



Countess Gytha
Primary and Preschool



Friday 9th February 2023

Countess Gytha NEWSLETTER

Spring 1 Edition

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Today marks the half-way milestone this school year! I hope that you enjoy seeing the hard-work and exciting opportunities classes have had in their recent weeks of learning since the Christmas break.

As you can see from the graphics, the autumn parent survey results continue to show the school in a very positive light. 100% of respondents felt that their child is happy and safe at our wonderful school and that there continues to be plenty of opportunities for enrichment and wider personal development.

One area that we will look to develop is the clarity in our expectations for all learners. We think that our outstanding outcomes in reception, Key Stage 1 and 2 speak for themselves but of course, we recognise that high expectations run far wider than academic measures. It is validating that all would recommend the school to other parents and there were some lovely comments to pass on to staff too – thank you. The school's summer survey will be available after the Easter holiday.

We will take the upcoming parent meetings at the end of March as an opportunity to continue to refine our school offer but as ever, if you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to speak to me on the school gates.

Please don't forget to regularly visit the class pages and other areas of the school website for even more pictures and updates of school life this year – thank you for your continued support.

With all best wishes as ever,

Mr David Gordon – Head Teacher

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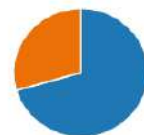
My child is happy at this school (0 point)

[More Details](#) [Insights](#)



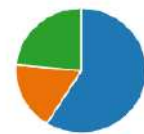
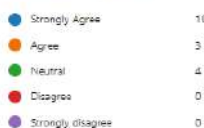
My child feels safe at this school (0 point)

[More Details](#) [Insights](#)



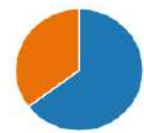
10. The school has high expectations for my child (0 point)

[More Details](#) [Insights](#)



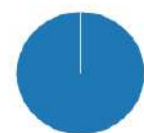
My child does well at this school (0 point)

[More Details](#) [Insights](#)



16. I would recommend this school to another parent (0 point)

[More Details](#) [Insights](#)



The Designated Safeguarding Lead
is Mr Gordon and Deputy
Safeguard Leads are Mrs Trusson,
Miss Bridge, Miss W Flagg and Mrs
Gillman. The school's Safeguarding
and Child Protection Governor is
Mrs Sam Clifton.

Sundries...

Choir Concert



Westlands Entertainment Venue: A Festival of Song on Friday 9th February 2024

Tonight, the school choir are performing in, 'A Festival of Song' at Westlands Entertainment Venue – keep an eye out for a recount in next half-term's Diary Dates.

Good luck choir!

Sports Update



Physical Education and extra-curricular sport continues to thrive at Countess Gytha. There were recent wins in the football at Buckler's Mead, the Basketball at Westfield and the Cross Country at Yeovil Showground.

Congratulations to all the students that have attended our sports events outside of school hours and thank you also to all parents, volunteers, the local community, and helpers that enable our school to attend these events and clubs.



All at Countess Gytha are excited for the challenges in sport coming our way in the second half of the school year, with netball and cross events in the first week back.

Mr Gallagher and Mr Bunter



Enrichment Club change over

Please note that the following clubs remain the same:

Film Club, Coding Club, Hama Bead Club and Art Club.

Children who were allocated Group 2 start in Multi Sports Club, Animation Club, Construction Club and Dodgeball Club from the week of 19th February 2024.

If you are unsure of which clubs your child was allocated, please speak to Mrs Annetts or email the school office.

Dear Parents/Guardians,

World Book Day 2024

This year, we would love the children to dress as their favourite character from a book. Your child can dress as a character from a fiction, non-fiction, comic or any other type of book they enjoy. If possible, please could your child bring their chosen book into school with them on World Book Day so that we can see their characters in the book and share our books with others in school.

Some members of staff are dressing up as words this year and will be dressing in an outfit that represents that word. For example, 'flamboyant, stripey or pollination'. Please have the word with its meaning with the child to further enhance our knowledge of vocabulary. Feel free to join staff in dressing up as wonderful vocabulary and a 'Words to spark ideas' sheet is attached.

During the day, children will get the opportunity to go to the Countess Gytha book swap where they will have treats and get to swap some of the great books that the children have kindly donated over the past few weeks. They will also participate in online events, where authors will celebrate reading and books.

Thanks to the PTFA, book-themed prizes will be given out for the best dressed boy and girl in each class. We are really excited to see the outfits and different characters in school and as always appreciate your support in helping your child to create their costume!

We are also running a 'Book in a Jar/Box' competition to celebrate World Book Day. Please see details below.

