School Matters

The Fortnightly Newsletter from Newton Poppleford School

Friday 18th September 2026

Message from Mr Pope

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over the first two weeks, the children have engaged really well with their learning activities and settled back into school life. The teacher's have been talking about how well they have applied themselves to their lessons and the general feeling around the school has been a positive one.

You will have seen that we will have a change in our teaching team at Christmas and I would once again like to offer my thanks and best wishes to Mary Raffell on the next steps in her journey.

Recruiting Teaching Assistants

We are looking for the right people to join our team and our advertising will be going out imminently. This is available to view on the website now. We have a permanent post and also some flexibility in our part time roles. If you know of anyone who can work in wonderful school that could make a difference to our children please do make them aware – we would love to have a conversation.

Juniper Application

The school will shortly be sending you an invitation to join the Juniper application and sign up for your children. If you have multiple children in the school, you may receive multiple actions. The teachers have received training on this application. Currently there is a technical glitch that we are waiting for the developer to address as all children are currently showing twice on the system.

Training and Outward Focus

I have been lucky enough to attend three different collaborative events this week involving schools across Devon. These events have been focused on ensuring partnership working and sharing best practice across localities. This is a very important strategic direction from the local authority (and nationally). The school's links with other schools across the Sidmouth learning Community have always been strong and we are looking to ensure that the services we engage with to support our families and community are known to us and you. I am hopeful this work will support our children and lead to an improved understanding of and access to vital support.

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.

This year the staff team and I have set a clear direction and purpose to our school-based activities and we have a number of priorities we are working towards. Two of these that are central to our undertaking are below. One I would draw attention to, is our desire to excel in the area of personal development for our children. We feel this is central and vital to achieving success in their educational journey preparing them for success in their next steps.

⇒ To ensure the school development in teaching and learning is focused on adaptive practice to meet the needs of all learners.

⇒ To maintain and develop an effective Enrichment framework so that the school is able to judge itself as at a "strong or exceptional" standard against the Ofsted frameworks for personal development.

We are also looking to form a new informal school improvement partnership to ensure we remain current, share best practice and hold our professional standards with rigour and support. More information will follow when finalised.

The newsletter follows on with the important things – what your children have been up to and achieving in school! I hope you enjoy seeing some of their wonderful achievements and activities. We look forward to welcoming you into school soon and as always, please do reach out to us if there is anything you want or need.

Best Wishes,

Ant Pope
Headteacher





Applying for Free School Meals

Dear Parent/Guardian,

From September 2026 the free school meal qualifying criteria is being expanded.

This change means that all households receiving Universal Credit will qualify for free school meals – no matter their income

What's changing?

From September, there will be two categories of Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility under the Universal Credit criteria:

Eligible targeted: this covers children in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less. These children will attract pupil premium and other disadvantage funding for their schools. Other education entitlements, such as the holiday activities and food programme (HAF) and the 'extended rights' element of school travel assistance, will be based on targeted free school meals.
Eligible expanded: this covers children who are in households receiving Universal Credit with annual household earnings exceeding £7,400. Children will be entitled to free school meals only.

What happens next?

If you believe you are eligible, please apply through the Devon Citizens Portal.

This is the quickest and easiest way to apply and will result in you getting an instant decision.

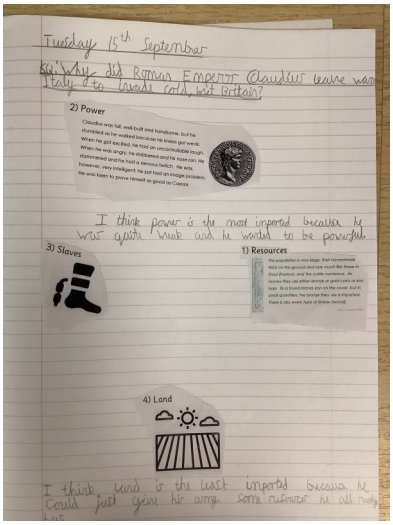
If you are found to be not eligible but believe you are, you can email evidence of your qualifying benefit to us at freeschoolmeals@devon.gov.uk. For claimants on Universal Credit, we would need to see the previous 3 months of Universal Credit statements to assess eligibility. If you have less than 3 months, please send however many you may have.

If you have any questions or need support, please don't hesitate to contact us at freeschoolmeals@devon.gov.uk, by phone at 0345 155 1019 or visit our website at School meals - Children, families and education.

Best Wishes,

Free School Meals Team

Year 4





We have been very fortunate to be able to purchase more books for our children from the Bookery! We have bought new books to support children moving on from their phonics programmes, new picture books for KS1 and a range of topic books to support learning in class.

