



Newsletter: Spring 1, 2026

Dear Parents & Carers,

Welcome to January – how are you?

As we step into a brand-new year, I'm reminded of a lovely quote from Winnie the Pooh in *Reflections from the Hundred Acre Wood*:

"Hello, new day, it's lovely to meet you!"

Every new morning is a gift – even in January!

Of course, January can bring its challenges. The "January Blues" have been recognised for centuries – even Charles Dickens and Samuel Pepys wrote about them! The Romans didn't even name the winter months at first, waiting until spring to start afresh. Shorter days, chilly weather, financial worries, and the post-holiday slump can all play their part, and many of us may already have lost sight of those well-intentioned resolutions.

But January can also be a time of gentle transition. Small, achievable steps can make a big difference to our wellbeing: getting outside for daylight, moving with mindfulness, staying hydrated, and eating well. As you greet each new day, what will you look forward to?

To support this, this term, our school values are **love and joy** – something we hope is felt throughout our community and beyond. Thanks to your incredible support before Christmas, we've been able to secure some much-needed play equipment for the children (for now, just some loose parts), and we'll continue fundraising for something bigger and better.

As expected at this time of year, we're seeing some increased absence among children and staff, mostly due to seasonal viruses and post-holiday bugs. Thank you for your understanding if you notice any changes to the school day.

On an exciting note, we've launched our **new school website!** However, we're currently working through some technical teething problems with the provider, so updates are temporarily on hold. Please bear in mind that some information may not be up to date – for the latest on what your children are learning, this newsletter is your best source.

Finally, we've had the pleasure of welcoming many trainee teachers this week as part of Somerset's SCITT (Somerset Centred Initial Teacher Training) programme. It's been wonderful to see their passion for education and to have them working alongside our teachers and children. The feedback from pupils has been fantastic – many really enjoyed the experience.

Here's to a term filled with **love, joy, and new opportunities**. Thank you for your continued support, and let's make 2026 a year to remember!

Warm regards,
Helen Newstead

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Clubs starting week commencing:

19th January

PTA Event - Disco

Friday, 20th March

PTA Event - Bingo Night

Friday, 27th March



CLASSROOM NEWS

SNOWY & TAWNY OWLS

This half term the Snowy and Tawny Owls are learning all about Space and Dinosaurs for their new topic 'Our Wonderful World'.

They have started to learn facts about space which they have remembered extremely well already. They will definitely turn into space experts.

Over the next few weeks they will also learn some facts about dinosaurs. Miss Edmunds and I always enjoy this topic as the children help us too!

In maths we will be continuing our number work as well as starting addition and 2D shape.

PELICAN & YELLOW WAGTAILS

Year 1 started the new year with a mystery package which contained some straw, sticks and bricks ... we were asked to investigate a possible crime, can you guess what it was?

This half term we have a Science focus as we learn all about materials and their properties. We will be writing stories in CLL and enjoy doing art work and other creative activities following the fairy tale theme. In maths we are continuing to work on our understanding of place value, addition and subtraction. We are lucky to have our forest school sessions this half term and our waterproofs and wellies are being put to the test!

We remind families to check tapestry for photos of learning and reminders of events and dates and encourage all families to add photos from home of experiences the children would like to share, especially if they include a celebration!

ROBIN & PUFFIN

We've had a fantastic start to Spring 1 with our Stunning Starter to launch our new topic about 'Rocks and fossils'. The children enjoyed being fossil hunters for the day and have started to learn about the life of Mary Anning, all of which will support our writing in CLL. We love how invested the children are in our learning and we are hearing about trips to Lyme Regis already!

Our focus in Maths will continue to be around addition and subtraction, before moving onto multiplication and division.

Mr Williams is with us this half-term and will be doing Gymnastics in PE, covering a range of movements, shapes, jumps and balancing.

A busy half term ahead, with Forest School opportunities for both Year 2 classes; we are looking forward to it!

PEACOCK & FALCON

The children have settled back into school life very well and are already showing great enthusiasm for their learning.

This term, we have started exploring a range of topics, including **rivers**, where children have started learning about how rivers are formed and their importance, and **forces and magnets**, where they will be investigating pushes, pulls, and magnetic attraction through practical activities.