Many thanks,

Mr Gallagher

A L F B C D M I U G P E

100 Vocabulary Words to Spark Costume Ideas!

abdomen	egghead	lackadaisical	separate
abundance	elasticity	lightning	shortsighted
accomplice	error	litter	sinister
adrift	extravagant	luminous	tendrils
agitation	feast	midnight	threefold
agony	ferocious	monarch	throng
air	flexible	monstrous	tidy
aircraft	fortification	noteworthy	transparent
annihilate	fruitless	nourishment	tremendous
appendage	ghastly	obstacle	tributary
arrow	gigantic	outskirts	unearth
assemblage	gyrate	pierce	unequal
blizzard	headstrong	polestar	useless
blockhead	heroic	ponderous	utterly
bookworm	horizontal	proboscis	vacant
brilliant	identical	protuberance	vain
busybody	illuminate	quiver	vaporize
cascade	inflammation	radiant	vigilant
cavity	inflammation	regal	web
celestial	join	rejoin	workload
cheerful	killjoy	retract	writhe
closefisted	king snake	rickety	x-ray
collision	knothole	satellite	xylem
dangle	knuckleball	scale	yoke
decoy			zany
disguise			zigzag
divergent			

Miss Alaineus, A Vocabulary Disaster

written and illustrated by Debra Frasier • www.debrafrasier.com
Vocabulary Parade Kit © 2012 Debra Frasier

Book in a Jar/Box Competition

We are also running a 'Book in a jar/box' competition to celebrate World Book Day. Children are invited to think about how a favourite book could be represented in a simple jar or a shoebox.

There are some examples of jars below for you to have a look at. Any clear jar can be used, a coffee jar, jam jar or other. You can put carefully chosen items to represent your book into your jar, selected quotes from your book, perhaps even clues about its characters or setting.

Please make sure that any 'Book in a jar/box' competition entries are clearly labelled with the book that is being represented, your child's full name and year group.

All entries must be in school on the morning of Thursday 7th of March for judging. Winners will be announced in assembly on the afternoon of the 7th and the jars/boxes will be available for viewing by the whole school as part of our World Book Day celebrations.

Good luck!



Billionaire Boy



Gangster Granny



The Diary of Anne Frank



The Secret Garden



Alice in Wonderland





Thank you Mrs Crang!

Mrs Crang is stepping back from her role as class TA in Pendragon but not from Countess Gytha altogether. Mrs Crang has been a superb help every Thursday and Friday, from lunch duties to phonics teaching, first aid to science investigations – Mrs Crang has been a brilliant member of our teaching staff. The family farm calls however, but we are delighted that she has agreed to continue with Mrs Hewlett in delivering Environment Education on Friday afternoons for the remainder of the year – thank you Mrs C!



PTFA Film Night

Thank you to all who came and had a great time earlier this term – we look forward to seeing lots of parents at this year's AGM – details below!



Queen Camel Medical Centre

Queen Camel Medical Centre's pharmacy extension is now underway and the build is progressing well.

We would ask that you do not use the car park for school drop off or pick up and please park considerately if using the lane.

If you would like any further information regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

Sarah Jones - Practice Manager

www.queencamelmedicalcentre.co.uk

Please Remember...

Respect our neighbours and each other; please park courteously and with the due care and attention that parking in and around a school requires.

Thank you for not parking in the Queen Camel Medical Centre when visiting the school.

Chinese New Year

From Saturday 10th February, it will be the year of the 'Wood dragon' in the Chinese Zodiac. To celebrate this year's Lunar New Year, children in Merlin (reception), Pendragon (Year 1 and 2) and Excalibur (Year 4 and 5) made this superb dragon to perform in a lion dance with children in Lancelot (Year 5 and 6).



We have some 'dragon children' celebrating their zodiac sign this year – good luck to Dexter B, Freya, Henry, Ben, Emily, Cullie, Leia, Eloise, Harry and Chloe – all in Lancelot class!





Congratulations Poldens House!



1612

980

As our house winners of the half-term, a MUFTI-day will be held on Friday 23rd February 2024 for children in Poldens.

1312

1683

You may choose to come to school in your house colour of yellow or other MUFTI as desired.

We've got space for girls aged 4-7 to join Rainbows in Yeovil today!

We've got space for girls aged 10-14 to join Guides in Yeovil today!

We've got space for girls aged 7-10 to join Brownies in Yeovil today!

We've got space for girls aged 14-18 to join Rangers in Yeovil today!

**Girlguiding
Yeovil division**

Register your interest at
www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-a-child

Thursday 22nd February is World Thinking Day.

If your child is part of Girlguiding or Scouting they are invited to wear their Rainbow, Brownie, Beavers or Cubs uniform to school on Thursday 22nd February.

Each year since 1926, on 22nd February, members all over the globe have celebrated World Thinking Day. It's a day when they think of each other and give thanks and appreciation for their international friendships.



22nd February was chosen as the date for Thinking Day because it was the mutual birthday of Lord and Lady Baden-Powell, the founder and original World Chief Guide of the Girl Guides, respectively.

One of the traditions of Thinking Day is that members of Girlguiding and Scouting groups wear their uniforms to school to show others that they are part of the movement.

Pupil Premium

The pupil premium is additional funding that the Government provides for each child who is believed to be disadvantaged in achieving their best in education. At Countess

Gytha Primary School, we provide high quality education and enrichment opportunities for all our pupils, regardless of their ability or background. However, it is useful to receive this funding for all children entitled to it. There are a large range of qualifiers, including if your child is entitled to free school meals or a member of the household is currently in receipt of Universal Credit (or has been at any time in the last six years). Please apply through the following link:

[Pupil Premium Information](#)



School Uniform

Our school uniform colours are navy blue, white and grey with navy and green striped ties.

