, excitement and adventure, the children will love to cheer their hero ALADDIN and boo the evil ABANAZAR. They will roar with laughter at the antics of WISHEE WASHEE & WIDOW TWANKY and gasp with amazement when the GENIE appears'* . The voluntary contribution required, in order for the theatre show to go ahead is **£4.10.** Please pay via ParentPay by **13th November.**





Christmas at Cottesmore – Nativity Liturgies

- **Year 6 Monday 14th December at 2.30 pm**
- **Reception Tuesday 15th December at 9.15 am**
- **Year 5 Tuesday 15th December at 2.30 pm**
- **Year 2 Wednesday 16th December at 9.15 am**
- **Year 4 Wednesday 16th December at 2.30 pm**
- **Year 1 Thursday 17th December at 9.15 am**
- **Year 3 Thursday 17th December at 2.30 pm**

Please can all children dress in school uniform unless directed otherwise by their class teacher (no PE kits). Some children will dress up and the school will provide these costumes. If your child has a nativity play at 9.15am, once you have dropped your child off with the class teachers at the usual start time, you can head straight to the hall. We will reopen Radinden Manor gates at 9.05am but they will close 9.15am. If your child has a nativity play at 2.30pm, Radinden Manor gates will open at 2.20pm and they will close at 2.30pm. The office won't have capacity to escort latecomers through the building. We look forward to celebrating with you all.

Christmas Dinner

KS2 Christmas Dinner - Wednesday 16th December.

If your child chooses to have lunch on their Christmas dinner day, you will be debited the usual amount of £2.65 from your Parent Pay account. Children can, of course, still bring in a packed lunch if they do not want a Christmas lunch and you will not be charged. On this day, children are invited to wear colourful party clothes / Christmas jumpers to help with the festivities.

On Thursday 17th December, children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 will have their Christmas Dinner. Due to the popularity of this, there will be no school dinners available on this day for your KS2 child. We ask that you provide a packed lunch from home on Thursday 17th December. If your child is registered for free school meals (Pupil Premium) and you will require a school packed lunch to be provided for them, please email the office by 10th December.

KS1 Christmas Dinner - Thursday 17th December.

All KS1 children will automatically be offered a FREE Christmas lunch on this day. On this day, children are invited to wear colourful party clothes / Christmas jumpers to help with the festivities.

On Wednesday 16th December, there will be no school dinners available for KS1 children due to it being the Christmas dinner day for those in KS2. We ask that you provide a packed lunch, for KS1 children, from home on Wednesday 16th December. If your child is registered for free school meals (Pupil Premium) and you will require a school packed lunch to be provided for them, please email the office by 10th December.

SPOOKY CAKE SALE

Friends of Cottesmore Primary

THANK YOU...

to everyone who donated and bought from the cake sale! Together we raised:

£431.95



Friends of Cottesmore Primary

PRE-LOVED UNIFORM SALE

THANK YOU...

to everyone who donated and bought from the uniform sale!

TOGETHER WE RAISED

£128.28

RELOVE RECYCLE REUSE

SAVE THE DATE

ADVENT FAIR

4TH FRIDAY DECEMBER 15:10-16:30

Friends of Cottesmore Primary



FOOD VANS, GAMES, DRINKS, MR MARVEL, CRAFTING & MUCH MORE

Friends of Cottesmore Primary

Nicholas James

SALES LETTINGS AUCTIONS

Are you thinking of selling or letting your property?

Nicholas James will kindly donate to the PTA 20% of their commission* for properties sold or let on behalf of Cottesmore families.

- Request a valuation
- Sell or let your property
- Money is donated to FOCP

It's that easy!

So far Nicholas James have **kindly donated almost £5,000** through Cottesmore family property sales.

nicholasjamesproperty.co.uk

*subject to T&C's

MONDAY 9th	• 9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2027
TUESDAY 10th	• World Science Day – Science for and with society • 9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2027
WEDNESDAY 11th	9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2027 Remembrance Day (Remembrance Sunday is Sunday 8th) Year 3 St Cecilia Forest School am Nurture group 2 Forest Scchool Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 12th	Year 6 Height & Weight check am KS1 Michael Rosen Day – Huge Poetry Party
FRIDAY 13th	• Year 5 Swimming • World Kindness Day • Children in Need - non school uniform in exchange for money towards collection
MONDAY 16th	• Anti-Bullying Week – Break the silence • 9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2027
TUESDAY 17th	• 9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2027 • School trip to Glyndebourne – year TBC
WEDNESDAY 18th	• 9am - 10am School Tours for Reception 2027 • Year 2 St Monica Forest School am • Nurture group 1 Forest Scchool • Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm
THURSDAY 19th	• PTA Quiz Night 6pm – 10pm.
FRIDAY 20th	Year 5 swimming Connor Saunders Foundation to talk with Years 5 and 6 Year 5 and 6 Film Show 3.15pm – 5pm (school hall).
MONDAY 23rd	
TUESDAY 24th	Year 6 Connor Saunders First Aid course
WEDNESDAY 25th	• Year 2 St Patrick Forest School am • Nurture group 2 Forest School • Year 1 St George Forest School pm • Years 3 – 6 Aladdin Pantomine in school hall for children
THURSDAY 26th	
FRIDAY 27th	Year 5 swimming
DECEMBER	
MONDAY 30th	
TUESDAY 1st	Advent begins School Nurse drop-in session
WEDNESDAY 2nd	• Choir to Brighton Centre for One Voice Singing Festival (rehearsal in day and show in evening) • Nurture group 1 Forest School • Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm
THURSDAY 3rd	
FRIDAY 4th	Reception and Year 1 parent / carers Phonics workshop. School hall. 8.50am PTA Advent Fair, school hall and outside, 3.15pm – 4.30pm. Please bring donations of cakes and sweet treats
MONDAY 7th	
TUESDAY 8th	
WEDNESDAY 9th	Forest School Free Session Nurture group 2 Forest School Year 1 St George Forest School pm PTA uniform sale after school – items between £1 and £2
THURSDAY 10th	Interactive Fairy Tale Show for Reception - Year 2. Dick Whittington. Fairytale costumes or party clothes for children in Reception only. Year 1 and 2 school uniform.
FRIDAY 11th	
MONDAY 14th	Year 6 Nativity - 2.30pm
TUESDAY 15th	Reception Nativity - 9.15am Year 5 Nativity - 2.30pm
WEDNESDAY 16th	• Year 2 Nativity - 9.15am • Year 4 Nativity - 2.30pm • Christmas Dinners: KS2 (these year groups wear Christmas jumper / colourful clothes). All children in KS1 to bring a packed lunch this day.
THURSDAY 17th	Year 1 Nativity - 9.15am Christmas Dinners: KS1 (these year groups wear Christmas jumpers / colourful clothes). All children in KS2 to bring a packed lunch this day. Y3 Nativity - 2.30pm
FRIDAY 18th	Class parties for all school and Father Christmas to visit Reception – Year 3. • School finishes for Christmas holidays
	CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY **Monday 21st December – Friday 1st January**
JANUARY 2027	
MONDAY 4th	• **INSET DAY – school closed to pupils**
TUESDAY 5th	
WEDNESDAY 6th	
THURSDAY 7th	
FRIDAY 8th	
MONDAY 11th	
TUESDAY 12th	
WEDNESDAY 13th	• Year 6 St Maximillian Forest School am • Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 14th	
FRIDAY 15th	Closing Date for Local Authorities applications 2026/2027