



SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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14th February 2025

"Don't let yesterday use up too much of today."

Dear Parents/Carers,

Once again, we have arrived at the end of another half term and are now officially halfway through the academic year! Where has the time gone? As always, we have been exceptionally busy, so I know all of our pupils, families and staff are looking forward to a well-deserved break!

Yet again, it's been busy in school! We have been spreading the love with lots of friendship themed activities and you can read more about what the children have been up to in their classrooms when you reach the 'Shobnall Showcase' further on in the newsletter.



A HUGE thank you to the PFA for organising last week's valentine themed disco for the children! A total of **£330.49** was raised! The PFA are looking forward to the next event – the return of 'Easter Bingo' on **Friday 4 April 2025!** More information will follow in due course!

I hope that whatever it is you have planned for half term, it is restful and relaxing. We reopen to pupils on **Tuesday 25 February 2025** at 8.45am. Have a very happy holiday and we look forward to seeing you again in just over a week's time! Enjoy!



Essential Gas Works Postponed – Shobnall Road

We informed you last week that essential Utility works were scheduled to be completed on Shobnall Road, starting over half-term.

There has been a message posted on social media by Staffordshire County Council to local residents stating that,

"After listening to many local residents concerned about the forthcoming roadworks on Shobnall Road, we can confirm that these have now been postponed."

We've been working with GTC who were due to carry out these works over the next week. They are now being delayed until the work at Branston Bridge has been completed.

Once again, thank you for all the feedback you have given us."



Safer Internet Day

The children have also been engaging with Safer Internet Day this week and exploring the theme 'Too good to be true? Protecting yourself and others from scams online.' You can read more about the work each class has undertaken in this week's 'Shobnall Showcase' at the end of the newsletter.

If you would like to explore online safety to a greater extent yourselves, click on the link below for more information, useful guides, and resources.

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/parents-and-carers>

Valentine's Day

By the time the newsletter goes live this week, the PFA Valentine Disco will already be in full swing! Once the profits have been totalled up, we will let you know how much has been raised! As you know, St. Valentine's Day is celebrated every year on 14 February. Hundreds of years of traditions and customs have made it into this occasion that we observe today. Here are some interesting facts about the day dedicated to love:

- 🌹 Every year, thousands of romantics send letters addressed to Verona, Italy to "Juliet", the subject of the timeless romantic tragedy, "Romeo and Juliet." The city marks the location of the Shakespearean tale, and the letters that reach the city are dutifully answered by a team of volunteers from the Juliet Club. Each year, on Valentine's Day, the club awards the "Cara Giulietta" ("Dear Juliet") prize to the author of the most touching love letter.
- 🌹 The Valentine's Day tradition of giving a box of chocolates was started in the 19th century by Richard Cadbury, a scion of a British chocolate manufacturing family. With a new technique recently established at the company to create more varieties of chocolate, Cadbury pounced on the opportunity to sell chocolates as part of the beloved holiday.
- 🌹 During the Victorian Era, those who didn't want the attention of certain suitors would anonymously send 'vinegar valentines.' These cards, also called 'penny dreadfuls' were the antithesis of customary valentines, comically insulting and rejecting unwanted admirers. They were later used to target suffragettes in the late 19th and early 20th century.
- 🌹 The term "wearing your heart on your sleeve" may have origins in picking a valentine. During the Middle Ages, men would draw the names of women who they would be coupled with for the upcoming year while attending a Roman festival honouring Juno. After choosing, the men wore the names on their sleeves to show their bond during the festivities.
- 🌹 Cupid has been associated with Valentine's Day for centuries. However, before he was renamed Cupid, he was known to the ancient Greeks as Eros, the god of love. Eros, the son of Greek goddess Aphrodite, would use two sets of arrows – one for love and another for hate – to play with the emotions of his targets. It wasn't until stories of his mischief were told by Romans that he adopted the childlike appearance that we recognise today.



JTMAT Subject Excellence Winners!

Congratulations to Arham in Year 3 and Keyarah in Year 5, who have been chosen as winners of the most recent JTMAT Subject Excellence competition! Their artistic creations were bold, bright and unique and represented the JTMAT values beautifully! We are very proud of them!

They can both look forward to visiting Chase Terrace Academy at the end of March to work with illustrator Raj Dhunna at an exclusive finalist's event and workshop.



Parent Survey Feedback

Following on from the feedback provided by parents in our Kirkland Rowell Survey, we would like to discuss the *parking* in this week's newsletter, which we have sent many reminders about previously.

This issue, as always, remains a great source of frustration for many parents and residents who are neighbours of the school. Inevitably, even though the school has tried its best to help alleviate the situation, we continue to receive a significant number of complaints about this which is frustrating to say the least.

