

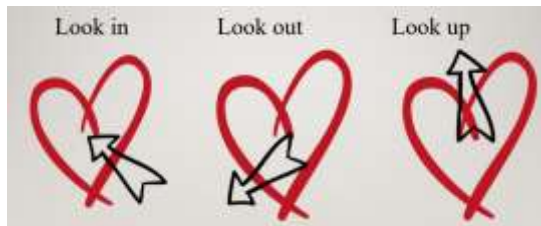


Newsletter: Spring 2, 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Dare I say it... after such a *soggy* start to the year, it finally feels as though **spring may have sprung!** The brighter days, much-welcomed sunshine, and the joy of blooming daffodils have lifted spirits across our school—timed perfectly, too, with **St David's Day on Sunday**.

This term, our school values are **goodness** and **kindness**, and Mrs Samways, our Ethos Lead, has been working closely with the children to deepen not just their understanding of these values, but how they can *live them out* in their daily interactions. Last week, she introduced three new phrases to support their reflection:



Many of you may be familiar with the 'Windows, Mirrors and Doors' approach used in spiritual education. It encourages children to develop reflection, wonder and positive action:

Look in: Supporting children to reflect inwardly, connect experiences to their own feelings and values, and understand themselves more deeply.

Look out: Encouraging curiosity and gratitude as children observe the world around them—celebrating the "wow" moments and exploring the "ow" moments that prompt deeper thinking.

Look up: Prompting positive action in response to what they have learned and reflected on—whether through kindness, creativity, or small meaningful changes.

Celebrating Our Children: Recognition Feathers

Recently, we have also been reflecting—together with children and staff—on how we recognise and celebrate the achievements of our pupils. Importantly, we want to ensure *you* can share these moments with your children too.

From next week, children will be recognised throughout the week by different members of our school community. Their achievements will be displayed on our **Recognition Feathers** board, where they will be showcased proudly for all to see.

During our celebratory **Collective Worship on Friday**, these feathers will then be presented to the children, who will bring them home to share with you. We hope this encourages lovely conversations about *why* they were recognised and helps them feel proud of their efforts and choices.

And in the future, we hope to make our feathers even more special... **watch this space!**

As we settle into this new term, I look forward to seeing goodness and kindness continue to bloom right alongside the daffodils outdoors. Thank you, as always, for your ongoing support—it makes such a difference to the life of our school.

Warmest wishes,
Helen Newstead

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

PTA Event –
Crazy Hair Day

Friday, 13th
March

Chocolate
donations for
Bingo Night

PTA Event –
Disco

Friday, 20th
March

PTA Event –
Bingo Night

Friday, 27th
March

WiseUp
Workshop –
Year 5

Wednesday, 1st
April

Racing to School –
Year 6

Wednesday, 1st
April



CLASSROOM NEWS

SNOWY & TAWNY OWLS

The Snowy and Tawny Owls have started their new topic 'Ready Steady Grow'. They were very excited to find a trail that led them to clues for our new book focus 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Over the next few weeks we will be retelling the story using Mighty Writer and this will help us when we have a go at writing the story ourselves in CLL. Our story links nicely with our topic work as we will be learning all about what plants need to grow, the parts of a plant and different lifecycles. It has been lovely to have some share their knowledge and understanding already.

In maths we will be learning about doubling, part-whole and lots of other number skills. It is going to be a busy few weeks, but I know the children are going to have lots of fun and we can't wait to see the learning they produce!

PELICAN & YELLOW WAGTAILS

Year 1 - Amazing Animals
As we leave Winter and enter Spring Year 1 are learning all about animals, including humans. The children will expand on their knowledge of the human body, learn about how animals grow and change and group animals. This topic will lend itself to colourful art work, craft activities and the children will sew animal hand puppets.

In CLL we will be learning more about how sentences are made and using books with an animal theme. In Maths the children will continue their learning about place value and addition and subtraction within 20.

We ask year one families to log into Tapestry regularly to see what we have been learning and not to forget they can upload pictures and photos too.