It has been wonderful to see the children engaged, curious, and working hard across all areas of the curriculum.

“Learn continuously! There is always one more thing to learn.”

CRANE & RED KITE

Year 4 have had an excellent start to the half term! We have been using the text *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* to write narratives and as a drive to their science topic of States of Matter.

We have had an excellent engage stage with David the Chocolatier making chocolate lolly pops and learning all about how chocolate is made and if it is fair-trade.

BUZZARD & MAGPIE

In Year five, we kicked off our learning with a stunning starter from *Gary at Carrymoor*, who challenged us to think about how we can **“Slim Our Waste.”** Through real-life examples and practical ideas, Gary helped us explore what happens to our rubbish and why reducing waste matters for our planet.

Using the book *What a Waste* by Jess French, pupils will build their understanding of waste, recycling and sustainability. In Science, we'll be investigating different **materials**, thinking about how they are used, reused and recycled, and how our choices can make a positive difference to the environment.

KESTREL & EAGLE

Year 6 have returned from Christmas full of focus and enthusiasm, ready for an exciting, but busy Spring term ahead. Our main topic this term is *Living Things and Their Habitats*, which we will be exploring throughout the whole of Spring. Children will develop their scientific understanding from classification and grouping of living things, through to learning about Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution.

We began the half term with a *stunning starter* – creating geometric animal artwork inspired by our science topic. These impressive pieces will be developed and completed over the next half term.

In Maths, pupils will be building their skills and confidence in ratio, algebra and decimals as we move through Spring 1 and into Spring 2.

Alongside our curriculum learning, we are increasing our SATs practice this term. This is to help children consolidate key skills, build exam confidence and develop effective strategies, ensuring they feel as prepared and confident as possible as they transition to secondary school.

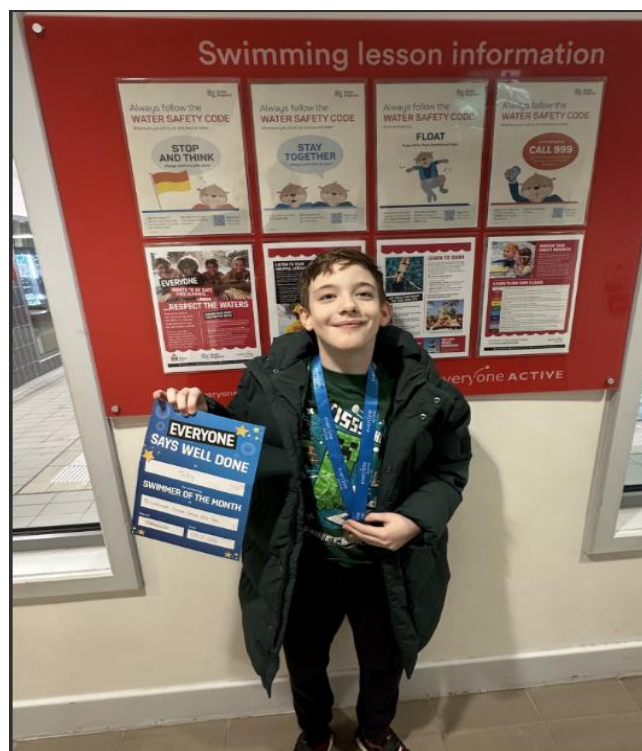
With lots of exciting learning planned across the curriculum, it's set to be a busy and rewarding term. We're really looking forward to a great half term ahead!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Toby on his incredible achievement! 🌟

We're so proud to celebrate him as **Swimmer of the Month for January.**

His hard work, dedication, and commitment have truly paid off—well done, Toby! Keep up the fantastic work! 🏊👏

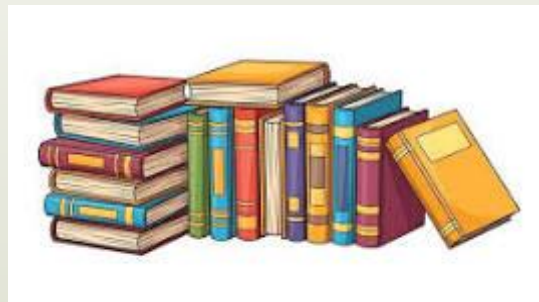




Thank you so much for all the generous donations of Christmas trees. They have been put to very good use and greatly appreciated by the whole school community.