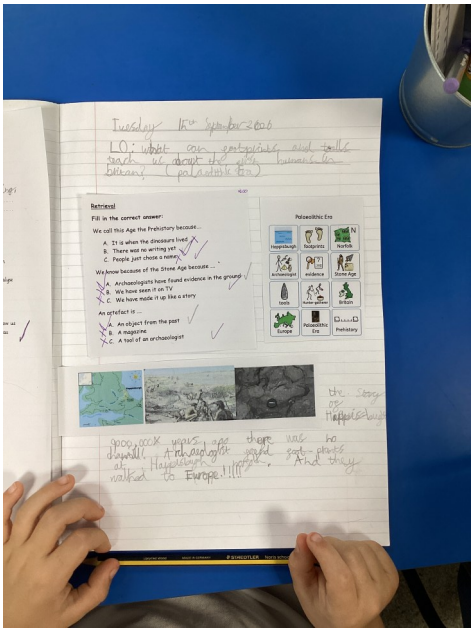
Year 4 have got off to a flying start by investigating why Emperor Claudius would choose to invade Italy nearly 100 years after Julius Caesar's attempt.

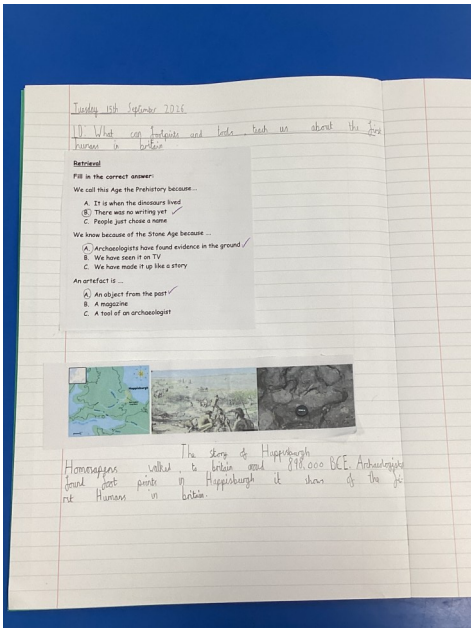
Year 2



Year 2 have started their new PE unit with hockey. We got our hockey sticks out and began developing our skills by practising how to move with and control the ball. Everyone enjoyed getting active, learning some new skills and, of course, making the most of being outside for our first PE lesson of the year!

Year 3





Year 3 have settled in amazingly over the past two weeks and are already excited to be taking the next steps in their learning journey. We have introduced our new topic, The Stone Age, and spent some time exploring Stone Age artefacts and learning about the important role of an archaeologist. The Kestrels were particularly excited to see photographs of the first human footprints found in Britain. These footprints were made around 900,000 years ago and were discovered in 2013 in Happisburgh, Norfolk! We completed some fantastic writing, summarising all that we have discovered so far. The children have shown great enthusiasm and curiosity, we can't wait to continue learning more about life in the Stone Age!

Year 1



Year 1 have been developing their mathematical thinking through sorting and grouping.

Using a range of objects, the children explored how they could sort and group them based on their properties. They used mathematical vocabulary such as same, different, similar, colour, shape, size and property, while explaining how and why they had sorted the objects.

A practical way to develop their mathematical language and reasoning skills .

Year 6





Year 6 have been getting to grips with how the heart works and exploring how it pumps blood around the body!

Using jam jars, straws, water and tape, they created their own working models to investigate how the heart pumps and moves blood around our bodies.

A fantastic hands-on way to bring their learning to life!

Adventure Island





Adventure Island is back





Year 3 have been making their own charcoal!

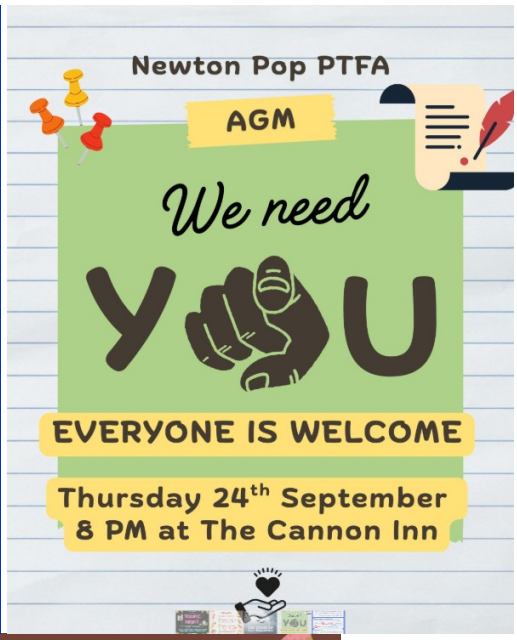
The children collected firewood and stripped bark from willow before using the fire to make charcoal, taking part in the process from start to finish.

They will use the charcoal in their art lessons this half term and when exploring Stone Age cave paintings.