ROBIN & PUFFIN

This term in Year 2, our topic is **Nurturing Nurses**. We will be learning about significant people in history who have helped to shape modern nursing, including Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. The children will explore why these inspirational women are remembered today and how their compassion, bravery and determination made a difference to the lives of others. We will be developing our historical enquiry skills by asking questions, comparing the past with the present and understanding how healthcare has changed over time.

As part of our topic, Year 2 will also be learning some vital first aid skills. The children will explore how to keep themselves and others safe, what to do in an emergency, and how to respond calmly if someone is hurt.

The children will write stories inspired by the journey of the Empire Windrush. We will explore the experiences of the passengers who travelled to Britain and use this as a stimulus to develop descriptive language, storytelling skills and empathy. We are looking forward to a term full of engaging learning as we discover how these nurturing nurses helped to make the world a better place.

PEACOCK & FALCON

This half term, Year 3 will be exploring the fascinating world of the Ancient Egyptians, discovering how they lived and why they are still remembered today.

In Maths, we will be developing our understanding of fractions, while in CLL we will focus on writing a narratives.

In Science, we will investigate sound and how it is made and travels, and in Faith and Belief we will be learning about Salvation.

Our school values for this half term are goodness and kindness, and we will be encouraging the children to demonstrate these through the curriculum and in their relationships with others.

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

CRANE & RED KITE

This half term, Year 4 will be learning about the Industrial Revolution! We will be looking at many different inventions of the time including; the steam engine, the spinning jenny and exploring the engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

We will also be applying this knowledge in our Art curriculum and creating some prints of important structures of the time.

BUZZARD & MAGPIE

What another busy half - term we've got ahead of us in Year 5! The children will be studying the history of Ernest Shackleton and will learn why he became such a famous explorer of his time. Using their research and knowledge, the children will create newspaper reports to report key events that happened through Shackleton's expedition. On the first day back, for our 'Stunning Starter', pupils studied the artwork of the illustrator 'William Grill' from our class book, 'Shackleton's Journey'. They will recreate their own piece of art in the same style. This will require the children to think carefully about their choice of colours and build tone, texture and pattern to add to manipulate the visual elements of their work. We will finish this half-term with a fun team-building event run by WiseUp. This will encourage the children to work as a group solving puzzles and a range of activities. This aims to recreate elements of Shackleton's journey by demonstrating how to work in a team.

KESTREL & EAGLE

Year 6 have returned after half-term with a fantastic attitude and a brilliant mind-set - ready to learn, challenge themselves and make the most of every opportunity. We are so proud of the maturity and determination they are already showing. We've got this, Year 6!

This term, we are continuing our exciting Science topic on animals, with a deeper focus on evolution and inheritance. The children will be exploring how characteristics are passed from one generation to the next, how species adapt over time, and the work of influential scientists such as Charles Darwin. Lessons will be practical, investigative and full of discussion to really develop the children's scientific thinking.

To enrich our learning even further, we are thrilled to be welcoming a veterinary nurse into school to lead a special workshop. This will give the children a real-life insight into animal care, adaptation and genetics in practice - a fantastic opportunity to bring our classroom learning to life.

Our Science learning will closely link with our English lessons, where pupils will be developing their writing through persuasive pieces, explanations and reports linked to our evolution topic. It's wonderful to see the children making meaningful connections across subjects and applying their knowledge in different contexts.

In Maths, we will be focusing on key areas including fractions, decimals and percentages, as well as area, perimeter and volume, and statistics. The children will be building fluency, deepening their reasoning skills and applying their knowledge to solve increasingly complex problems. These are vital skills that will support them not only in SATs, but as they transition to secondary school.

SATs preparation is well underway. We are continuing to strengthen core skills, practise test techniques and build confidence in a calm and supportive environment. Our aim is for every child to feel prepared, capable and proud of their progress. SATs are just one part of their journey, and we are focused on ensuring they feel reassured and supported every step of the way. With their positive attitude and continued hard work, we know they can achieve their very best.