We would also be very grateful for any donations of wood chippings. If you have any available, please contact the school office via email **for the attention of Mrs. Sgorlon** and she will be in touch.

Thank you once again for your continued support.



School Library

Our library is buzzing with activity, and the children are loving spending time in the space and borrowing books! 📖🌟

If you haven't already, please take a moment to consent to the Library Home School Agreement on Arbor. Once completed, your child will be able to borrow books and fully enjoy all the wonderful resources our library has to offer.

Thank you so much for helping us keep the love of reading alive!

Safeguarding Information

Safeguarding your child

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please direct to one of our safeguarding team members:

Mrs. Barton, Mrs. Newstead, Mrs. Paling, Mrs. Merrick & Mrs. Samways
Nadia Connor or Dele Maxwell (Little Herons Nursery)

If you are worried a child is at risk of harm or in danger, please contact:

Children's Social Care on:

0300 123 2224 or by email at: childrens@somerset.gov.uk

Happy New Year - we hope that you've had a great festive break and have found some time to relax and enjoy all that this time of year offers. As we return to school, many of you will know that some children's holiday will have sadly not been a relaxing and exciting time. For others, the gift of technology, be that enhanced 'kit', or first devices will mean even greater amounts of time accessing content or gaming. Research points to children accessing content, including through gaming and social media at a younger and younger age. As many of you plan the term ahead, anything that can help both children, but especially parents understand both the dangers, but also the protective actions and measures including encouraging children to share their concerns and behaviours is vital.

When used with healthy boundaries, gaming can be a positive experience but for some young people, gaming can start to negatively affect their mental wellbeing. When this happens, children need support from their caregivers to help with healthy boundaries.

We have seen an increased number of incidents of issues brought into school from online gaming which is happening at home. Please be reminded of the minimum age for social media apps. We acknowledge that online gaming and social media will take place and we aim to support children in managing how to use these. It is all of our responsibility to ensure children keep safe online.

Here are some tips for parents:

1) Have a family agreement.

A family agreement is a way for everyone to negotiate screen boundaries together, which then apply to the whole family. It is a time to set rules, expectations and boundaries.

2) Discuss implications of online gaming/ chats.

It is important that children understand what is appropriate to share, post, say online and the implications of their words. Remind children that what they say has a consequence online and if online gaming try to be in the room as much as possible to monitor what is being played/said.

3) Follow through on consequences.

If your child does not stick to a boundary you have agreed, make sure to follow through on the consequences. Agree the consequences with your child in advance so they are not taken by surprise, or left feeling it is 'unfair'. Following through on consequences will help to make the boundaries clear and consistent.

4) Agree the best way to end a gaming or online chat session.

Ask them if it's better to set a fixed playing time, or to agree a stopping point in a way that works for the game they're playing. For example, they might be happier to stop at the end of a particular level, rather than stopping after an hour. If you've set a fixed time, you can use a sand timer or stopwatch to remind them how long they've got left. Some games also let you set a timer within the game.

Minimum Age Social Media Apps

13 years

Facebook
Instagram
Snapchat
Tik Tok
X (Twitter)
YouTube
Pinterest
Reddit
Discord
Twitch
Tumblr
Kik
WeChat
Viber
Signal
Houseparty

16 years

WhatsApp
LinkedIn
Telegram





WEST MONKTON PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA

DISCO
20TH
MARCH

RECEPTION/KSI
4-5PM
YR 3 & 4
5.15-6.15PM
YEAR 5 & 6
6.30-7.30

TICKETS TO BE PURCHASED FROM:
PTA-EVENTS.CO.UK/WESTMONKTON

BINGO
Night

Family bingo event. £5 a book. Children welcome.
Refreshments and a small bar available.
Buy your books at www.pta-events.co.uk/westmonkton