As we all know, the school run can be hectic, but we ask that kindness, respect and courtesy is shown to our neighbours. We always ask for parents to consider walking to school in the first instance, but if this is not possible, please consider parking further away from the school and walking the last five or 10 minutes. We are very fortunate in that The Albion are happy for our parents to park their vehicles in their car park so as to ease congestion around the school! Please utilise their facilities.

We also want to remind parents that there are rules on parking to avoid parking dangerously or causing issues for others. It's important that you do **NOT** park:

- on zig zags and double yellow lines
- in a way that blocks access for emergency vehicles
- opposite to or near to a junction
- on a bend
- near the brow of a hill
- near a school entrance, bus or tram stop
- over or on the driveway of a property
- over a dropped kerb
- on the pavement – this can cause problems for parents with prams, wheelchair, or mobility scooter users and the elderly
- on or near crossing points where a school crossing patrol operates, this can impede their view, making the crossing unsafe.



Unfortunately, these rules continue to be broken. Whatever, the reason, we ask for the support of the *whole* community in ensuring these rules are followed and that due regard is given to our neighbours and the safety of others. Our worst fear is for an accident to happen due to carelessness and/or lack of consideration for others.



If any of you have concerns or issues regarding parking in our school vicinity, these can be reported directly to Staffordshire County Council [here](#). Thank you for your thoughtfulness.



Coffee morning for parents

Got concerns or questions about your child's development?

Join the Early Years Special Educational Needs Coordinators for tea, coffee, biscuits and a chat.



Get advice and support about your child's development:

- 25 February 2025
- 10am to 11am
- East Staffordshire Family Hub, Waterloo Street, DE14 2NJ



- Right help.
- Right time.
- Right place.

Conscious Cupid

As Valentine's Day approaches, love is in the air, so why not spread some of that love for the environment...

Simple Swaps

- Did you know a mixed bouquet of roses imported from overseas creates approximately 32kg of CO2 emissions! Switching to UK grown flowers will produce less than 2kg of carbon emissions.
- Over 145 million Valentine cards are sent each year! Cut down on waste and give a wildflower card or send a virtual one.
- When it comes to wine, glass bottles usually have a higher carbon footprint than the wine! Buy locally or try buying wine boxes over bottles - and remember to recycle when you're done.



[Read more on having a sustainable Valentine's Day here.](#)



Online Safety Tips

Findings from Ofcom last year indicate that as many as 16% of the UK's population are currently using dating apps to form new connections. That's more than 11 million users in this country alone, and among so many, there are bound to be some who don't hop on these platforms with the best of intentions.

This is especially important to remember when we consider that an Ofcom consultation in the lead-up to the Online Safety Act found that some children and young people use these apps – regardless of their age restrictions.

It's vital that parents and educators remain aware of the risks associated with dating apps and learn how best to keep youngsters safe from them.

That's why this week's expert-led guide details the most prominent risks of these platforms.

FREE Uniform!

We continue to accept donations of old uniform via the box situated outside the school office for any parents who wish to donate. Please could we ask that these are cleaned and in good condition before placing in the box outside the school office. If you need any uniform, you will need to pop down to the **Family Hub** on Waterloo Street, DE14 2NJ. The Family Hub do not have the capacity to reply to emails but do have uniform on site all year round and are open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.00pm.



Reading Corner

This week's recommended read is for children aged 7+...

Murray the Pirate

Written by Adam Stower

ADVENTURE LIES BEYOND THE CAT FLAP!

Your favourite duo are back... MURRAY AND BUN!

Murray is a cat. Murray loves snoozing, fluffy blankets, and peace and quiet.

Bun is a bun. Bun loves... EVERYTHING!

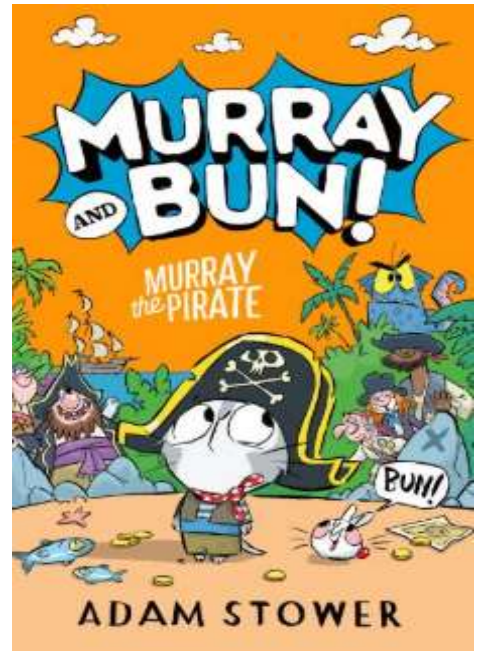
And together they are unstoppable!