Please can all children come to school dressed in the school uniform as follows:

- All Children – White Shirt/Blouse (plain) with Tie
- Navy Sweat V Neck or Cardigan (logos are optional)
- Grey Trousers/Shorts
- Socks/tights – Grey/Black
- Grey Skirt/Pinafore (White, grey or black Socks)
- Black School Shoes (Black Boots can be worn during the winter months)

School PE Kit is:

- White logo or plain Polo Shirt
- Navy Shorts
- Navy jogging bottoms for winter
- Trainers
- Logoed hooded sweatshirt (optional)



All items are available from South West Schoolwear with many also available from the school's PTFA. Thank you for your support in ensuring all our children look very smart and feel ready to learn.

School Council and Eco Committee Update

The School Council have held four meetings this term, so far. Our main agenda this half term was to work alongside our Eco Committee to discuss how we could best improve our school environment and to complete actions from our Eco Schools action plan.



This was met with huge enthusiasm by all involved, with the making of new bird boxes, bird feeders and designing new bug hotels. All these now adorn the KS1 outside area along with a bird house and feeder in the main playground.

The council were very keen to share their ideas and achievements for the upcoming term with the governing body of the school and were delighted to invite Mr Straker Nesbitt to join them at a meeting where he took the hot seat for a question-and-answer session!



We have delivered two whole school assemblies this term. The first was to inspire the children at our wonderful school to challenge themselves to try and gain a Blue Peter badge and the second to inform the school about The Big Garden Birdwatch of 2024.

In total we had 50 families take part our Birdwatch and this data alongside the data collected for, our school observations have been sent, to add to the National totals.



Both assemblies were very informative and delivered enthusiastically by the children involved. We have been delighted to hear that many of the children have already applied for the Blue Peter Badges and have been successful. Well done to all! We look forward to sharing your achievements in up-and-coming assemblies.

Council members will be fund raising as soon as we return to school - with Red Nose Day fast approaching, the annual cake sale and Red Noses will be on sale at the end of the school day. As mentioned recently in the Diary Dates, we are also setting up a 'Care and Share Rail' where coats that no longer fit your child can be donated and placed on the rail for families to help each other out.

We would like to thank-you for your continued support and hope you will be able to support us with our endeavours in the upcoming terms - *Mrs Sherry, The School and Eco Councils*



Mini-Merlins Preschool

We have had a super busy start to the spring term exploring our topic of Superheroes! From Spiderman and Batman to real-world superheroes such as police, nurses and farmers and the people who help us every day, we have had lots of fun learning through our play.

We started the term by turning ourselves into Superheroes and making a colourful Superhero mask.



We have been lucky enough to have some visitors come into preschool and talk about their jobs and what they do every day. Our first visitors were two local PCSOs, all the children loved trying on the police hat and sitting in the police car. They even put the lights and sirens on for them!



Following the visit the children made their own police car.



We had a visit from a nurse who showed the children how to put on a bandage, a sling and they even got to use a stethoscope to listen to each other's heart beats.



All the children were super excited when we had our final visitor come to preschool this week. We were lucky enough to have a visit from a farmer, who not only brought his tractor for the children to sit in, but he also brought two sheep and two piglets! The children were very careful when stroking the piglets and even got to feed the sheep.



As always, the children have enjoyed looking at books and listening to stories.



We have explored mixing colours when painting some beautiful pictures.



During the first half of the spring term both preschool and Merlin class have enjoyed 'Fun Fridays' when we have opened the doors between the two classrooms and the children have been free to explore and play. Lots of fun has been had by all and we look forward to continuing this during the next half term!





We have finished the term making Chinese lanterns as part of our Chinese New Year celebrations.



We hope you all have a lovely half term break and look forward to seeing you all when we return, when our topic will be 'Once Upon a Time'.



Merlin Class



Merlin Class have enjoyed spending the last 6 weeks learning about 'Creatures Big and Small'. We have appreciated a wide selection of books as part of our topic including *The Gruffalo*, *Rumble in the Jungle* and *Tyrannosaurus Drip*, as well as looking at non-fiction books.

The children have enjoyed learning about lots of different animal facts, including investigating their habitats and diets. Merlin Class have learnt lots of new vocabulary which they have passionately shared with other adults across the school – super learning, Merlins!



Our weekly welly walks are back in full swing! Despite the flooding, wind and frost, the children have enjoyed embarking on local adventures to observe the impact of weather on our environment as well as keeping our eyes peeled for any animals, in keeping with our learning topic.



Reading and phonics remains a vital learning experience for all Merlins. The children have all made remarkable progress with their phonics and are progressing rapidly with their reading. We have been busy learning lots of digraphs this half-term which has helped us to become a lot more independent with our writing. The children are reading and writing longer words, and this is showcased through their written work. It is lovely to see the children record down their own ideas by confidently applying their phonics knowledge.

In Maths, we have been learning a variety of different strategies to enable us to add and subtract two numbers from each other. We have been using lots of different tools to help us, including ten-frames, number lines, drawings and our fingers.



The children have enjoyed learning number facts in relation to addition and subtraction and have mastered solving number problems! Next half term will see us revisit composition of numbers to 10 and exploring even and odd numbers.

There has been lots of great learning going on this half term which has been sure to keep us all busy! The children are working incredibly hard and should be proud of all that they have achieved during the first half of their first year at school!