FIRDAY 27TH MARCH
DOORS OPEN AT 6PM, EYES DOWN AT 6.30
West Monkton School Hall

West Monkton PTA

✉ westmonktonpta@outlook.com

📘 <https://www.facebook.com/WestMonktonPTA>

📷 [west_monkton_pta](https://www.instagram.com/west_monkton_pta)

📍 West Monkton PTA, Bridgwater Road, Bathpool,
Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8FT

👤 Registered with the Charity Commission as
277944



West Monkton Parish Church - All the details about our events are on the church website www.westmonktonchurch.co.uk and our Facebook Page

What's happening in our Church:

FEB

- 2nd 6.00pm Br PCC in the Benefice Office
- 7th 10am WM Coffee & More *'Trussell Trust'* talk about food poverty. Please bring food donations
- 10th 7.00pm Deanery Synod 'Grants' open to all
- 11th 7.00pm Cheddon Memorial Hall – Talk by John Scanlon *'The war time vegetable patch'*
- 15th 6pm CF - Deanery Evening service
- 18th 11.30am KSM Ash Weds service & lunch
- 18th 6.00pm WM – Ash Weds service
- 23rd 10.30am Lent Group begins – *book via office*
- 24th 10.00am Wardens meeting in the office
- 25th 9.00am Bath Abbey Trip – see below
- 25th 7.00pm Lent Group begins – *book via office*

West Monkton: Thursday and Friday 5 /6 February
Between 9am - 1pm church cleaning. All help welcome. Refreshments available.

WM Bath Abbey Trip: 25th Feb – cost £30: The coach will leave the Bus Stop opposite the Village hall at 9am promptly. We will aim to leave Bath at approximately 3pm. The entry ticket to the Abbey, includes a Self-guided tour and entry to the Discovery Museum and the Embroidery Exhibition.

Threads Through the Cross. To book click the link:
<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/westmonktonchurchfundraisers/1956052>

LENT GROUPS BEGIN W/C 23rd Feb:

We will be following the Pilgrim Book 'Turning to Christ'. Mondays 10.30am at Tricia's or Weds 7pm in the benefice office. (*please sign up via the office*)

FREE WEBINAR FOR PARENTS & CARERS



SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Would you like to know ideas on how to support your child with their mental health & wellbeing as they grow?

IN THIS 1 HOUR WORKSHOP HOSTED BY SOMERSET'S MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM, WE WILL EXPLORE...

- WHAT MENTAL HEALTH IS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD MENTAL HEALTH FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
- HOW TO IDENTIFY THE EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH
- A RANGE OF STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING
- WHERE AND HOW TO GET MORE SUPPORT IF NEEDED



WHEN?

20TH JANUARY 2026

10-11AM



REGISTER HERE!

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/FREEWEBINARMH](https://bit.ly/freewebinarMH)



SCAN ME

FREE WEBINAR FOR PARENTS & CARERS



SUPPORTING YOUR NEURODIVERSE CHILD

Would you like to know ideas on how to support your child with their mental health & wellbeing as they grow?

IN THIS 1 HOUR WORKSHOP HOSTED BY SOMERSET'S MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM, WE WILL EXPLORE...

- HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD OR TEEN'S MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN ANEUTYPICAL WORLD.
- UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD/TEEN'S NEURODIVERGENT EXPERIENCE
- WHERE TO GET FURTHER SUPPORT



WHEN?

22TH JANUARY 2026

1:30-2:30PM



REGISTER HERE!

[HTTPS://BIT.LY/WEBINARSNC2026](https://bit.ly/webinarsnc2026)

SCAN ME!



WORLD WAR TWO DAY
Saturday 31st January 2026

- Military vehicles
- Rationing
- Code breaking
- Object handling
- ... and more!

Adults: £9.50, child: £3
Museum members: £4.75, child: £2

TIVERTON MUSEUM
of Mid Devon Life

Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00-4:00
www.tivertonmuseum.org.uk
Beck's Square, Tiverton EX16 6PJ
01884 256295
Registered Charity 1181576

FOLLOW US
@TivertonMuseum



Jan/Feb/March 2026



Somerset
Council

Somerset School Nurse Team Newsletter

Welcome to the new Somerset School Nurse Team newsletter!

