

School Matters

The Fortnightly Newsletter from Newton Poppleford School

Friday 14th February 2025

Message from Mr Pope

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, Happy half term holidays to everyone. We hope you are looking forward to a short break and will have some time together as families. The half term has been another eventful one and I want to say thankyou as always to the wonderful staff team here. They work tirelessly for the children and put in so much effort to make our school a place that is happy, safe and give the children that sense of belonging that is so important for all of us.

This half term our enrichment calendar has included lots of opportunities for the children to expand their horizons and experiences. To name some of them we have had: a trip to the orchestra, visits from different cultures and religions, First Aid training, a parliament assembly, Break the Rules Day, Internet Safety Day, Mental health Week, the Fun Run (the list goes on). Once again, this happens due to the drive and willingness of staff to organise and arrange these events. In the next half term, we have already lined up drumming workshops, artist workshops and many other events and opportunities. One date of note which is always a dressing up highlight is the 6th March.

World Book Day Thursday the 6th March – Read your Way! <https://www.worldbookday.com/>

In our curriculum generally, we have been ensuring that we continue to improve and develop and this half term we received a review in history, geography and RE from our local authority officer Julie Stevens. Once again, it was very positively appraised and we look forward to receiving the report. Of especial note was the amount of information the children could recall about previous units due to our retrieval practice and the work the school is currently undertaking in oracy.

We are all excited that another of the PTFA projects (The sensory garden) is now in the final stages of planning and we envisage this being installed in the KS1 field near the bridge in the coming months when the weather improves. Thanks again to all of the people who are involved in making these projects happen.

Today, we held a special assembly for Mel Burns who is leaving our school today. Mel has been here for many years and is known to many of our families. She has worked in the pre-school for a number of years and as a HLTA. Mel has secured an exciting new position as a nursery+ practitioner. We are really pleased that Mel has been successful in this exciting new challenge but at the same time we will all miss her. She has done so much for the children here and she leaves with our thanks and best wishes!

We have also had some opportunity to celebrate the successes of children outside of school. A group of parents have taken on the Exmoor Challenge for this year – thankyou so much to them. Although we do not run this as a school, we are really grateful to parents for keeping this tradition alive. We have also seen a group of children perform at half time at an Exeter Chiefs game and they had an amazing time.

Once again, I wish you all a wonderful holiday and hope you enjoy the break period.

Kind regards

Mr Pope

www.newton-poppleford.devon.sch.uk

☎01395 568300

✉ admin@newton-poppleford.devon.sch.uk

For any Twilight after school club matters, please phone the main school number.

SENDCO

Devon's SEND Local Offer

Managing anxiety <https://www.devon.gov.uk/education-and-families/send-local-offer/about-send-and-the-local-offer/what-is-send/semh/managing-anxiety/>

Attendance

The importance of starting next term well. Please be prepared for some children to find it difficult on the first day after the holidays.

The below is from a study done by the children's commissioner.

The data confirmed my theory that if a child attends every day for the first week of the school term that is a strong indicator that they will go on to attend school regularly throughout the term. For example, children who had an unauthorised absence on any day during the first week of term had an average term-level unauthorised absence rate of 25% compared to an unauthorised absence rate of 2% for pupils who didn't miss any sessions in the first week.



Reception



Reception went on a Winter walk to 'Farthings' to look at what 'our tree' was like in Winter. We were surprised to see some flowers in bloom already including one daffodil! When we go again in the spring I wonder how different 'our tree' will look and how colourful the garden be?

Year 2



During our music lessons, we have been learning about Rock music, during our unit 'I want to play in a band' and the children in year 2 have become expert air guitarists and drummers in the last few weeks. Last week, we all had a go on a real electric guitar, which made us feel like real rock stars!

Adventure Island

This week children have taken part in the RSPB Big Schools Birdwatch, a really worthwhile project that helps instil a sense of responsibility for protecting the environment. Children also had the opportunity to make a bird feeder to take home and might enjoy some birdwatching in the half term holiday! To find out how to identify birds and help support them the RSPB website has lots of helpful information. www.rspb.org.uk



Year 3

On Monday 3rd February, Year 3 were treated to a fantastic talk by Year 3 parent, Rebecca Layman, all about her climb to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro. She showed the class videos and photos of her ascent and talked them through the items she had to carry as well as the food, toilet and sleeping arrangements. The class were fascinated to hear about the night walk to the summit and the amazing sunrise at the top. The talk linked perfectly with the current Geography topic of 'Mountains' and their non-fiction writing in English.