We hope you all have a lovely half term,
Miss Morris & the Merlin Class Team



Pendragon Class



This half term, Pendragon have been exploring traditional tales. The children have enjoyed becoming familiar with different stories and creating their own version of the Three Little Pigs. They had some super ideas as to how to make their own story including changing the pigs to koala bears, sheep and frogs. We have also been reading the story Cinderella and have been focusing on writing setting descriptions, letters to the stepmother and recounting the story.



To help the children get into character, we used role play to explore the character of Cinderella, before writing letters to the stepmother to explain how we were feeling.



In maths, we continue to look at addition and subtraction, using practical resources to support our learning as much as possible. We have also looked at doubling and halving, money and place value. We've priced items in a shop so the children could practice finding the correct coins to pay for them and used number beads and counters to help us counting in 5s and 10s.



'Everyday Materials' has been our topic in science this half term. The children have explored objects around the school and what materials they are made from, as well as looking at their properties.



We also carried out an investigation to find the best material for the three little pigs to build their house from; the children then tested their houses to see whether they were strong enough to survive the huffs and puffs of the big bad wolf!

In addition to learning about everyday materials, the children have also been enjoying outdoor learning this half

term with Mrs Crang and Mrs Hewlett.



They have been exploring the allotment looking at seeds, plants and leaves and using equipment to study them closer. They have produced some great creations using different items from the allotments which I am sure they have brought back home.

Finally, we must say a big thank you to Mrs Crang for all her support with Pendragon. Mrs Crang will be stepping back from her role as class teaching assistant but will continue to support the school in delivering her Environment Education lessons on Friday afternoons - thank you Mrs Crang!



King Arthur Class



We have reached the halfway point of the year and have taken this opportunity to reflect on how much the children have learnt so far. Our main topic for this half term has been the Egyptians, which the children have enjoyed greatly, and it has been a pleasure to see so many of them taking on their own research projects and showing such a keen interest in this ancient civilisation. We are very much looking forward to our Egyptian topic day on Friday 1st March!



In our history lessons, the children have explored the gift of the river Nile and why it was so essential for survival in Ancient Egypt. They have looked at the process of mummification, even getting to mummify Mrs Elsworth and Mrs Collins! They have also researched the famous Egyptologist Howard Carter, who was responsible for the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, as well as explored the hieroglyphic writing system used by the ancient Egyptians. As well as this, they have looked at some of the key beliefs of the Egyptian gods and goddesses.



The children have loved our art unit this half term, which has linked to the Egyptians; they have looked at some popular Egyptian patterns and symbols and used these to create a scroll, made from their own hand made version of papyrus paper.



We have also linked our writing to the Egyptians, with a primarily non-fiction focus; we have written a non-chronological report about this fascinating civilisation, a newspaper report about the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, a diary entry from the perspective of Howard Carter and a retelling of the Legend of Isis and Osiris. We have also been working hard on our grammatical features, specifically using conjunctions and adverbials of time, place and cause.



In maths, we have consolidated our learning on multiplication and division, before moving on to money. We have worked on recognising the value of different coins and notes, counted money in pounds and pence, compared amounts and have calculated change. As well as this, we have explored different ways of presenting data, including in a tally, pictogram, bar chart, table and block diagram, for our statistics unit.

'Everyday Materials' has been our focus in Science; we have explored the different uses, properties and classifications of materials, looked at how they can change shape or be made into new materials, and we have investigated the process of recycling.

In RE, Judaism has been our key religion for this term and we have looked at some of the main festivals and celebrations, such as Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shabbat as well as Bat and Bar Mitzvahs. Next half term, we will continue to explore some of the key beliefs and elements of Judaism, by looking at their religious texts and places of worship.



We are looking forward to another busy half term for Spring 2 and have lots of enrichment activities coming up, including our Egyptians topic day, World Book Day and our class trip to Cheddar Gorge (more information to follow shortly)!

Thank you as always for your continued support - Miss Bridge, Mrs Elsworth and Mrs Collins .

Excalibur Class



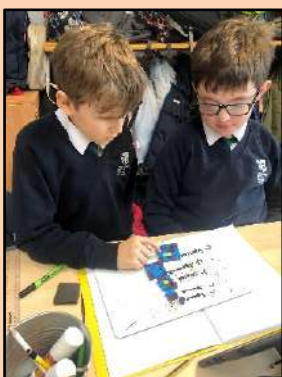
Excalibur Class studied the digestive system in science this term. We have discovered what our digestive system looks like below the surface of our skin and learnt the correct names for those parts that play a vital part in our digestion of foods and fluids.



Later in the term, we found out the function of each of the organs and body parts in the digestive system. Most recently, we have set up an experiment to investigate the affect of different liquids/drinks on our teeth. We immersed 5 eggs in a variety of liquids and are recording our observations on how each of the liquids are affecting the shell of the egg each day...hopefully your children will be coming home at the end of this term telling you all about the healthy balance of liquids they can drink, based on the results of our egg-speriment!



In our music lessons this term, we have been refining our composition and group playing skills, using the glockenspiel. We started with focusing on playing the notes D, E and F and now have introduced a fourth note, C. It is taking a great deal of concentration to play in time, but we are starting to sound really good!



We have covered a range of topics in maths so far this term, however the Year 5s particularly enjoyed learning about square and cube numbers in maths lessons, whilst the Year 4s were practising counting in 6,7,9,25 and 1000, along with plenty of challenges and reasoning based on these themes.

