



Spring 2026 - Newsletter 4

Messages From Mr Hitchcock...



Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, a huge thank you for making **World Book Day** such a brilliant occasion. The costumes were fantastic. I know they take effort in already busy lives, but the children absolutely love it. The energy and excitement around the school was wonderful to see. We are very lucky

that our pupils enjoy their stories so much, and I've included a graphic below highlighting just how important reading is for children's development.

A big thank you as well to the **PTA** for organising the disco and to **DJ Rob Da Dancefloor** for keeping the dancefloor full all evening.

We are naturally disappointed that we will be losing **Ms Spence's Forest School expertise**, but we know how much the children love it and we are already working on some possible solutions.

Please also remember the **public meeting next Thursday at 5:30pm at Exeter Library** about school funding. Quite simply, *Devon's children are not worth less*. After 16 years of declining funding in education, it's important we continue to make the case for fairer investment.

Finally, thank you to the **Cherry Class parents** who helped transform the outside space – it looks fantastic. I have also been really impressed with the **Key Stage 1 story writing** this week. The pupils have such great ideas and their handwriting is excellent. If you'd like to see some examples, there is a **Willow Class book in the library** that parents are welcome to look through.

Thank you, as always, for your support. Please read on for helpful advice and lots of pupil celebrations of our lovely school.

Mr Hitchcock

Headteacher

Text Messages From School - some parents have reported they are missing messages that are being sent by us because they are not receiving SMS messages, but the messages are going to the app. We have spoken to Teachers2Parents (the messaging system) who say they are unable to toggle the settings for us as a school. Their advice is to either allow notifications from the app (done in your phone settings) or to uninstall the app completely, so you only receive SMS messages and not messages sent to the app. Hope this makes sense!

HERE'S THE IMPACT OF READING 20 MINUTES PER DAY!

A student who reads

20:00

minutes per day

will be exposed to
1.8 MILLION
words per year
and scores in
90th PERCENTILE
on standardized tests

A student who reads

5:00

minutes per day

will be exposed to
282,000
words per year
and scores in
50th PERCENTILE
on standardized tests

A student who reads

1:00

minute per day

will be exposed to
8,000
words per year
and scores in
10th PERCENTILE
on standardized tests

 SCHOLASTIC

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13:46 72

**SMARTPHONE
FREE CHILDHOOD**

Leaderboard

School name

School	Pacts
Dartington Church of England Academy ↗	135
Woolacombe School ↗	110
St Peter's Church of England Primary School ↗	81
St Michael's Church of England Primary School ↗	58
Caen Community Primary School ↗	56

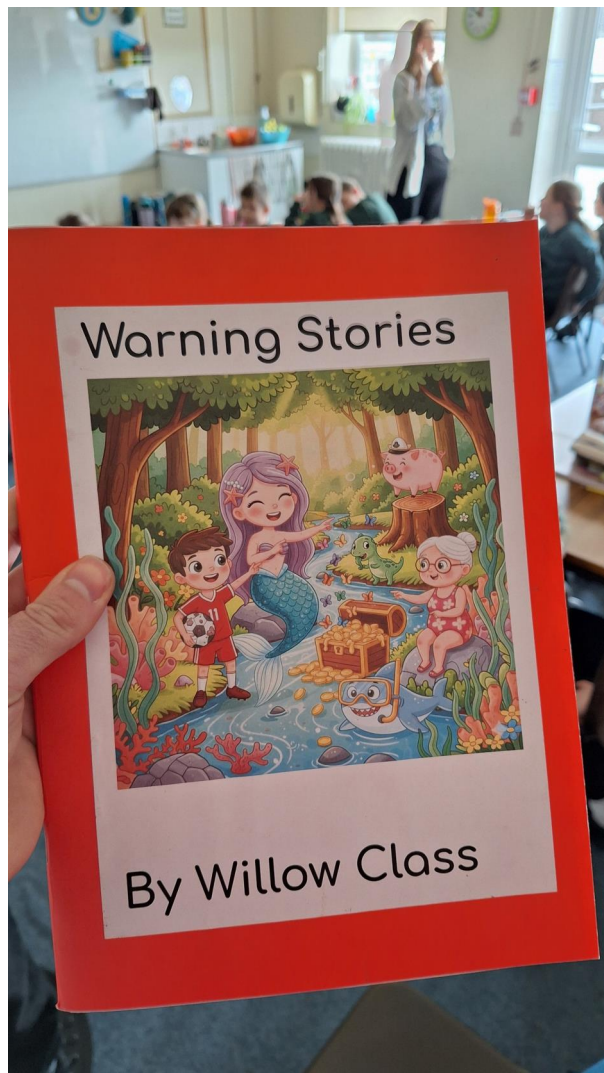
1 - We are the third best school in Devon! Keep off those smartphones!