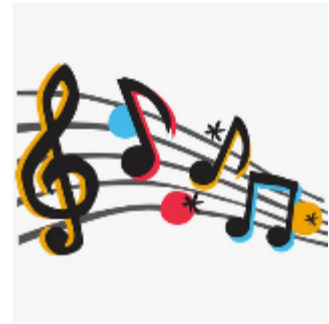


Explore the Orchestra

On Friday 31st January, Year Three, Year Five and a small group of Year Six children attended a free concert from Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at Exeter University Great Hall. The theme was 'Sea Stories' and they played a range of music related to the sea. Particular favourites were music from the 'Pirates of the Caribbean' and 'Moana'. The children were introduced to the different instrument families and were very impressed with the size of the double bass. They also had lots of opportunities to join in as we had learnt a couple of songs prior to the concert called 'Emerald Isle' and 'Into the Blue'. The children said they enjoyed *'hearing the sounds they put together to make the music', 'joining in with actions for 'Out of the Blue' and 'doing the 'singalong' parts'*. All the children



behaved well and were a credit to the school. A big thank you to all the staff and helpers who came on the trip.



Year 5 and 6 Sporting Activities

Two teams of Year 5 and 6 children took part in a Hi 5 'Bee' Netball Competition on Wednesday 5th February at Sidmouth College. One team played in a rotational 5-a-side tournament and the second team participated in a skill and gameplay focused festival style event. The both teams showed great teamwork and determination as many had never played netball before. Overall they came 3rd in the tournament.



School Fun Run



PTFA Update

As we reach the end of another busy half term, we want to say a huge thank you for your continued support of the PTFA! Looking for an engaging activity over the half-term break? Why not take part in our short story competition! Winners will receive book vouchers to spend at our upcoming school book fair. Don't miss this exciting opportunity to showcase your creativity!

Mr. Filer's Quiz Night was a fantastic evening, raising an incredible **£601!** A big thank you to everyone who took part, and if you enjoyed it, keep an eye out for another quiz night in the future. We're also very grateful to **Mr. Filer and Newton Poppleford Table Tennis Club** for their generous **£250 donation** to the PTFA.

Recently, we welcomed several companies to the school to provide quotes for new **KS1 and KS2 play equipment**, as well as to discuss plans for the **sensory garden**—exciting progress is being made!

Meanwhile, the **Allotment Working Party** has been busy planning what to grow and where. If you'd like to get involved, please reach out to **Anna Trossell** or **Georgia Trengove**.

We hope you all have a wonderful half term—and don't forget, when you return, we'll be kicking off **Penny Wars!**

Thank you again for all your support!



PTFA Dates for your Diary

- 24th February-7th March- Penny Wars
- Thursday 27th February- Year 2 cake sale
- Friday 28th February-Short story deadline to hand in
- All week from 17th March- Book Fair
- Thursday 27th March- Year 1 cake sale
- Thursday 3rd April- Easter Egg Hunt
- Thursday 8th May-Reception cake sale
- Friday 16th May- The Rainbow Rush colour run



Sidmouth Surf Life Saving Club
CALLING ALL 8 - 12 YEAR OLDS!

Are you interested in joining our Junior Lifeguard Sessions?
Lifeguard Training Saturday Mornings
from May to September
Optional Competition Training Wednesday Evenings
Swim trials on 23rd & 29th March 2025
Limited Spaces available!
For more information and entry requirements,
please contact:
membership@sidmouthsurf lifesaving.co.uk
Sidmouth Surf Life Saving Club

The poster features several circular images showing children participating in water sports and lifeguard training activities.



Sporty Stars
HOLIDAY CAMP
ENTER LEAVERIDGE ST LUKE'S CAMPUS

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Glow Sports
- Arts & Crafts
- Inflatable Football
- Inflatables Games
- Biweekly Cactus
- Swimming
- Sports & Team Games

GOOD TO KNOW

- Monday 17th - Friday 21st February
- Ages 9-12
- £42.50 Day / £112.50 week (10% discount)
- 8.15am - 5.00pm (Ages 9-11)

Join us this February Half Term for an exciting programme with at least 6 activities each day.