It's shaping up to be a busy and exciting term and with such a strong start, Year 6 are ready to thrive.

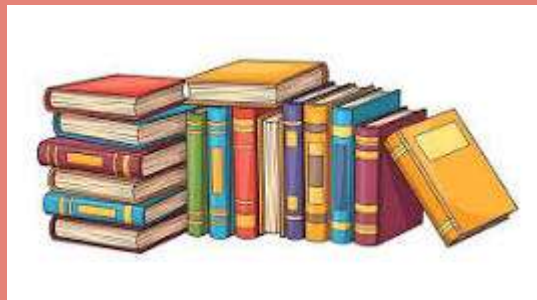
We are proud of you all - let's keep going. We've got this, Year 6!



The children have been thoroughly enjoying their Forest School sessions this term. Despite the muddy conditions, they have shown great enthusiasm and resilience, embracing the outdoor environment with confidence and excitement.

This term, there has been a strong focus on developing practical skills through the increased use of tools, with children learning how to use them safely and responsibly. These activities have supported the development of fine motor skills, teamwork, and problem-solving, while also building independence and self-confidence.

Forest School continues to provide a valuable opportunity for children to explore, experiment, and learn through hands-on experiences in nature. The children consistently demonstrate happiness and engagement during sessions, making outdoor learning a meaningful and enjoyable part of their school experience.



School Library

The children have been enjoying regular visits to the library, and it has been wonderful to see the joy and enthusiasm on their faces. Our librarians have also been working extremely hard to check every book on the shelves, ensuring that all returned books are accounted for. Despite this effort, we still have a number of outstanding library books.

I have recently received several books that children discovered at home—thank you for returning these. We kindly ask families to continue checking bookshelves at home for any items that may belong to the school library. School library books can be identified by a barcode located on the first or second page. Your support in helping us reunite these books with the library is greatly appreciated.

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

Online Safety & Use of Mobile Phones

YouTube Safety Update: New Parental Controls

YouTube have published their latest update on how parents can support their child on YouTube. YouTube will now allow parents to set the amount of time viewing Shorts – this can even be set to zero. YouTube Shorts are short videos, usually less than 60 seconds long, which when continuously watched, can lead to excessive screentime. Furthermore, parents will also be able to set bedtime and 'take a break' reminders. You can find out more here:

<https://blog.youtube/news-and-events/updates-youtube-supervised-accounts-teens/>

If you would like to find out more about supervised accounts on YouTube, then this article explains the different settings available:

https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/10315420?hl=en-GB&ref_topic=15279060&sjid=15225282118002181205-EU

Mobile phones: do you know the risks?

We know that children having access to a smartphone can expose children to risks including:

- Viewing inappropriate content
- Excessive screen time/use, which in turn can affect their mental health and sleep pattern.
- Contact from inappropriate people/grooming
- Cyberbullying
- Spending money on in-app purchases/scams

What effects do mobile phones have on children's mental health?

Compass discuss the research around this important topic, outlining the positive and negative effects that mobile phones have:

<https://compass-uk.org/services/compass-changing-lives/online-resources/what-effects-do-mobile-phones-have-on-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health/>

EE Online Safety Hub

EE has published age guidance for smartphone usage to improve children's digital wellbeing. In summary, they recommend that children under 11 should use non-smart devices, for children aged 11-13, they advise that if a smartphone is used, then parental controls should be enabled and access to social media restricted. Finally, for 13-16-year-olds they still recommend that parental controls are implemented and appropriate restrictions set up. You can read the full guidance here:

<https://ee.co.uk/internet-online-safety>

Could you delay when your child is given a smartphone with Smartphone Free Childhood?

The premise behind this movement is that all parents/carers of a class all agree not to give their children smartphones (therefore the level of peer pressure is reduced) for a set time or until a specific age:

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/>

What device?