2 - Disco fun with monkey!



3 - A big thank you to the Cherry class parents that helped transform the outside space - it now looks fabulous! A special thank you to Mrs Evans, Nikki, George, David, Laura and Michaela for their help last week. You are all amazing!



4 - KS1 writing - just ace!

Supporting Your Child's Emotional Health—For Free

We know that parenting is the most rewarding job in the world, but it's also one of the toughest! To help you navigate the ups and downs, we're delighted to share a range of brilliant, free online courses from **Togetherness** (powered by the NHS Solihull Approach). Whether you're looking for tips on better sleep, managing moving up to a new school, or understanding your child's brain development, there is a wealth of expert advice available at your fingertips.

Designed by clinical psychologists and health professionals, these courses are tailored to every stage of your child's journey—from pregnancy right through to the teenage years.

Explore the free courses here: togetherness.co.uk

Is the "Escape Hatch" to the Digital World Hiding a Real-World Need?

In a recent study by Jonathan Haidt and Lenore Skenazy, a surprising truth emerged: children aren't just "addicted" to their phones; they are using them as an **escape hatch**.

While 75% of kids ages 9 to 12 regularly roam virtual worlds like Roblox, fewer than half have ever walked down a grocery aisle alone. Many aren't even allowed to play unsupervised in their own front yards. The survey revealed that children actually **prefer** unstructured, real-world play—like exploring the neighborhood or playing sports—over social media. However, because real-world independence has dwindled, they turn to screens as the only place they can socialise without "hovering" adults.

As parents, our instinct is to protect, but "intensive caregiving" is linked to spiked levels of anxiety and depression in our youth. To help our children put down their phones, we must open the front door. By fostering independence—letting them run an errand or play at the park—we help them build the competence and confidence they crave.

Take the next step for your child:

- **Read the full article:** [The Atlantic: What Kids Told Us About How to Get Them Off Their Phones](#)
- **Reflect:** Does your child have a space in the "real world" where they can be unsupervised, or is the internet their only place for freedom.



Don't Miss Out: The Budleigh Lions Beach Challenge!

Time is ticking! We've already seen some fantastic entries for our "**Save Our Sands**" poster competition, but there is still plenty of time to get yours in.

We are looking for the best designs to help stop people leaving dangerous pallets and nails on Budleigh beach. The **Budleigh Lions** will be visiting to judge the winners, and the stakes are high:

- 💰 **£50 Prize** for a boy and girl in **KS2**
- 💰 **£50 Prize** for a boy and girl in **KS1/Reception**

Whether it's a drawing of a beach hero, a catchy slogan, or a warning about the danger of rusty nails, we want to see your creativity! Winning designs could even end up being painted onto local beach huts.



Deadline: Please hand all entries into the **School Office** by the **end of March**.

Let's help the Lions keep our beach safe for everyone (and every paw!).

Would you like me to put together a few catchy slogans the kids could use on their posters to get them started?

Who's Who? Mrs Vicki Stone...