SOMETIMES Murray's enchanted cat flap leads to the garden... but mostly it leads to ADVENTURE!

And when Murray and Bun travel through the cat flap and find themselves in a land of PIRATES, they're quickly thrown into their biggest adventure yet!

Kidnapped by the dread pirate Captain Patch of the feared pirate ship the Lurchin' Urchin, Murray and Bun discover a secret map which leads them to MONSTER ISLAND, where they must find BURIED TREASURE... or be made to walk the plank!

Perfect for newly independent readers and fans of *Bunny vs Monkey*, *Dog Man*, *Adventure Mice* and *Claude*, this funny, exciting, and hugely loveable story - brilliantly illustrated throughout - will delight adventure-lovers young and old.



Attendance

Please read the [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) which has further information if you are unsure whether to send your child to school or not. We are always happy to advise in line with this guidance, so if you are still in doubt, please contact the school office if your child develops any symptoms and we can discuss this further with you.

Children can come to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This includes general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose, or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above.

Please note, we can only accept and administer **prescribed medicines** that are in-date, labelled, provided in the original container as dispensed by a pharmacist and include instructions for administration and dosage.

If your child arrives late, it is the responsibility of the adult to report to the school office and sign the "Late Book", giving a reason for lateness. This is important so that the school office knows your child is in school and can mark your child in in the class register. The class registers in the classrooms close at 8.55am when lessons start.

When reporting an absence, please could we ask that parents contact the school office before 9.30am and state clearly reasons for absence. Let's keep working together to ensure attendance is as good as it can be! Remember, every pupil, every day! Thank you for your support.

This week's Attendance Champions are **Year 6!** Here are the latest figures...

Reception	96.0%	Target
Year 1	96.7%	97%
Year 2	100%	
Year 3	95.6%	Overall (to date)
Year 4	98.8%	
Year 5	91.6%	
Year 6	97.5%	96.3%
Overall	95.9%	

Head Teacher's Awards

Reception	Kethana R	Amal M
Year 1	Ava T	Hamza I
Year 2	Jack P	Sofia K
Year 3	Evie T	Yahya K
Year 4	Thea K	Alizah A
Year 5	Rosie T	Seb J
Year 6	Zarah B	Constance L

Lunchtime Star Awards

Reception	Ali Q
Year 1	Fred S
Year 2	Shasta S
Year 3	Bradley F
Year 4	Sophia W
Year 5	Charlie W
Year 6	Flora P






Team Points

Team Points	Claymills	Rosliston	Sinai	Trent
Points (Week Ending 14.02.25)	94	172	59	89
Position	2 nd – 3 Points	1 st – 4 Points	4 th – 1 Point	3 rd – 2 Points
Running Total	11	14	10	17

Team Point Champions

Congratulations to **Trent**, who have successfully won the team point challenge for this half term! As a reward, they can wear non-school uniform (ideally something blue) on **Friday 28 February 2025**.

Hot Lunch Options 25.02.25 – 28.02.25

WEEK 1	 MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Main dish	Margherita pizza with baked potato wedges	Pork sausage with creamy mash potato & gravy	Roast beef, with Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes & gravy	Chicken burger with crispy diced potato	Crispy fish fingers with chunky chips
Vegetarian Main dish	Roasted vegetable pizza	 Vegan sausage & mash potato with gravy	 Quorn™ fillet with roast potatoes & gravy	Vegetarian burger with crispy diced potato	 Crispy vegetable fingers with chunky chips
Accompaniments	Peas & baked beans Salad bar	Peas & carrots Salad bar	Carrots & cauliflower Salad bar	Green beans & sweetcorn Salad bar	Peas & baked beans Salad bar
Desserts	Apple & cinnamon muffin	Shortbread	 Flapjack	Jam & coconut sponge	Ice cream
Fresh fruit or yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt	Fresh fruit or Yoghurt
Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection	Jacket potato and sandwich selection