When you think it is the right time for your child to have a phone, then 'Which?' provide an overview of some options available:

<https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/mobile-phones/article/buying-a-first-mobile-phone-best-dumb-phones-and-smartphones-for-kids-aA03C3Y8aTzr>

Further information:

<https://cybersmarties.com/behind-the-screen-how-algorithmsshape-what-kids-see-online/>

The BBC discuss algorithms in this article about doomscrolling:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zwnk3qt>





WEST MONKTON PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA

Friday 13th March **Easter chocolate donations**

Crazy Hair Day

Wear your hair in anyway you want, the crazier the better!

We are asking for Easter chocolate donations which will become hampers/prizes at our Bingo event 2 weeks later, which will be on the 27th March.

Collection points for the donations will be at each gate on Friday the 13th of March at drop off.

Thank you for your support

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:

Groups & Activities

As well as Sunday worship, we encourage everyone to get involved in living out their faith in all sorts of ways. The South Quantock Benefice plays a vital and visible role in the local community. We lead some groups and activities (from Bible study to pop-up play sessions) host others and support and join in many other local initiatives.

For more information on any group please contact the office 01823 451257

March

7th 10am WM Coffee & more –'Bedlam to Beds' - Changing the NHS one bed at a time.

9th 10.30am Lent Group session 3 at Tricia's

11th 10.00am KSM PCC in the Vicarage

11th 12.30 KSM church lent lunch

11th 7.00pm Lent Group Session 3 in the office

14th 10am-12noon Coffee morning Br church

16th 10.30am Lent Group session 4 at Tricia's

18th 12.30 KSM church lent lunch

18th 7.00pm Lent Group Session 4 in the office

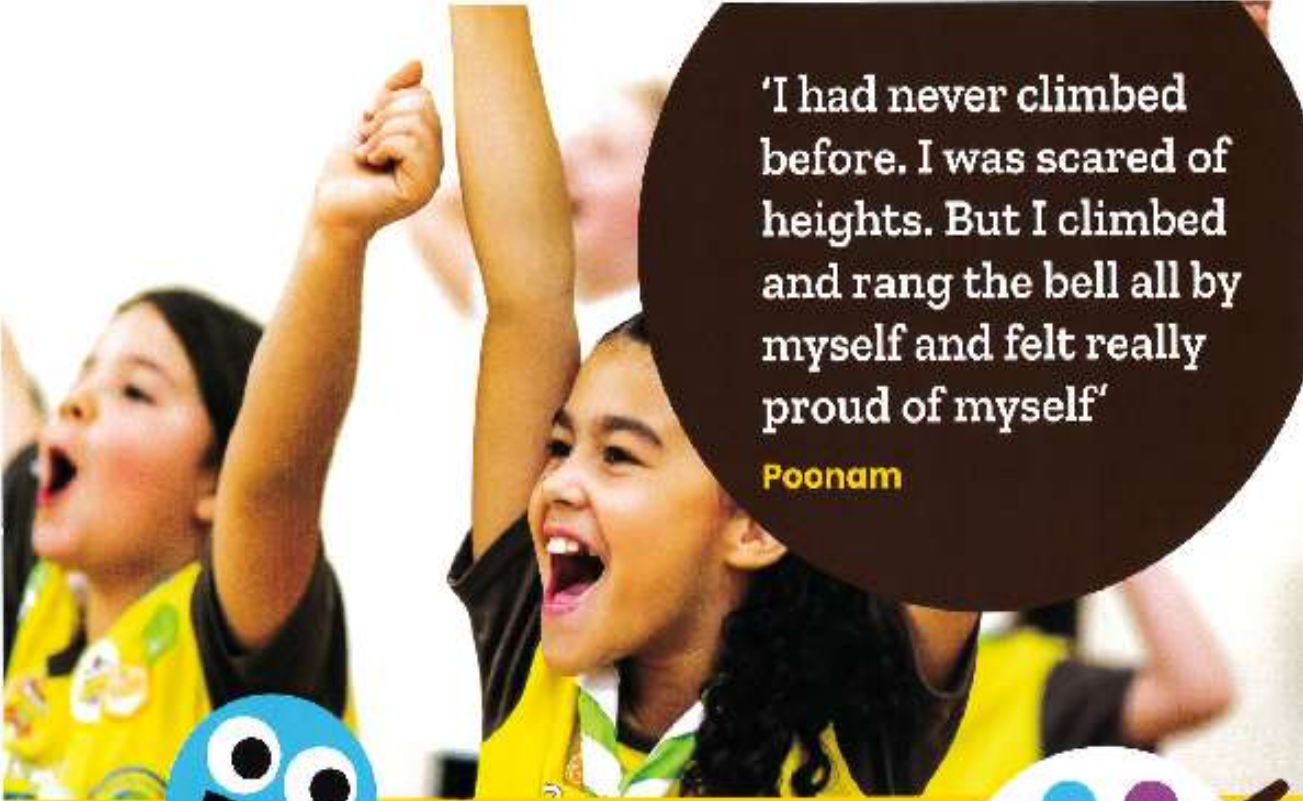
21st 3.00pm Mens Group – Titans Rugby £15