Mrs Vicki Stone joined St Peter's 10 years ago as the school business manager. Her favourite teacher at school was Mrs Taylor who taught English because she was funny and kind and made understanding poetry and Shakespeare easier! She also developed a love for words that Mrs Stone took with her to college studying to be a journalist. When she was at school her favourite books were the Chronicles of Narnia, The Moonmings and Lord of the Flies. As a grown up she still loves reading and will read anything that interests her. Mrs Stone's son George was in year 2 when she joined St Peter's, he's now learning to drive a car and is studying A levels but when he was little she loved reading 'What Do People Do All Day' by Richard Scarry with him. Mrs Stone was born and grew up in Devon but then went to work in London after university where she got to travel the world. However she always missed Devon and finally was able to move back in 2011. She used to have a huge dog called Alfie that everyone said looked like Chewbacca (in the pic) and loved going out running with him. In her spare time she loves gardening and being outside in nature. Mrs Stone had never worked in education before working here at St Peter's; her wish would be that all schools were funded better!

Calling Remote Workers, Freelancers & Small Biz Owners In Budleigh And Nearby!

We're looking to start a new co-working space in Budleigh Salterton, and we've got a special offer for a limited number of Founding Members!

In Budleigh, right by the sea

Opening planned Spring / early Summer 2026 (subject to demand)

Founding members get early access + special pricing

If you're:

- working from home
- craving adult conversation
- missing structure or motivation
- wanting to meet like-minded locals
- fancy a change of scenery...this might be for you.

What's planned: Flexible membership options | A variety of workspaces | Fast Wi-Fi | Great coffee | Networking + community | Business upskilling workshops | Talks from local experts | Bookable meeting room | Optional pre/post-work & lunchtime swims This isn't corporate coworking. It's local. Friendly. Collaborative. And focused. A place to work well - without working alone.

OFFER: Founding Member perks - Register your interest now and receive:

- 6 months for the price of 5
- Early access to memberships
- Priority booking for workshops + events Places are limited.

What's Coming Up Next...

Week 3

January

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
.	.	.	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	.

February

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
.	.	.	.	.	.	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	.

12-18

January 2026

12

Mon

13

Tue

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Wed

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Thu

16

Fri

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Sat

18

Sun

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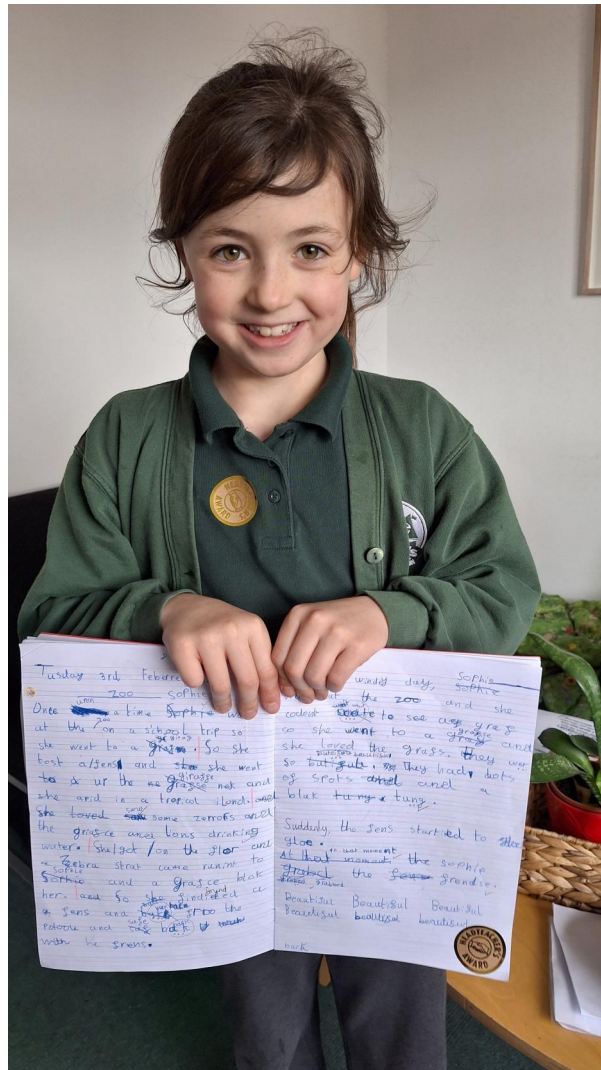
Don't forget to check the **NEED TO KNOW** page every Sunday, to check for events coming up in school that week.