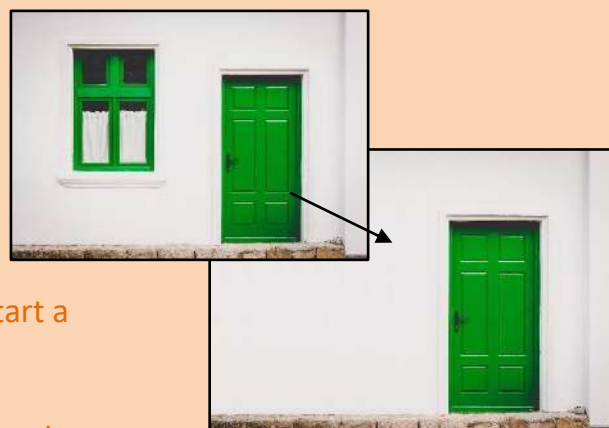


Last week, our Year 4 children joined other local schools at Ansford for an afternoon of team building activities. As you can see from the photos, the children had lots of fun and were faced with several challenges which led to some head-scratching!!

On a Tuesday morning, we have been fortunate enough to begin our day with a yoga session. The children have been really enjoying having the opportunity to focus on their health and wellbeing during these lessons.



Computing this half-term has been based on image composition and editing. When working with Mr Gordon, children have been learning about the crop, clone and colour saturation tools. The class have discussed the uses of these as well as the e-safety messages of understanding how pictures can be manipulated such as those well-illustrated in the [Dove Skincare films](#) – well worth a look to start a conversation with your children!



Mr Plumbley has been crafting helmets in the style of that found at Sutton Hoo in 1938. The children are at the first-fitting stage of their projects, which will continue on Friday afternoons after the half-term.

Next term, we will continue to read about the adventures and destiny of Magnus in our class reading book 'Anglo-Saxon boy' by Tony Bradman, which will also support the children's history topic based on the Anglo Saxons and Scots.

Mrs Trusson, Mr Gordon and Mr Bunter.



Lancelot Class

Over the course of this term, Lancelot have been studying Crime and Punishment. We have been learning about this topic through the ages, starting with the Romans and culminating in the Victorian prisoner experience. In between, we have debated Anglo-Saxon crimes, written diary entries as a prisoner, described punishments from the Tudor era and even re-enacted hard labour tasks that prisoners would experience. Don't forget we have our school trip coming up at

Shepton Mallet Prison too!

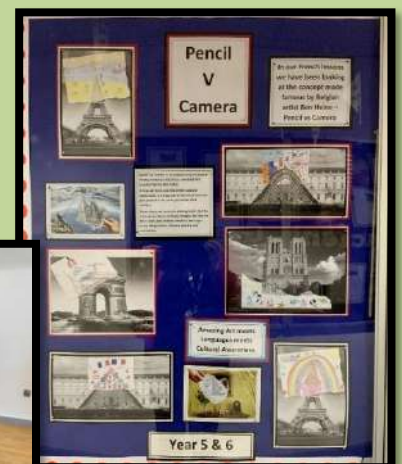


In writing this half term, we focused on The Lucky Dip: writing a narrative based on this short video. We have also read Holes by Louis Sachar, which has inspired a diary entry, a non-chronological report and we will continue to write about this fantastic novel in the coming weeks.

This term in Ukulele lessons Lancelot have been learning a variety of songs, in different styles; Three little Birds, How Far I'll Go and Stitches. Children have all really grasped the concept of tablature notation, playing short musical phrases from TV and film; themes such as Jurassic Park, Spiderman, Bluey and The Simpsons. They have been learning about how to read a range of rhythmic notation and how to apply that to their playing as well as beginning to write their own musical scores!



In our language lessons this term we have received letters and cards from our pen pals in France and Mexico. The children have used their prior knowledge and the use of bilingual dictionaries to help translate these letters.





We have also been developing our conversational skills by adding questions to add detail. As a cross curricular activity, we looked at the Belgium artist Ben Heine and his concept of Pencil v Camera. With a photograph of a famous French landmark the children manipulated the photo and added their own artistic flair!

In PE, the class have been working extremely hard in hockey with Mr Gallagher. Focusing on skills such as dribbling, stopping the

ball, passing and using the reverse stick technique to dribble. They have been doing tag rugby with Mr Bunter. This culminated with a great tag rugby tournament for the school and a hockey festival which will be played next term.

Thank you for all the parents who came to our 'Are you smarter than your 10-year-old?' quiz. It was a great success and confirmed that the parents know more than the children, at this point in the year...



Upcoming in the second Spring half-term

- One final week of Year 1 and 2 swimming (Monday 19th February 2024) – any outstanding payments to be cleared as soon as possible.
- Yoga for King Arthur and Excalibur Classes – Our weekly Yoga sessions continue with Paula. Paula is an accredited Yoga Instructor, and her Green Crow Yoga classes help children to find their own sense of calm and contentment, a key skill in all walks of life.
- Enrichment clubs

Please note that enrichment clubs will finish a week earlier than usual, with Friday 15th March being the last enrichment club of the Spring Term. This is due to our Spring Parents' Evenings.
- Deadline to book meals for week commencing 19th February 2024 is Wednesday 14th February. If you have any problems with bookings, please email the school office with your order. This is also the deadline for booking Breakfast Club and Wrap Around Care Club.

wraparoundcare@countessgytha.ppat365.org

Wrap Around Breakfast and After-School Care Club!