PTFA


Newton Poppleford Primary School PTFA
SEPT 2026- SEPT 2027
BE PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL
JOIN THE PTFA
COMMITTEE ROLES AVALIABLE:
Chair
Deputy Chair
Treasurer
Secretary
Sub committee role avaliable- speak to Georgia to find out more
Make a real difference
support your children
meet new people
flexible roles

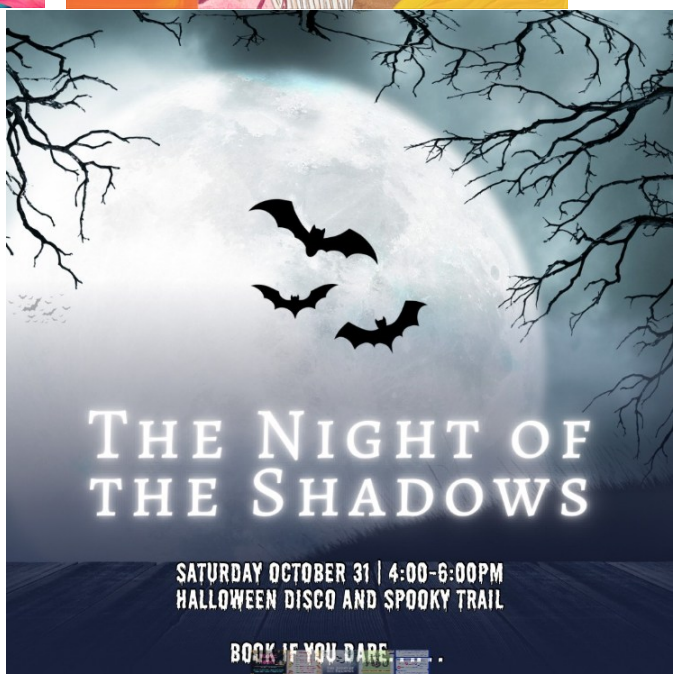

HELP US RAISE MORE MONEY WITH MATCH FUNDING!
What is Match Funding?
It is a fantastic way to double the money we raise at school events — at no extra cost to you!
Many employers offer to match the funds raised by employees for charities like us. If you volunteer at a PTFA event or help raise funds, your company might match the amount we raise — £100 becomes £200!
Which employers offer Match Funding?
Here are just a few well-known companies that participate:
M&S First sky HSBC ASDA British Gas
If you're not sure, ask your HR dept – they'll tell you if you're eligible
How can you help?
1. Volunteer at one of our events (even just an hour!)
2. Check if your employer offers Match Funding
3. Apply through your workplace — it's usually a simple form
Why it matters
With Match Funding, we can support school with more resources for our children — without asking families to donate more.


Newton Pop PTFA
AGM
We need
YOU
EVERYONE IS WELCOME
Thursday 24th September
6 PM at The Cannon Inn


NEWTON POP PTFA
TROPIC NIGHT
FRIDAY 27TH NOVEMEBER
£10 A TICKET INCLUDES WELCOME DRINK AND CHARCUTERIE BOARD
DOORS OPEN AT 7PM


CAKE SALE
FRIDAY 25TH SEPT
TOP PLAYGROUND AFTERSCHOOL
YEAR 6


Cake Sales
2026-27
Year 6: Friday 25 September 2026
Year 5: Friday 23 October 2026
Year 4: Friday 20 November 2026
Year 3: Friday 29 January 2027
Year 2: Friday 26 February 2027
Year 1: Friday 19 March 2027
Reception: Friday 7 May 2027
Preschool: Thursday 10 June 2027


THE NIGHT OF THE SHADOWS
SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 | 4:00-6:00PM
HALLOWEEN DISCO AND SPOOKY TRAIL
BOOK IF YOU DARE.....

Dates for the Diary

Dates for the Diary	
15/09/2026	Year 5 Swimming Lessons (1 of 5)
22/09/2026	Year 5 Swimming Lessons (2 of 5)
	Year 3 and 4 Cross country Event (Selected children only)
23/09/2026	Year 5 and 6 Cross Country Event (Selected children only)
24/09/2026	PTFA AGM
	Year 6 PTFA Cake Sale
29/09/2026	Year 5 Swimming Lessons (3 of 5)
30/09/2026	Year 3 and 4 Mixed 6 a side Football (Selected Children only)
06/10/2026	Year 5 Swimming Lessons (4 of 5)
07/10/2026	Year 5 and 6 Mixed Football (Selected Children only)
13/10/2026	Year 5 Swimming Lessons (5 of 5)
15/10/2026	Year 5 Trip
22/10/2026	Year 5 Cake Sale
26-30 /10/2026	Half Term
31/10/2026	Proposed Halloween Disco
02/11/2026	Children back to school