You can access it by clicking the following link <https://st-peters-school.org.uk/class-info/>

Headteacher Awards...

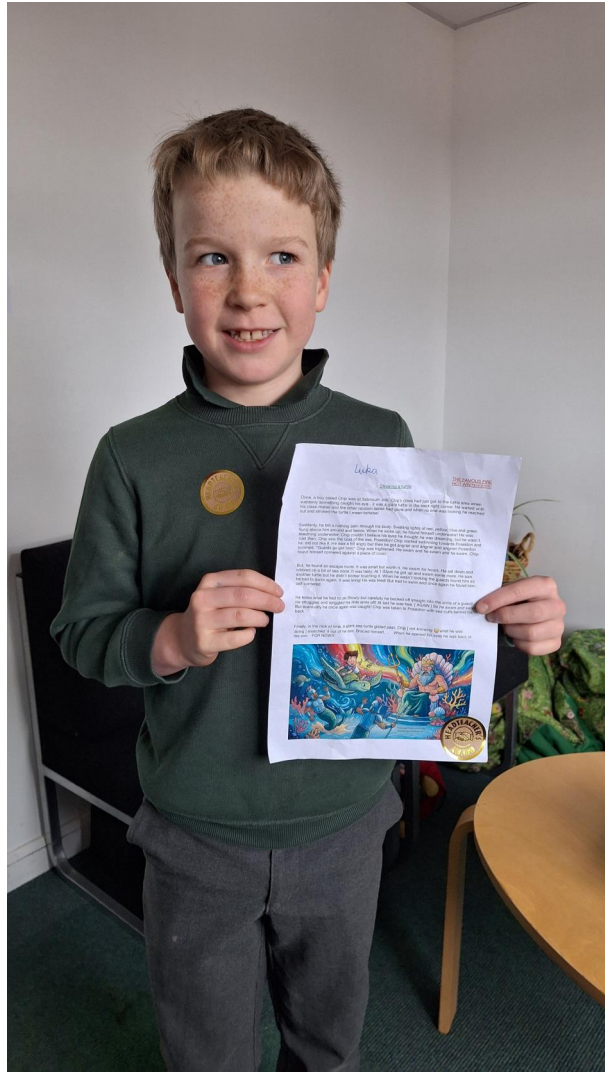


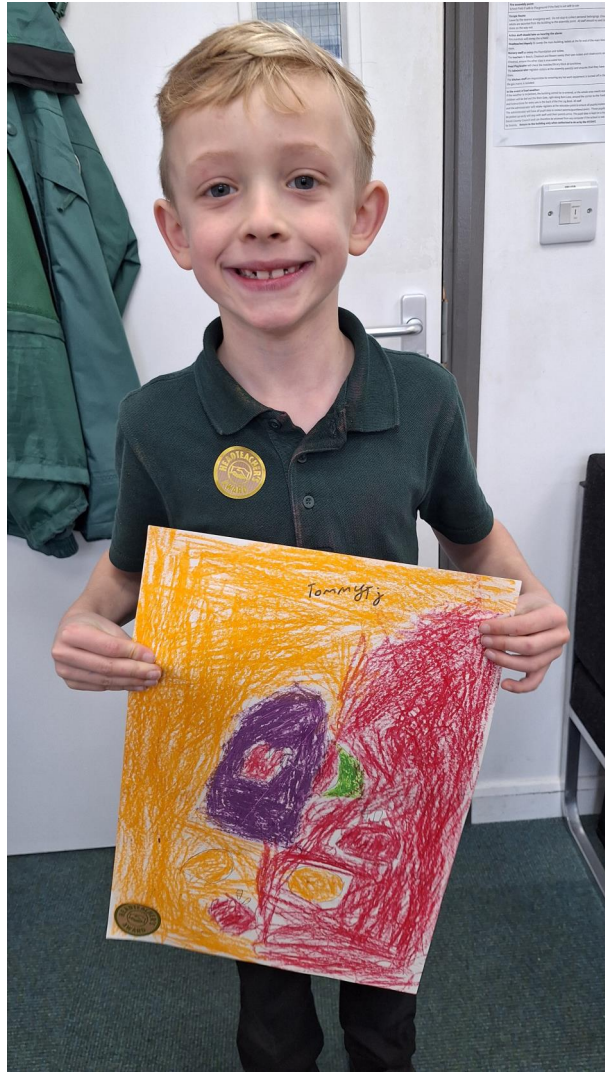




Tuesday 2nd February
On a fine day, Sophie went to the zoo and she
at the zoo on a school trip so
she went to a giraffe. So she
lost a/lost and she went
to a up the giraffe and
she and in a giraffe and
she loved some zebras and
the giraffe and lions drinking
water. She got on the lion and
a zebra that came running to
Sophie and a giraffe that
her and so she finished
a lion and a giraffe and
with her friends.

Wednesday 3rd February
Sophie went to the zoo and she
lost a/lost to see a giraffe
she loved the giraffe and
so but giraffe, they had dots
of spots and a
black tongue.
Suddenly, the lions started to
glow. It was a moment
that the Sophie
thought the giraffe
Beautiful Beautiful Beautiful
Beautiful beautiful beautiful