More information: 01392 964233 Visit our website: sportystars.co.uk

Accept tax free / childcare vouchers



WORLD BOOK DAY
COSTUME SWAPS

WORLD BOOK DAY
6 MARCH 2025

DONATE, SWAP OR REHOME PRE-LOVED COSTUMES FOR WORLD BOOK DAY 2025

NO COST, NO WASTE, NO FUSS

20TH FEB- 6TH MARCH

Libraries Unlimited Recycle Devon

The poster features illustrations of two children in costumes, one holding a sword and the other holding a book.

- **New Management Information and Finance System**

We are in the process of moving to a new software package for managing pupil information and finance. This has been happening over the last two weeks and will continue over the forthcoming weeks. The timelines for various parts of the migration are largely out of our control and so we are having to instigate changes fairly last minute, alongside training for the new system. This is significantly adding to the workload of the school office so apologies if you notice a delay in responses to queries.

Changes for parents

There will be changes that you will see as parents and we will guide you through these as they arise. The first change is that you will no longer be able to pay for school dinners through School Gateway after half-term. Instead, dinners will need to be paid via a new app called 'My Child at School' (MCAS) and we will be rolling this out after half-term. This app has a lot of functionality that parents will find useful but we will roll out the features gradually. It is likely to be a couple of weeks after half-term before you are able to pay for dinners in the app but we will keep you updated on this. Dinners will still be booked in classes in the usual way.

For Breakfast and Twilight bookings, clubs and trips we plan to continue using School Gateway initially but over time will migrate fully to the MCAS app. School Gateway will need to be moved to our new system and this requires that new accounts are set-up for parents. You will not need to do anything to set up a new account, this will be an automated process but you will notice a few days delay in being able to access once we instigate the transfer. We don't believe you will be able to see any historical information in the app once the transfer happens. We will keep you updated when this is happening.

Actions for parents by Tuesday 18th Feb

You will not be able to make payments in your current School Gateway account after Tuesday 18th Feb (next Tuesday, during half-term). Accounts have been synced today so balances should be correct. We would ask the following:

- Please pay any money owed for dinners in School Gateway by midnight on Tuesday 18th Feb.
 - Please book any Breakfast/Twi sessions in School Gateway for the week after half-term by Tuesday 18th Feb (this is the usual Tuesday booking deadline).
 - If at all possible, please also book Breakfast/Twi up to 14 March by Tuesday 18th Feb. It may be that we will be taking email bookings for Breakfast/Twi for a week or two after half-term depending how quickly School Gateway can be set up in the new system. This is largely out of our control.
 - Please pay any 'extended pre-school' balances for next half-term in School Gateway by Tuesday 18th Feb where possible (these are due by the end of half-term).
 - Please pay any remaining pre-school fees for the Spring term in School Gateway by Tuesday 18th Feb where possible (if not possible the debit balance will be transferred and the current deadline of 10 March will still apply).
- After Tuesday the office will run a final sync of accounts from School Gateway and will extract statements of account for each child. If you check your School Gateway account on Wednesday morning this will show your final balances before we move the system.
 - Balances will be transferred manually by office staff to the new system and new School Gateway accounts as soon as we are able.
 - If you have any queries with your account balances in School Gateway please email admin@newton-poppleford.devon.sch.uk by Tuesday next week so that we can investigate before transfer. We will lose access to the old School Gateway accounts once the transfer happens so the more issues we can resolve before transfer the easier it will be for everyone. When we return from half-term, we will keep you updated with progress.

Welcome to the February 2025 Scomis Online Safety Newsletter for Parents and Carers

Online Gaming

In the December 2024 issue of the SCOMIS Online Safety newsletter we recommended 'setting up devices' before wrapping up. In this issue we will sign-post you to advice and guidance available for parents and carers about Online Gaming. Knowing where to begin looking can be a challenge! The following websites have lots of information, summarised as follows:

Childnet—[Online Gaming: an introduction for parents and carers](#) includes advice on:

- How and where to play games safely
- The risks of Online Gaming
- How to report inappropriate behaviour
- Further support and guidance

CEOPS ThinkUKnow—[Gaming: what parents and carers need to know](#) includes advice and videos on:

- 3 ways to make gaming safer for your child
- how to find out about 'in-game chat'
- how you can tell what is an age appropriate game
- In App purchases

Internet Matters—[Online Gaming | Resources for Parents - Internet Matters](#) includes advice on:

- setting parental controls on games and consoles
- gaming guides for parents
- gaming guides for children
- gaming books

Family Lives—[Gaming | Family Lives](#) find out about:

- how to talk to your child about gaming
- how to game safely
- how to set boundaries
- why gaming is so addictive
- the positive sides of gaming
- how to encourage healthy screen time

watch the video on Pros and cons of social media: [top tips to help parents of teens](#)

NSPCC— Online Games: [understand the risks and get advice to help children play online games safely](#)

Find out more about:

- age ratings of games they play
- messaging and contact functions on the games
- trolling, griefing and scams
- how to report problems

Young Minds—[Gaming: A guide for parents](#) includes:

- what to do if you are worried
- finding professional help
- view their [guide for young people](#) on gaming and mental health

South West Grid for Learning—[Online Safety and Gaming](#) includes articles on:

- what is gaming?
- benefits of gaming
- [Online safety and gaming](#)
- basic privacy and security settings

Review the [Gaming Dictionary](#) and discover the meaning of:

FPS, OCG, MMO and much more.



Protect yourself and others from Online Scams

Safer Internet day took place on 11th February 2025. This year's theme was 'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online' The [UK Safer Internet Centre \(UKSIC\)](#) has advice and guidance for parents and carers which inform you on:

- starting a conversation about how to spot an online scam
 - how to respond to and report an online scam
- Use these top tips to keep you and your loved ones safe online.

Enjoy going online together and talk regularly about your family's online lives

Make sure your child knows they can talk to you about anything that they see or experience online.

Take online security measures seriously

Use [strong and separate passwords](#) for online accounts and [set up two step verification](#) (2SV) where it's available. You may also wish to [set parental controls](#) to prevent unwanted online purchases and limit children's access to harmful content.

Look out for warning signs that someone or something online cannot be trusted

"It just seems too good to be true!" – Other common signs of a scam include contact that you weren't expecting or being asked for money or personal information (think: bank or contact details, passwords, or phone numbers). Scammers use [other tactics](#) to manipulate their victims into paying, like playing with your emotions, or building a sense of urgency so you are rushed into making a decision. If you aren't sure it's reliable, don't risk it.

Remember that anyone can be a victim of a scam. Scammers are good at what they do and will target anyone. We all need to stay vigilant and support those who are *most vulnerable including children and the elderly* by helping them recognise what to look out for.

Know where to get help if something goes wrong. If you or someone you know has been the victim of a scam online, you're not on your own. Help is available and you are not to blame for what has happened. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, you can report fraud and cyber crime online to [Action Fraud](#) or by telephoning 0300 123 2040. Remember, if you or anyone else is in immediate danger, call 999 immediately.

Check the following websites:

[Childnet's Parent and Carer's Toolkit](#)

[ThinkUKnow's advice for Parents and Carer's](#)

[ThinkUKnow's interactive website for 4-7 year olds](#)

Need Help in the holidays?

Remember FREE advice is just a phone call away from

the [NSPCC helpline](#):

0808 800 5000

[Childline](#): 0800 1111

SCOMIS
Your ICT Partner

Dates for the Diary

24th February	Children back to school Year 3 Swimming (1 of 6)
25th February	Westcountry Music for Schools restarts
24th Feb -7th March	Penny Wars
26th February	Year 4 Rock up and Read
27th February	Year 2 Cake sale Year 4 and 5 Artist Workshop
28th February	Short story deadline
3rd March	Year 3 Swimming (2 of 6)
5th March	Year 5 and 6 Girls football event - selected children only
10th March	Year 3 Swimming (3 of 6)
13th March	Year 3 Trip
17th - 21st March	PTFA School Book Fair
17th March	Year 3 Swimming (4 of 6)
19th March	Year 1 and 2 Multiskills
24th March	Year 3 Swimming (5 of 6)
25th March	Parent drop in Dogs trust in
27th March	Year 1 Cake sale
31st March	Year 3 Swimming (6 of 6)
3rd April	PTFA Easter Egg Hunt
8th May	Reception Cake Sale
16th May	PTFA The rainbow Rush Colour Run