EAT WELL GROW STRONG

KEY

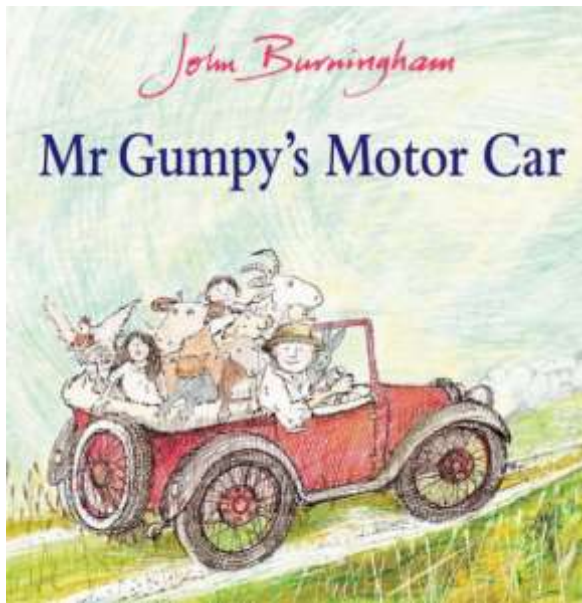
-  1 OF YOUR 5 A DAY
-  MEAT FREE MONDAY
-  CHEF'S CHOICE
-  PLANT-BASED (VEGAN)

A WORLD OF FUN WITH FOOD

Allergens and intolerances: All of our food is lovingly hand crafted and prepared on site daily. We have an allergen procedure in place, so please ensure you make our catering team aware of your allergens/ your child's allergens prior to using the restaurant. Our kitchens are used for multi-purpose production so we cannot guarantee the above dishes are completely free from allergenic ingredients or traces of these.

SHOBNALL SHOWCASE!

Let's have a sneaky peek as to what has been going on in our classrooms this week...



Nursery

Our adventures in Nursery this week...

The Nursery children have had a fantastic last week of the half term! As part of our maths learning we have been selecting shapes for space. We shared the story 'Mr Grumpy's Motor Car,' and used the puppets to retell the story and explored which box would make the best car for Mr Grumpy.

On Thursday, we were all eager to take part in our weekly session of 'Drawing Club.' We drew our representations of planes and the adventures we got up to whilst flying our planes. The details and level of description whilst talking about their drawings really have been phenomenal.

Love was in the air at the end of the week as the Nursery children listened to the story of St. Valentine. We also looked at the work of the street artist James Goldcrown and created

our own overlapping heart pictures to give to the people we love. What a wonderful way to end a fantastic half term.

Well done Nursery – you are spectacular!

Reception

Our adventures in Reception this week...

We have had a super final week to this half term in Reception!

On Monday we were treated to a visit from the dentist and discovered some interesting facts about looking after our teeth including:

"We brush 2 times in the morning and at bedtime." (Lakshmi)

"You only need a small circle of toothpaste not lots." (Ethan)

"We have to eat no more food after brushing at bedtime." (Minnie)

"Not too many sweets or Percy plaque will have a party!" (Mustafa)

"The best drink for teeth is water." (Ava)

We played a fun game by sorting lots of food and drinks to find which ones would be healthy or unhealthy for our teeth. We continued to explore teeth by practicing using the right amount of toothpaste to brush some model teeth.

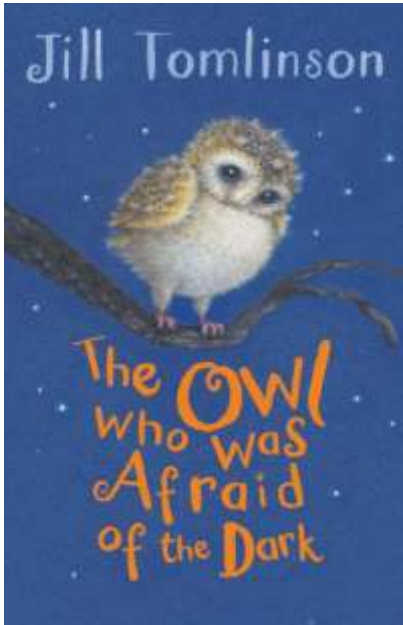
It was a great way to end the week on Valentine's Day as we discovered lots of information about this exciting celebration. We then had tremendous fun joining in with lots of activities including subitising, making patterns, sorting and making doubles with an array of hearts. We got creative by making love bugs, bubble heart pictures and an amazing junk model heart. In the message booth we matched broken heart words to images, wrote our own Valentine messages and wrote tricky words using a range of media.

We have had a fantastic half term and we are excited to return and explore our next adventures linked to our theme 'Food Glorious Food.'



Year 1

Year 1 have had a wonderful week and have worked exceptionally hard! In Maths, they have been learning to use doubles and near doubles and have tried really hard to solve all of their addition sums. In English, we have been writing sentences about pirate life and using the model text to identify the different things Captain No-beard got up to. During our afternoon session, we have been learning all about our sense of smell in science, how Jesus has been a good friend as well as all about Safer Internet Day. We also had our last session of Forest School where we did lots of bug exploring and found, worms, centipedes, woodlice and much more. Well done Year 1 – enjoy your break!