Please remember, all bookings should be made by the Wednesday of the week before the booking is needed.

Bookings should be made via

wraparoundcare@countessgytha.ppat365.org

Thank you for your continued support!

e-Safety Update – see more at our [Online Safety Webpage here](#)

Online safety tips for children in primary school



In partnership with

digital poverty alliance

What are children doing online?

Children in this age group spend most of their online time using video sharing platforms, watching TV or films and using messaging sites or apps with many also playing games and using social media.

Source: Ofcom Media Use and Attitudes 2022

Online safety issues that children can come across:



Cyberbullying: this is behaviour meant to hurt another person that happens more than once. Cyberbullying happens online, at school or at home.

Grooming: this is when an adult or usually older child builds trust with your child to trick them into doing something sexual, illegal or extreme.



Misinformation: when fake information is shared online, your child might not realise it isn't true. This could harm them, especially if it is a dangerous experiment they do at home.

Inappropriate content: videos, images and games that might be violent or have sexual content are not appropriate from primary school children.



Screen time: children sometimes spend too long on their devices without taking breaks. Or they might not know how to use their devices in healthy ways. This can lead to sleep, behaviour and other problems.



If your child has special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), they may need extra support to stay safe online. These resources can help:

- Learn more about the harms they might face and how to support them at internetmatters.org/inclusive-digital-safety
- See how to help them face different online safety issues at internetmatters.org/connecting-safely-online

Stay safe checklist to support children:



Talk about their online lives: ask them what kinds of apps they use or games they play and what they like to do online. If your child knows you're interested in their online life, **they are more likely to come to you if something goes wrong.**



Set boundaries: together, **decide what your child can and can't do online.** Think about what times they can go online, how long they can spend online and what kinds of app/platforms/sites they can use to stay safe.



Set parental controls: parental controls help **manage who can talk to your child online, what content they can see or how much time they spend online.** Setting them can help keep them safe. Set parental controls on different devices, including broadband and mobile networks.



Explore features together: if your child wants to play a new game or use a new app, first use it together. See what they can do on the platform to check if it's **suitable for their age.** Check to **see if there are safety settings or parental controls you can set.** This will also show them you're interested in their online lives.



Show them safety features: to help them stay safe online, apps and platforms have different ways to stop online hate or inappropriate content. Get familiar with **report, block and other features** to help your child stay in control of their online safety.



Other helpful resources:

- Learn how to set parental controls at internetmatters.org/parental-controls
- Learn more about online safety issues at internetmatters.org/issues
- Find where you can get help or report online safety issues at internetmatters.org/report-issue
- See more advice for your child's age at internetmatters.org/apps
- Get advice sent to your email at internetmatters.org/digital-family-toolkit



UK Health
Security
Agency

**UK Health Security
Agency South West**

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BS1 6EH

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8162

swhpt@ukhsa.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency

06 February 2024

Dear parents and guardians,

Stop the spread of coughs, colds and other infections this winter

As is usual during winter months, UKHSA are seeing increasing levels of winter illnesses including flu, COVID-19 and other illnesses like whooping cough and measles in some areas outside the South West.

We are writing to share simple steps everyone can take to reduce infections spreading in the community – helping children make a healthy start to the year and minimising the impact of illness on attendance.

What infections are circulating in the South West?

At this time of year, other types of illnesses that circulate are **respiratory infections (colds, covid, flu) and whooping cough, scarlet fever and chickenpox**, as cases usually peak in late winter and early spring.

Symptoms of [respiratory infections](#) can include a runny nose, high temperature, cough and sore throat. For most children, these illnesses will not be serious, they soon recover.

Symptoms of [scarlet fever](#) include sore throat, fever, swollen neck glands, a bumpy rash on the tummy, flushed cheeks and 'strawberry tongue'. If you suspect your child has scarlet fever, contact your local GP; and if diagnosed stay away from nursery or school for 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotics.

Chickenpox is highly contagious, with the most common symptom being an itchy, spotty rash. If your child has [chickenpox](#), keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over.

[Whooping cough](#) starts with cold like symptoms and progresses to bouts of coughing which may make a 'whoop' sound (a gasp for breath)

Measles

There are currently increased levels of measles in the West Midlands affecting the school age population, with some children needing hospitalisation. Although we are currently seeing low numbers of measles cases, because measles is highly infectious, we are likely to see cases of measles in the South West in the coming months.

We therefore urge parents to get their children up to date with the MMR vaccination. This is the best form of defence against measles and has the added advantage of also preventing rubella and mumps.

Check your child's red book and make an appointment with your GP surgery to catch up on missed doses.

What can I do to prevent infections?

Teach good hygiene habits

Encouraging good hand-washing habits is one of the most effective ways to stop the spread. Regularly wash hands in soap and warm water for 20 seconds.

Using a tissue to catch coughs and sneezes, binning it and then washing hands will help prevent infection from spreading.