23rd 10.30am Lent Group session 5 at Tricia's

25th 12.30 KSM church lent lunch

25th 7.00pm Lent Group Session 5 at in the office

30th 10.30am Lent Group Session 6 in the office



'I had never climbed before. I was scared of heights. But I climbed and rang the bell all by myself and felt really proud of myself'

Poonam



Brownies



**Girls have nonstop fun,
learning and adventure**






for ages 7 to 10

At Brownies, we welcome all girls to explore their creative side, get out into the great outdoors and start to learn to look after themselves, others and the world we live in.



Girlguiding

Registered charity number: 308016



Join a local Brownies group [girlguiding.org.uk/joinus](https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus)



RISE.



SCHOOL GAMES LIVE

EASTER SPECIAL

Friday 20th March 2026

1:30pm - 2:30 pm

3 x 15 minute active fitness sessions live via Zoom.

Find a space, log in and get active in preparation for EASTER



REGISTER NOW >



To join the live session click on the link below:

[School Games Live Stream](#)

Meeting ID: 889 0263 9832

Passcode: 355271

**SCHOOL
GAMES**

LX Health &
Wellbeing



**Active
Partnerships**

GET YOUR CHILD INTO SWIMMING



**AND BE IN WITH A CHANCE TO WIN
3 MONTHS FREE SWIMMING LESSONS**

Everyone Active is pleased to be working in partnership with your school to help more children build confidence in the water.

Swimmers from the school who join lessons at Blackbrook Leisure Centre & Spa or Taunton Pool will be automatically entered into a prize draw to win 3 months of swimming lessons!

Why Learn To Swim with Everyone Active?

- ✓ Expert, qualified Swim Teachers
- ✓ Lessons available 7 days a week
- ✓ Structured lessons for all abilities
- ✓ A safe, supportive environment for children

Simply scan the QR code above to register your interest. One winner will be selected at random at the end of the promotional period. New swimming lesson joins only. Terms apply.










**STAY
AND
PLAY**

AT
BRITTONS ASH
COMMUNITY HALL,
MONKTON HEATHFIELD

EVERY
THURSDAY
FROM 10.30-
12PM
FREE TO
ATTEND

COME AND MEET
OTHER FAMILIES FROM
THE COMMUNITY

FOR 5 YRS
AND UNDER

FREE
TEA/COFFEE
AND BISCUITS
AVAILABLE

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT JESS AT:
ADMINEVENTS@WESTMONKTONPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK






COME ALONG TO THE
WEDNESDAY AFTER SCHOOL

YOUTH CAFE

A CAFE AND YOUTH CLUB FOR 11+
RUNNING EVERY WEDNESDAY DURING THE SCHOOL TERM

FROM 3.30 UNTIL 5.30
AT BRITTONS ASH COMMUNITY HALL

HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS
FREE HOT CHOCOLATE AND SNACKS
POOL/TABLE TENNIS
CRAFTS
MUSIC
A SAFE SPACE
AND MORE...




CONTACT KATE AT COMMUNITY@WESTMONKTONPARISHCOUNCIL.GOV.UK FOR MORE INFORMATION