Year 2

What an exciting week we've had in Year 2! In English, we've taken our imaginations on a magical journey as we created our very own fairy tale stories. The children have loved weaving their tales and sharing their incredible ideas with each other. In Maths, we've been exploring the concept of grouping, and it's been fantastic to see the children so excited as they mastered this new skill together. Our Science lessons have been equally fascinating, as we've delved into the life cycle of a caterpillar, sparking plenty of curious questions and discussions. To top it all off, we finished reading *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark*, and the children adored it! It's been a week full of creativity.

Year 3

This week, our Year 3 children have been busy and engaged in a variety of exciting learning activities! In English, they worked incredibly hard to write and publish their final pieces on *How Magnets Help Us*, showcasing their fantastic effort and creativity. In maths, they have begun exploring fractions by identifying them in different shapes. Science lessons have been all about orienteering, where the children discovered how magnets play a role in navigation – culminating in the creation of their very own treasure maps to follow! In French, they have been expanding their vocabulary by learning about shapes and colours. Well done, Year 3! Keep up the great work!

Year 4

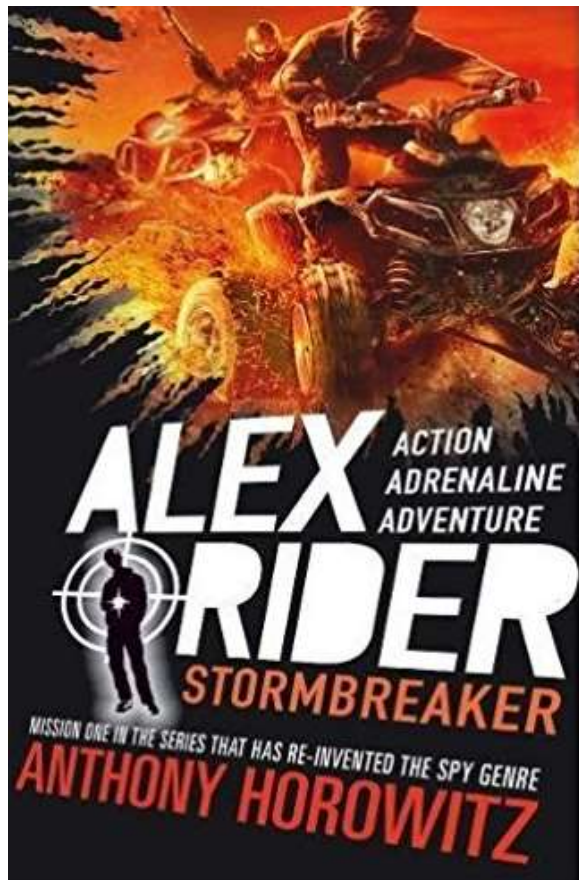
Year 4 have been busy expanding their knowledge and skills across a range of subjects! In Maths, the children tackled equivalent fractions, learning how numbers can represent the same value in different forms. Meanwhile, in English, they showcased their creativity by writing rhyming poems inspired by the weather – some truly imaginative verses emerged! In Computing, the focus has been on recognising and utilising repetition in games, a key skill for budding programmers. Over in Art, Mrs Keen guided the class through exploring 3D tints and shades, resulting in some outstanding artwork that



demonstrates depth and dimension. A special mention goes to everyone for their hard work in mastering their times tables – your determination has really paid off! As we head into the half-term break, I'd like to thank Year 4 for their enthusiasm and effort this term. Wishing you all a relaxing and enjoyable break – you've earned it!

Year 5

As always, Year 5 have worked incredibly hard right up to the end of term. In English, the children were



thrilled to complete their persuasive leaflets about Whitemoor Lakes. The finished pieces look fantastic, and they have every reason to be proud of their efforts!

In Maths, Year 5 have continued to excel with decimals and percentages, discovering how their earlier fraction knowledge is now proving invaluable. Their hard work is truly paying off!

Afternoons have been filled with a variety of activities, from exploring French foods and learning about online digital footprints to unleashing their creativity in Science and Art – designing pulleys and creating futuristic drawings.

A fantastic end to a fantastic term!

Year 6

This week, Year 6 have been busy with exciting learning! In maths, we tackled decimals, building our confidence with place value and calculations. In English, we wrote diary entries from the perspective of a chimney sweep, using *show, not tell* to express emotions. We focused on editing and improving our writing to make it even better. In science, we explored what fossils can teach us about the past. Alongside lots of revision, we finished the week with *Stormbreaker* and had thoughtful discussions to develop our oracy skills. A fantastic week – well done, Year 6!