Our [e-bug](#) resources for all ages can help you to explain and discuss hygiene habits – and why they are important – to your child or teenager.

Spot the signs of when to keep your child at home

While children are encouraged to stay in education or childcare with symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat or slight cough (if otherwise well and do not have a high temperature), children should stay home from school or nursery if they're displaying the following symptoms:

- If your child has a **fever and is unwell**, they should stay home from school or nursery until the fever has passed and they are well enough to attend.
- If your child has **diarrhoea and/or vomiting**, they should stay off school or nursery for at least 48 hours after their symptoms clear up – this will help stop the spread of stomach bugs.

Get vaccinated

Vaccination offers the best protection against many infections, including flu, measles and whooping cough. Please make sure that you and your children are up to date with their vaccines.

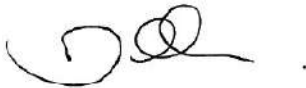
Being up to date with vaccinations, especially MMR and whooping cough, is also important for parents or staff who are pregnant. You can take a look at the [childhood vaccination schedule](#) to make sure your child is up to date with all their vaccinations.

Some useful resources

- NHS UK provides easily accessible guidance for parents to [help manage winter illness at home](#).
- Further back to school advice can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-reminds-parents-of-back-to-school-advice>

- e-bug teaches children and young people about infections and infection prevention [Home \(e-bug.eu\)](http://e-bug.eu)
- A parent friendly website where you can learn about vaccines [Home | Vaccine Knowledge Project \(ox.ac.uk\)](http://www.vaccineknowledgeproject.ox.ac.uk)

Yours faithfully,



Professor Dominic Mellon
MSc Dip HEP MEPS FRSPH FFPH
UKPHR: FR0823
Regional Deputy Director for Health Protection (South West)
UK Health Security Agency



Five Counties
Teaching
School Hubs
Alliance

Do you know someone who might be interested in training to teach?

Come and meet **Five Counties ITT providers** and find out about our training programmes. Routes into Primary and Secondary. Local school partners and placements. Friendly trainers! Information about applying and funding.

Wednesday 21st February

Drop-in 4.00-5.30pm

Broughton House,

Blackbrook Park Avenue,

Taunton, **TA1 2PR**

just off Junction 25 of the M5

Thursday 14th March

2.00-5.30pm (to include school experience and drop-in)

Oakfield Academy

Oakfield Road

Frome

Somerset

BA11 4JF

***To register your interest for either of the above events or if you
have any questions about training to teach please email
info@fivecountiesalliance.co.uk.***



AGM

Annual General Meeting

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Stay informed and get involved.

To be held in the school hall – entry through reception.
Please join us for a short AGM meeting and a tea/coffee!

Thursday 22nd February
9.00am



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During The

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FIVE Action Packed Days

9:00—3:00pm

**£16
Per Day**

Monday 12th to Friday 16th

Countess Gytha Primary School, West Camel Road, Queen Camel, Yeovil. BA22 7FF

EXTRA TIME AVAILABLE 8-9AM/3-4PM

For more information visit: www.tlesportscoaching.co.uk or call 01458 210799



NEW SWIM SCHOOL CLASSES

- Immediate availability, NO WAITING LISTS
- The first step in your child's swimming journey
- Stage 1-7 Swim England Learn To Swim Programme
- Small Groups, maximum of six swimmers
- Suitable for new learners age 4-years & attending school
- Also, dedicated classes for older beginners
- Available Monday - Friday between 16:00 & 19:00
- Open to all, including non-members

For more information, please get in touch ☎ 01935 415633



Hospitals | Fitness | Physio | Mental Health



PRESS RELEASE

THE SOMERSCIENCE FESTIVAL

6th MAY 2024 10.00 – 17.30

Haynes Motor Museum and Castle Cary venues, Somerset

The Somerscience Festival is back in 2024! Somerset's **only** rural STEM festival will be even bigger and better and hopes to exceed the nearly 5000 visitors who enjoyed it last year. This time there will be over **90 different activities from nearly 70 organisations** all bringing Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths breakthroughs to South Somerset families in a fun and engaging way. And it is **FREE with no need to book**, with Haynes Motor Museum, Market House, Caryford Hall and Ansford Academy in Castle Cary as main venues.

Visitors can find out about airline safety mechanisms or how the famous Henry vacuum cleaner is put together. Or investigate how we map the oceans or what lives in the deep. Exhibitors include all the universities of the area, Nikon, Honeywell, Thales UK, Leonardo, National Grid, RSPCA and many other well known names. There are **space planetarium shows, chemistry magic shows, and psychology or robotics workshops**, and the **biozone** is back with its **Teddy Bear Hospital**, Dr Snot and also with activities including **immunology**, foot health, **stem cell research** and how fish help us find out more about disease. Tata CS will be there to award the prizes to the students who have succeeded in the **Somerscience Festival Challenge** to build a digital innovation to support more sustainable transport across the county and there are schools exhibiting how their students tackle STEM in classroom. Plus a whole **programme of talks** and a **key debate with a panel of leading industrialists chaired by Sarah Dyke MP** on whether Somerset can become the green technology hub of the UK.

Throughout the day visitors can travel between Haynes and Castle Cary on the free festival shuttle buses which will be operating continuously.