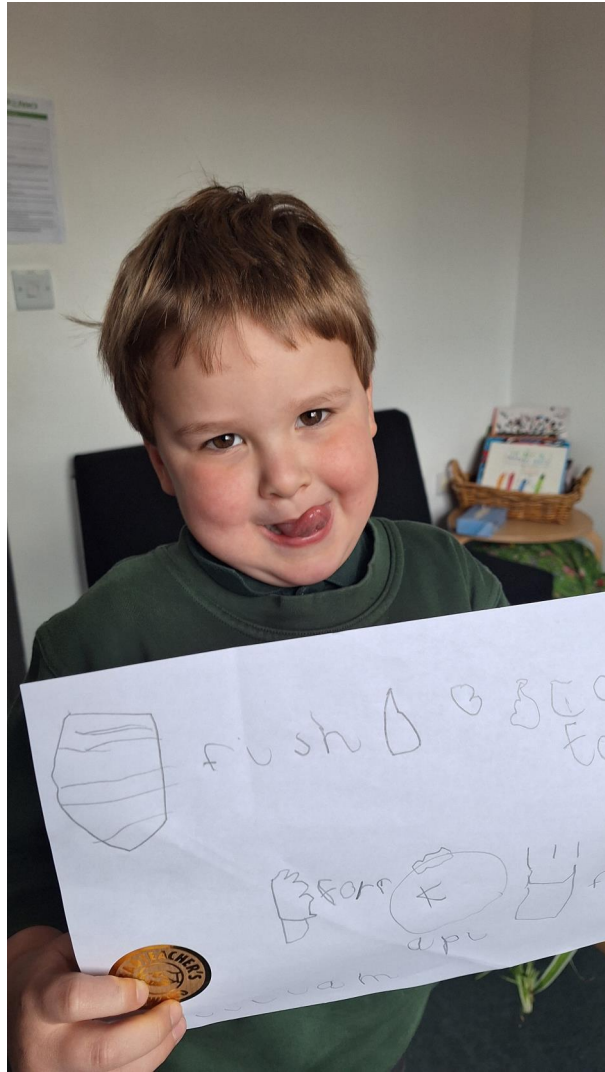


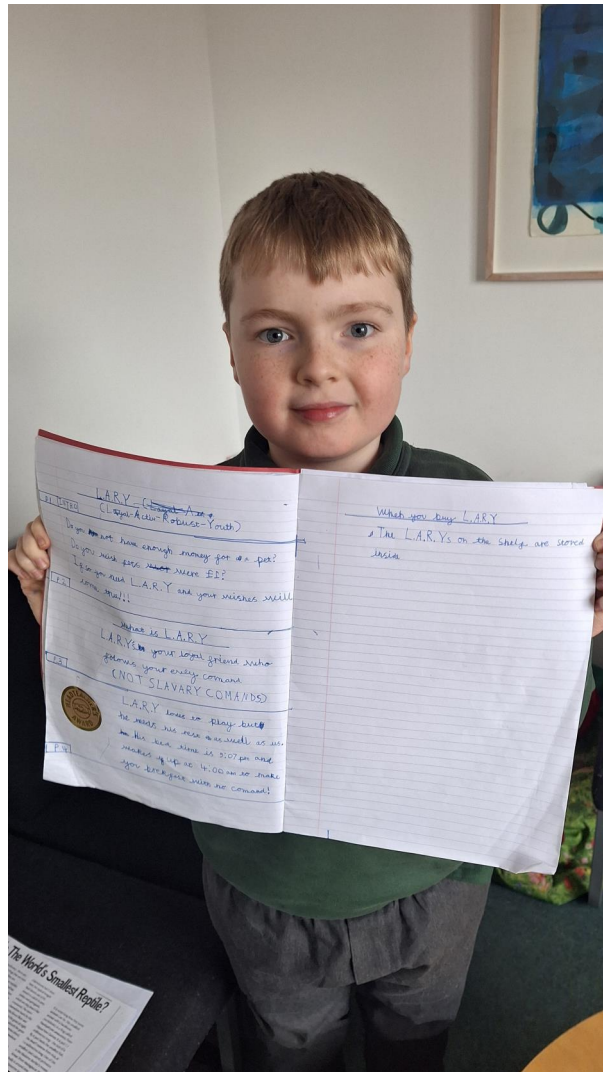






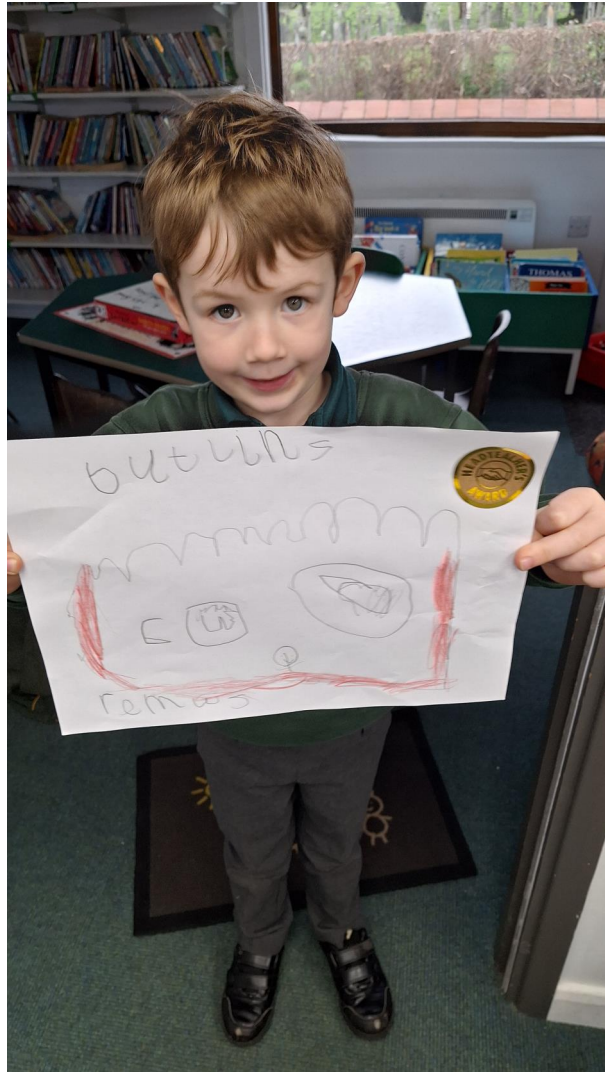




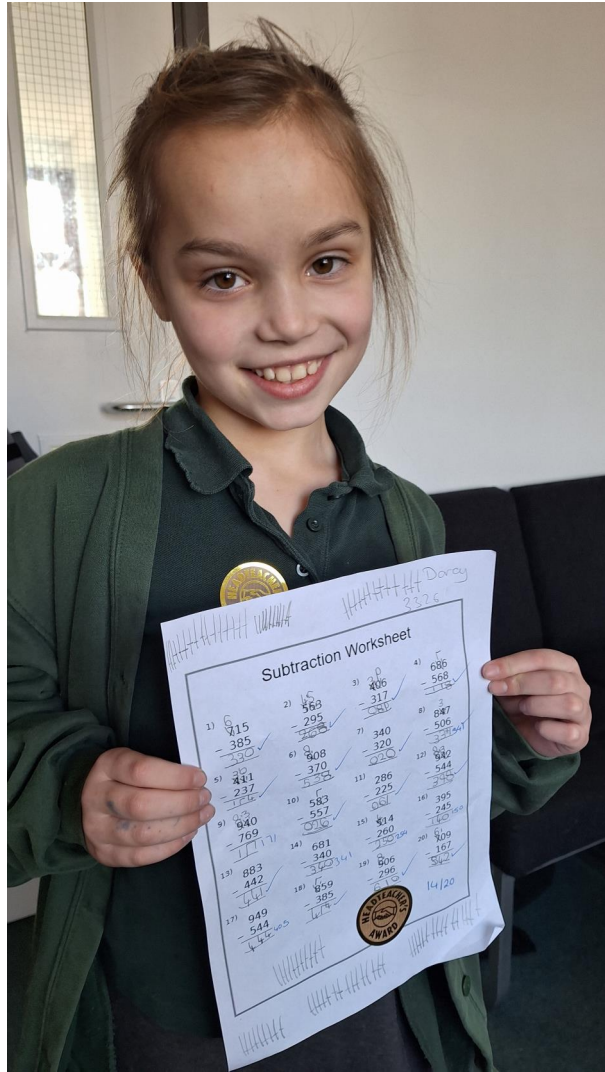












What's Been Happening In School...



Gym Fun in the Hall! Our Nursery children had a wonderful time exploring all the gym equipment in the hall today!

We love being able to introduce gymnastics skills to our youngest squad here at St. Peter's. With the support of our trained teachers, every child is encouraged at just the right level—knowing when to challenge and when to support. The result? Confident, strong, and empowered children who leave feeling fit, happy, and healthy! We're so proud of our little gymnasts!





Pupil Celebrations...



Well done to...Emily & Oliver, Holly, Hugo, Lex, Tilly, Florrie, Sofia, Karlotta, Eva-Rose, Jane's Gym Club, Poppy Marnie and Jasmine



5 - Well done to Emily and Oliver who completed their first park run recently!