Diary Dates 2024-2025

Event	Date/Time
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 14 th February 2025
INSET Day	Monday 24 th February 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Tuesday 25 th February 2025
Young Voices 2025	Thursday 27 th February 2025
Year 3 Class Assembly	Wednesday 9 th April 2025
School Closes for Easter	Friday 11 th April 2025, 2.00pm
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 28 th April 2025
County Council Elections – School Closed	Thursday 1 st May 2025
May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed	Monday 5 th May 2025
Key Stage 2 SATs Week	Monday 12 th May 2025 to Friday 16 th May 2025
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 23 rd May 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 2 nd June 2025
Reception Class Assembly	Thursday 5 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 1 Class Assembly	Thursday 19 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 4 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 th June 2025, 9.00am
Year 5 Class Assembly	Thursday 3 rd July 2025, 9.00am
JTMAT INSET Day	Friday 4 th July 2025
School Closes for Summer	Friday 18 th July 2025, 2.00pm
INSET Day	Monday 21 st July 2025

Spring Term Diary Dates

Event	Date/Time
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 14 th February 2025
INSET Day	Monday 24 th February 2025
School Reopens for Pupils	Tuesday 25 th February 2025
Young Voices 2025	Thursday 27 th February 2025
World Book Day	Thursday 6 th March 2025
Comic Relief	Friday 21 st March 2025
Year 5 Hampton Court Palace	Thursday 27 th March 2025
Eid al-Fitr	Sunday 30 th March 2025/Monday 31 st March 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Reception	Tuesday 1 st April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 1	Wednesday 2 nd April 2025
Key Stage 2 SATs Meeting for Parents	Wednesday 2 nd April 2025, 3.30pm, Year 6 Classroom
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 2	Thursday 3 rd April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 3	Friday 4 th April 2025
PFA Easter Bingo	Friday 4 th April 2025, 5.00pm
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 4	Monday 7 th April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 5	Tuesday 8 th April 2025
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 6	Wednesday 9 th April 2025
Year 3 Class Assembly	Wednesday 9 th April 2025
School Closes for Easter	Friday 11 th April 2025, 2.00pm



Train to Teach
in Local Schools

Primary (3-7) · Primary (5-11) · Secondary (11-16)

Funding for Selected Routes
Full or Part-time Routes
Gain School Experience

The John Taylor SCITT
jtscitt.co.uk

John Taylor MAT

CEO: Mike Donoghue OBE MA (Hons), MBA, NPQH, NLE



Dear Parents/ Carers,

It is with great pleasure that we announce that nominations are now open for the JTMAT Exceptional Achievement Award, which all John Taylor Multi Academy Trust pupils are eligible to be nominated for.

The award, which is open to all year groups in all JT MAT schools, is an opportunity for children to gain recognition for their achievements. Pupils may be nominated for the Exceptional Achievement Award at any point in the academic year, based on the following criteria:

Primary Aged Pupils (KS1 & KS2)	Secondary Aged Pupils (KS3, KS4 & KS5)
County, National or International status in any given activity in the last 18 months. Grade 1 at KS1 or Grade 3 plus level in music or singing at KS2. Performing in televised programme/ film or National stage production. Fundraising for a charity over £2000. Success in overcoming adversity.	National or International status in any given activity in the last 18 months. Grade 8 level/ Diploma in music or singing. Performing in televised programme/ film. Fundraising for a charity over £5000. Success in overcoming adversity.

Parents, carers, staff, or peers can make a nomination using the above criteria.

Please complete the online form via this link: <https://forms.office.com/e/qcKcUGbQ4H>, the form will ask you to complete a short paragraph (please work to a maximum of 250 words) in order to provide further details regarding the nomination.

Once you have made your nomination and, in the weeks, leading up to the ceremony, please be advised that we will be in contact with you to request supporting evidence, which you should provide to the student's headteacher. Please be advised that you will be notified shortly after this process has taken place to let you know whether your nomination has been successful.

Please provide as many specific details about the achievement as possible, ensuring that you provide full details of which sport/ instrument (eg), the achievement involves.

If successful, students will be invited to meet with their headteacher, who will join a Teams call with Mike Donoghue OBE, CEO of John Taylor MAT, in which they will receive their very special gold pin badge award and certificate of exceptional achievement.

We very much look forward to seeing our school community embrace this opportunity and celebrate those who achieve the award. The deadline for nominations is **4pm on Friday 13th June 2025** and winners will be announced shortly after that date.