The school nurse team is made up of Specialist Community Public Health Nurses, and Assistant Practitioners. We specialise in promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people aged 5–19 years and cover primary and secondary schools across Somerset.

This newsletter will be delivered termly, and is intended to keep you up-to-date on all the things we are doing as a service, and will include topics and links relevant to physical and mental health.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful but please do feedback anything you would like to be added.

[Somerset children & young people : Health & Wellbeing : Phn School Nursing](#)



Feedback QR code

SAINT
School Aged Immunisation Nursing Team

NHS Somerset
Somerset NHS Foundation Trust

School aged vaccinations

Did you know they will be offered these routine vaccinations at school?

- ✓ FLU - Reception - Year 11
- ✓ MMR - Year 8
- ✓ HPV - Year 8
- ✓ Meningitis ACWY - Year 9
- ✓ Diphtheria, Tetanus, Polio (DTP)

Did you miss us?

We also have community clinics across Somerset for:

- ✓ Home Educated Children
- ✓ Anxious Children
- ✓ Children who missed the session at School

For further information scan the QR code or please speak with a member of the team.

Call us on **0300 323 0032**

Children, Respect, Teamwork
Everyone, Every Day

Children's Mental Health Week 2026

9–15 February 2026

Place2Be's

CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
WEEK

9-15
FEB
2026

If your child is struggling with their mental health speak with a school nurse or your GP.

Further support can be found:

[Mental Health Issues | Young Somerset](#)

[YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | Young-Minds](#)

shout
85258
here for you 24/7

Are you looking for support with your child's bedwetting?

If so please contact your school nurse team for advice or make contact via the Chat Health Text service.

For more information regarding this topic please visit the following website:

[ERIC](#)

Free helpline:
0808 801 0343



Somerset Parent Carer Forum C.I.C

Do you have a child with additional needs/and or disabilities?

Are you looking for advice and support?

The Somerset Parent Carer Forum provides a range of information and support for parents and carers in Somerset. They run a range of support groups and workshops for parents/carers to attend, and also provide a phonenumber where you can speak to a parent representative.

For more information click on the link below:
[Somerset Parent Carer Forum CIC Ltd \(not for profit\) company](#)



6 ways to help your child with their weight



Small lifestyle changes can make a big difference – try these top tips.

1. Find some support

Speak to your child's school nurse, GP or practice nurse who will help support your family with diet and lifestyle changes if needed.

2. Make some healthier food swaps

There are lots of easy ways to cut back on sugar, salt and saturated fat – get started with our top tips and simple swaps.

[Food facts - Healthier Families - NHS](#)

3. Eat balanced meals

Find out what a healthy, balanced diet looks like. [The Eatwell Guide - NHS](#)

4. Try some new recipes

Get inspiration to help your family eat well every day. [Recipes - Healthier Families - NHS](#)

5. Get moving

Try boosting your family's activity levels in 10-minute bursts with our Disney inspired play along games.

[10 Minute Shake Up games – Healthier Families - NHS](#)

ChatHealth

Parent advice & support
Healthy lifestyles
School transitioning
Emotional health

is your child 5-19 and are you looking for confidential help and support?

A safe and easy way to contact your School Nursing Team

Just send a text
07480 635 515

Disclaimer: This is not an emergency service. It operates Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm and is only available by using a UK mobile number. Your messages are stored on our secure system and can be seen by the School Nursing Team who run our ChatHealth Service. Although this is a confidential service, in the event of a safeguarding issue the School Nurse has a duty of care to act on this and may escalate the concern.

Improving LIVES

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Somerset School Nurse Team Contact Details:

Email: schoolnurseduty@somerset.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 790 9854



SLEEP

Is your child struggling with sleep?

For practical advice & support visit...



[Home - The Sleep Charity](#)

Alternatively, speak with a school nurse using our Chathealth text service

Tel: 07480 635 515

National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP)

Is your child in RECEPTION or Year 6?

If so, the school nurse team will begin visiting schools in the New Year to complete the height and weight measurements of all children in Reception and Year 6.

For more information regarding the programme please click on the link below:

[Somerset children & young people :](#)

[Health & Wellbeing : F2f Ph Ncmp](#)