6 - Well done to Holly who took part in a gymnastics competition recently and placed 1st on the bar!



7 - Well done to Hugo who played his first tennis tournament since injury recently and beat players from Avon and Wales, winning against one of the best Devon players!



8 - Well done to Lex who was awarded the TREDs award with his Withycombe Rugby Club recently!



9 - Well done to Tilly who took part in the British Gymnastics Pat Wade Classic recently and came 2nd. At the same competition, Tilly was scouted and chosen to join the England Squad! Amazing!



10 - Florrie entered an Equestrian photography competition and came 2nd for 'Best January Calendar Shot'



11 - Well done to Sofia who played in the annual U9 Girls Tennis County Championships recently, helping Devon come 2nd overall!!



12 - Well done to Karlotta who won a medal at her Squad Club Competition on Saturday!



13 - Well done to Eva-Rose who competed in the Exeter Dance festival 3 times recently receiving some lovely comments and scores!



14 - Well done to Evelyn who competed in a gymnastics competition at the weekend and placed 5th overall for her age group!



15 - Well done Arno, Orla, Lexie, Rory & Millie who completed Core Skills Explore Level 1 in Gymnastics with Jane recently!



16 - Well done to Matilda, Evelyn, Ruby, Ophelia, Aurora & Tillie-Mae who completed Core Skills Explore Level 2 in Gymnastics with Jane recently!



17 - Well done to Poppy, Marnie and Jasmine who got awards for moving levels up in trampolining this week!

Coming Up In The School & Community...




FEB HALF TERM HAF PROGRAMME
 ST JOHN'S SCHOOL, SIDMOUTH
THURSDAY 19TH - FRIDAY 20TH FEBRUARY
 9:00AM - 13:00PM OR 12:30PM - 16:30PM

Includes
Hot Lunch






SIDMOUTH SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

Is your child interested in joining our junior surf lifesaving sessions?