If you have any enquiries, please email jtmat-subjectexcellence@jtmat.co.uk

With Kind Regards,

Mrs G Martin
Director of School Improvement (secondary)

Mrs L Farmer
Director of School Improvement (primary)

THE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM IN SCHOOLS ARE **OPEN** OVER THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Monday 17th February - Friday 21st February
(excluding weekends and bank holidays)

If your child is experiencing low level mental health difficulties, we may be able to help. Call us* between 9am - 5pm (Monday to Friday), leave your name and number and one of our practitioners will give you a call back to see what support we can offer.

We can help with:

- Low mood
- Anxiety
- Sleep difficulties
- Worry
- Panic

Burton and Uttoxeter
01283 504487

Cannock and Lichfield
01283 352113

Stafford
01283 352097

Tamworth
01785 301027



*Please note that these contact numbers are not to be used in an emergency.

BURTON & UTTOXETER MHST

Schools we work with:

- Anglesey Primary Academy
- Burton Pupil Referral Unit
- Loxley Hall School (Manor Hall Academy Trust) Secondary
- Paget High School
- Scientia Academy (Primary)
- Victoria Community Primary School
- Christ Church Primary School
- De Ferrers High School Academy
- Eton Park Junior (a deFerrers Trust)
- The Fountains High School
- The Fountains Primary School
- Lansdowne Infants (a deFerrers Trust)
- Shobnall Primary School
- Abbot Beyne Secondary School
- Edge Hill Junior School
- Holy Trinity CofE Primary
- Paulet High School
- Riverview Primary School
- Robert Sutton Catholic School Secondary
- Tower View Primary School
- Violet Way Primary Academy
- Dove CofE Primary Academy
- Oldfields Hall Middle School
- St Marys CofE First School
- St Joesphs Catholic Primary School
- Thomas Alleynes High School
- Tynsel Parkes CofE Primary Academy
- Windsor Park CofE Middle School

CANNOCK & SEISDON MHST

Schools we work with:

- Redhill Primary School
- Moorhill Primary School
- Bridgtown Primary School
- St Mary's Catholic Primary School
- West Hill Primary School
- Redbrook Hayes Community Primary School
- Littleton Green Community School
- Heath Hayes Primary Academy
- Churchfield CofE Primary Academy
- Kingsmead School
- Cannock Chase High School
- Cardinal Griffin Catholic College
- St Lukes CofE Primary School
- Chadsmoor CofE (VC) Junior School
- Chadsmoor Community Infants and Nursery School
- Five Ways Primary School
- Landywood Primary School
- Bilbrook C of E Middle School
- Chaselea Alternative Provision Academy
- Cherry Trees School
- Forest Hills Primary School
- Great Wyrley Academy
- Lane Green First School
- Jerome Primary School
- Moat Hall Primary Academy
- Norton Canes High School
- Norton Canes Primary Academy
- Perton Middle School
- The John Bamford Primary School
- Hazleslade Primary Academy
- Staffordshire University Academy
- Wightwick Hall School
- Longford Primary Academy

STAFFORD MHST

Schools we work with:

- Burton Manor Primary School
- Castlechurch Primary School
- Doxey Primary & Nursery School
- Flash Ley Primary School
- John Wheeldon Primary Academy
- King Edward V1 High School
- Penkridge Middle School
- Sir Graham Balfour School
- St. Leonard's CofE First School
- Stafford Manor High School
- Veritas Primary Academy
- St Patrick's Catholic Primary School
- St Leonard's Primary School
- St Austin's Catholic Primary School
- Walton Hall Academy
- Walton Priory Middle School
- Silkmore Primary Academy
- Marshlands School
- Blessed William Howard Catholic School
- Bailey Street Alternative Provision Academy
- St. John's C of E Primary Academy
- The Weston Road Academy
- Tillington Manor Primary School
- Blessed Mother Teresa Catholic Primary School

TAMWORTH MHST

Schools we work with:

- Kettlebrook Short Stay
- Landau Forte Academy Qems
- Moorgate Primary Academy
- St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary
- Two Rivers High School
- Oakhill Primary School
- Glascote Academy
- Lakeside CP School
- Amington Heath Primary
- Two Rivers School
- Anker Moor Primary Academy
- Landau Forte Amington
- Two Gates Primary
- Hanbury's Farm Primary
- Tamworth Enterprise College
- Landau Forte Academy 6th Form
- Ashcroft Infants School
- Florendine Primary School
- Dosthill Primary School
- Landau Forte Academy Greenacres
- Anker Valley Primary School
- The Woodlands Community Primary
- Birds Bush Primary
- Three Peaks Primary Academy
- Stoneydelph Primary
- The Wilnecote School
- Wilnecote Junior School
- Heathfields Infant Academy