The organisation behind the festival is The Somerscience Trust, which was set up especially to make this festival happen, and this has been funded through main grants and sponsorships from Thales UK, Royal Commission for the 1851 Exhibition, Somerset Community Foundation, ICMS, Royal Society of Biology and Stronger Starts.

All enquiries to Colleen Bower, Festival Director and Chair of the Somerscience Trust.
tcolleenbower@gmail.com 07375 890751 <https://somerscience.co.uk>

SOMERSET SCIENCE FESTIVAL

IN A FIELD OF POTENTIAL

May 6th 2024

10am – 5.30pm

CASTLE CARY & SPARKFORD

www.somerscience.co.uk

GET ON BOARD FOR SOMERSCIENCE 2024

As Somerset's only rural STEM festival we take you on a journey through the many aspects of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) that fuel our daily lives, with plenty of family fun along the way.

The whole programme is **FREE** with no tickets required. Just start your journey at Castle Cary or Haynes Motor Museum and create your own **PERSONAL** routemap using this programme, our friendly event assistants and our free, environmentally friendly shuttle buses operating all day between the two locations.

You might want to take part in **EXPERIMENTS** or **INTERACTIVE** demonstrations in the Science Fair Zones; take in a show or two; get **HANDS-ON** in a workshop; explore your health in the Biozone or sit in on a talk on a subject of interest. Or take a pitstop at the food outlets on site or in the town.

TALKS

1	The Science of Hinkley	10am
2	Exploring the Deep	11am
3	Our Wild World	1pm
4	Myths & Legends of the Sea	4pm
5	Can Mathematics Teach Computers to Talk?	13.00pm
6	Own Your STEM Destiny	2.00pm
7	Lessons in Biology: Inspiring the Next Generation of Scientists	4.30pm
8	All Compelling and Humanity's Future	10am
9	Can We Talk to Animals?	12.50pm
10	What Time is it on Mars?	13.00pm
11	How Can Maths Help Create a Sustainable Future?	2.30pm

BIOZONE

Hosted at **CARYFORD HALL** — 10am to 5.30pm

Torridy Bear Hospital	10.00am
Biology in Action	11.00am
Killer FunGus	12.00pm
Filipinob Science	13.00pm
Using Stem Cells to Understand Disease	14.00pm
Festival of Pharmacy	15.00pm
The Tape of Life	16.00pm
Endless Insects	17.00pm
The Science Behind Life - Saving Stem Cell Transplants	18.00pm
Healthcare Science & Biomedical Science Careers & Training in the SW	19.00pm
What Does Working in an NHS Pathology Lab Look Like?	20.00pm
We Can Hear Your Foot Health!	21.00pm
Build a Cell with Playdough; Tally the Microscope Challenge	22.00pm
Hands On Science - Immunology Chess & Dr Snot	23.00pm
Refractive Bristle and Bath with Microcraft, or Program our Robot!	24.00pm

VENUE KEY

HAYNES MOTOR MUSEUM	CASTLE CARY & BRUTON
1 Merin Room 1 - BA22 7JH	9 Market House - BA7 7JH
2 HAYNES stage - BA22 7JH	10 Undercroft - BA7 7JH
3 Merin Reception - BA22 7JH	11 Caryford Hall - BA7 7JH
4 Merin Room 2 - BA22 7JH	12 Anstford School 1 - BA7 7JH
5 Merin Reception - BA22 7JH	13 Anstford School 2 - BA7 7JH
6 Naper - BA22 7JH	14 Caryford Div/Environmental Centre - BA7 7JH
7 Meadows Suite - BA22 7JH	15 Mill on the River - BA10 0BA

Put your pedal power to the test, see what's involved in heritage **CAR MAINTENANCE**, head from healthy your feet are, discover the science behind bubbles, explore the **UNIVERSITY** and the ocean's in our very own space & ocean domes, play **MINI-MOOSER** chess, find out what time fits on **BATS** and whether we can talk to animals.

Wherever your interest we'll put you in the **coldest seat towards your STEM destination.**

Buses from **CARYFORD HALL** via **MARKET HOUSE** to **HAYNES** and back

STEM THIS WAY

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Don't forget to tag us in your posts! #somerscience

SHOWS

1 TCS App Challenge Finale	12pm
2 AskMe Anything	2pm
3 Putting the Wow Back into Science	3pm
4 Family Space show	10.00, 11.30am, 1.30, 2.30pm
5 EatMe Drink Me	10.30am
6 AskMe Anything (Health & Bio)	11.30am
7 Chemistry Lab Adventures	12.30pm
8 EatMe Drink Me	1.45pm
9 Chemistry Lab Adventures	3pm



WORKSHOPS

1 Membranes for Water Filtration	10.30am
2 Keep IT Safe	11.30am
3 Robotics 101 Build and Program	1.30pm
4 Maths for a Sustainable Future	3.30pm
5 Through the Looking Glass	1.45pm
6 Cyber Risk Awareness and Cyber Security Challenge	1pm
7 Through the Looking Glass	3pm

SATELLITE ACTIVITIES

10 How Healthy is The Blue	10.30am - 12.30pm
11 Eco Hunt around MOTB	10.30am - 12.30pm
12 Great Height Egg Drop	1.30pm - 4.30pm
13 Wildlife and Sustainability at Carymoor	10.30am - 12.30pm