We are now opening new member sign-ups and invite **7-12 year olds** to join our swim trials.

2026 SWIM TRIALS

Sunday 22nd March
Saturday 28th March
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
Sidmouth Pool

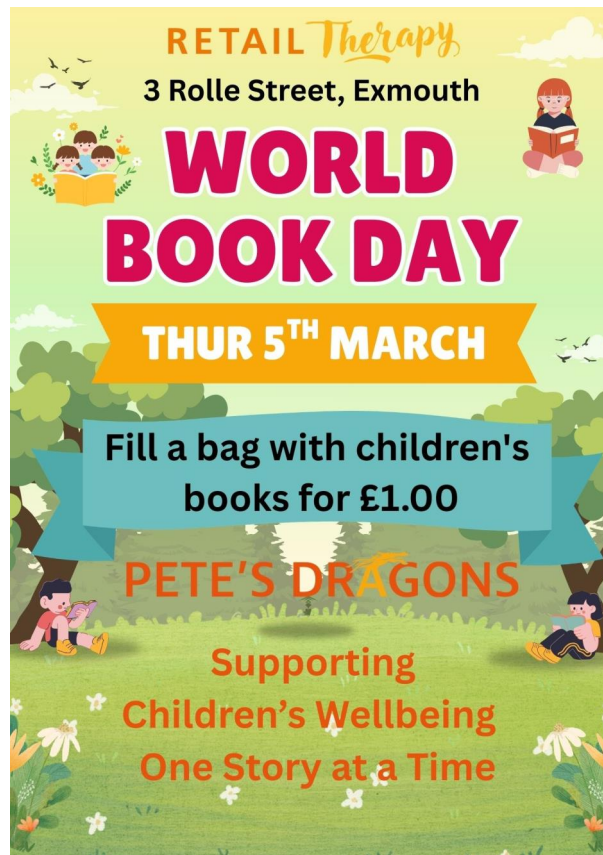
FIND OUT MORE, EMAIL:
membership@sidmouthsurf lifesaving.co.uk





WHAT'S INVOLVED?

- Lifeguard training **Saturday mornings** from May to Sept
- Competition training **Wednesday evenings**
- Pool training all year round



Budleigh Salterton Town Council

Town Clerk: Mrs Alice Gater-Wildgust
T: 01395 442245
E: office@budleighsaltertontowncouncil.gov.uk

Annual Parish Meeting

Your Budleigh.
Your Voice.

Why Attend the Annual Parish Meeting?

-  **Have Your Say**
Share your views, raise local issues, and help shape the future of your parish.
-  **Hear the Latest Community Updates**
Find out what has been happening in the parish and what plans are coming up.
-  **Ask Questions**
Ask the parish council and local groups about projects, spending, and decisions.
-  **Meet Your Community**
Connect with neighbours, volunteers, and local organisations.
-  **Share Ideas for Improvements**
Suggest ways to improve local services, facilities, and community life.
-  **Help Shape the Future of Our Parish**
Your voice can influence priorities for the year ahead.

Thursday 12th March 2026 Public Hall
7.00pm - Refreshments and Chat
7.30pm Meeting Start

Made with PosterMyWall.com

Hearts and Homes: A Fostering Devon Conference

Find out how **you** could make a difference to a child or young person's life in Devon.

Join our team of experts for a special in-person event to learn about:

- Fostering with your local authority.
- Training and support, including a Skills to Foster taster session.
- Approaches to therapeutic parenting and the support we offer.
- What children and young people want from their carers.



Friday 20 March



Future Skills Centre, Exeter

10am - 12pm or 1pm - 3pm

Register your interest at
fosteringdevon.org.uk
or by scanning
the QR code.



Inspiring futures. Changing lives.
Call 0345 155 1077
Visit **fosteringdevon.org.uk**

Devon
County Council

Fostering
SOUTH WEST

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- [Uniform](#)
- [Stationery](#)
- [Online safety](#)
- [St Peter's Fundraising](#)

Support the school with your online shopping - it's free and easy! All it takes is the click of a button.

Choose us at www.easyfundraising.org.uk

Contact Us...



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