LICHFIELD MHST

Schools we work with:

- Boney Hay Primary School
- Charnwood Primary School
- Chase Terrace Primary School
- Chase Terrace Academy
- Chasetown Community Primary School
- Erasmus Darwin Academy
- The Friary School
- The Rawlett School
- Saxon Hill Academy
- Queenscroft
- Rocklands School
- The Bridge Academy
- Willows Primary School
- Netherstowe High School
- St. Chad's C.E. Primary School
- St Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS & DATING APPS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Dating apps are used to help people find new relationships – whether casual or more long term – matching users based on age, interests, gender and more. Some may consider dating apps harmless to under-18s because they aren't able to use them, but effective age verification measures are quite scarce, and it's been known for young people to end up on apps of this type.

EASE OF ACCESS

The relatively lax age verification process of many dating apps makes them incredibly accessible to children who really shouldn't be using them. This carries the obvious risk of exposing under-18s to a dating scene populated by adults – who may not even be aware of the young person's true age. This is concerning when we consider the 'hook-up culture' common on these apps – with many people using them to arrange casual sexual encounters.

CONTACT AND CONDUCT RISKS

Once someone is active on a dating app, their social media profiles can be linked to the app and might be accessed by others. This can lead to random users 'sliding into their DM's' (sending a direct message) without consent. Complete strangers could start bombarding a young person's inbox with pictures, messages and sexual comments.

SCAMS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Some young people may feel they've formed a real bond with someone through online dating, but there's always a risk that it's not genuine. Scammers on these apps often build romantic connections with their victims – then once they feel they have their victim's trust, they begin asking for money under false pretences (such as suggesting they meet in person and requesting a 'loan' to cover a train ticket).

UNVERIFIED ACCOUNTS

As with all online interactions, you may not be talking to whom you think you are. Without paying a subscription, users of dating apps can often only view a certain number of profiles at a time. A TikTok trend has advised young people to set their age limit to 80 years and over – putting them in a sparse and more 'exclusive' category to bypass the usual restrictions. Unfortunately, this can lead to matches with someone much older.

PEER PRESSURE

The pressure to be in a relationship can be huge, and many young people use online dating apps as a cost-effective way to meet others. Some users find it difficult to meet people organically due to their lifestyle, and may not have the time or money to go out and socialise. It's also common for young people to set up accounts for their single friends in the hope of finding a match for someone they know.

SKEWED PERSPECTIVES

Dating apps can promote an unrealistic view of what makes someone attractive. With such vast options, some users can become both picky and extremely harsh about others' appearance. Ultimately, all you see on these apps are pictures (with no insight into someone's personality), and some young people struggle with the fear of being judged. Even when someone does start dating, there's a persistent paranoia that their partner is only one swipe away from a potentially better match.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK ABOUT DATING APPS

Let young people know that they can talk to you about anything, even something as private as their dating life. At school, the relationships, sex and health curriculum can assist with conversations around healthy relationships, consent and online safety. Emphasise the message that you want to help them make healthy, safe and informed choices. If they feel embarrassed talking to you, make sure they have a trusted adult who can help them.

ENCOURAGE DATA PROTECTION

Empower young people to protect their data and personal information. Explain why including things like their school, age and surname in their profile could potentially be dangerous. Make sure they know never to give out personal details, and that there's no reason for other users to ask for them. If they feel uneasy about a situation online, they need to speak to someone that they can trust.

VERIFICATION STAMPS

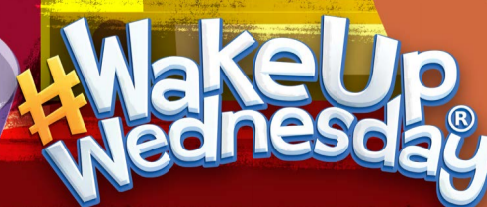
Explain that someone using a dating app should only communicate with those who have gone through a verification process. Online dating apps use a variety of methods to ascertain a user's identity, including scanning valid documents (such as a driver's licence or passport). Verification can also involve users taking a selfie to ensure that the photos on their profile match it.

REPORT AND BLOCK

Remind young people that they can always report or block (or both) anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable on any platform. Ask if they know how to do this and offer to help them figure it out if they're unsure. Every app should have advice on how to report or block another user, so be sure young people are familiar with the settings.

Meet Our Expert

Rebecca Jennings works at RAISE (www.raiseducation.org.uk) in the field of relationships, sex and health education, providing educational, age-appropriate workshops for pupils around the more sensitive areas of the curriculum – including online safety and healthy relationships.



The National College