

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2026



Whimple Primary School

Issue 3

23.01.26

By the time you read this, the children in KS2 will have enjoyed watching Clyst Vale Community College's production of Beauty and the Beast at the Barnfield Theatre. I believe there are a number of ex-pupils involved too. The PTA kindly funded the buses and the tickets—so a big thank you.

Information Session for Parents - Monday 9th February

We can now confirm that we will be holding these sessions on Monday 9th February. The content of the sessions will be mainly aimed at Reception and Year 1.

Ideally, we want to cater for as many families as possible so there are a choice of timings. If take up is limited we may cancel one of the sessions. Please complete the survey link here to register your interest.

<https://forms.gle/vMSwAdNkejVJRSRy6>

Achievement Assembly - Autumn Award

This was held on the last day of term before Christmas and I had forgotten to put it into the first newsletters after Christmas. These awards celebrate effort and success for progress in key curriculum areas across each term.

The Governor Cup was presented to the school by an ex-chair of Governors to be presented to a child, who has actively demonstrated our 6Rs throughout the school day.

The cup is given out on a termly basis and, this term it has been presented to Drew P, in Year 4.

The following children have been presented with a small trophy, (to keep for a term - please look after them and keep them safe) and a certificate. Trophies can be kept for the term so keep them on show somewhere in your home and then return them at the end of this term.

Elm Class Most Improved:	Reader	James	Writer	Ellis LL	Mathematician	Margot
Ash Class Most Improved:	Reader	Rose	Writer	Ruben	Mathematician	Kaya
Oak Class Most Improved:	Reader	Ava	Writer	Henry	Mathematician	Lucy
Beech Class Most Improved:	Reader	Keira	Writer	Zane	Mathematician	Marnie
Willow Class Most Improved:	Reader	Max Si	Writer	Max St	Mathematician	Theo



Federation News from Mr Jolliffe

The new Ofsted Toolkit for inspecting schools has a renewed focus on inclusion and how schools are making adaptations to the curriculum and beyond to remove barriers to learning. The principle they work on is that if a school is getting it right for the most vulnerable children, then it will be right for everyone. As a group of small schools, we have always been able to get to know our children quickly and well and work out if there are any barriers to learning that we can work together to overcome. In different ways, each school has always had a Pupil Progress Meeting each term to discuss the progress of each child in every class. The meetings are usually held between Heads and teachers and often include TAs and SENDCos as well. These meetings are an important part of the way that we track children's progress and give us the opportunity to identify barriers to learning and work out how to remove or reduce them. In turn, this enables us to share up to date information with parents at parent meetings, which are coming up later in the spring term.

YEAR 3 and 4 RESIDENTIAL

The Year 3 and 4 residential visit this year is to Dartmoor Zoo, where children will have the opportunity to spend the day with the animals, before spending the night in the accommodation area. We can take up to 60 children at a time, so we have split the visits up into three groups;

- Sandford, Brampford Speke and Cheriton will be Snoozing at the Zoo from Tuesday, 28th April to Wednesday 29th April. Pick up and drop off will be at Cheriton Fitzpaine School.
- Thorverton and Newton St Cyres will be Snoozing at the Zoo from Wednesday, 29th April to Thursday, 30th April. Pick up and drop off will be at Newton St Cyres.
- Whimble and Silverton will be Snoozing at the Zoo from Tuesday, 5th May to Wednesday, 6th May. Pick up and drop off will be at Silverton School.

We will be leaving at 9.30am and returning at 2.30pm for each visit. Please do not arrive before 9.00am so that parents can drop off for school first and we don't cause too much congestion around the schools. More information and a presentation about the visit is being sent by email to parents today. The cost of the two-day visit is £102. Help with funding the cost of the visit is available.

SMARTPHONE FREE CHILDHOOD

Smartphone-Free Childhood, SFC, is a growing movement of parents and carers who are choosing to delay giving children smartphones until at least age 14, and social media until 16. When parents act as a group, children feel less pressure, and families feel more supported.

As a federation, we're lending our support to this movement – not because we believe there's one right way to do things, but because we think this is an important conversation for all of us. We know that every family's situation is different, and many of you may already have devices in your household – for your child or their siblings. It's never too late to reset boundaries, build healthier screen habits, or take small steps towards a more balanced digital life, so we encourage you all to be a part of the movement.

To help establish this initiative across our schools' communities, we're looking for one or two parent volunteers from **Silverton** to act as school organisers. At Thorverton, Charlotte Giles is already in this role and is happy to support parents in other schools to help to keep momentum across the federation.



Federation News from Mr Jolliffe continued



The role is straightforward: connect interested families, share occasional updates, and act as a point of contact for the initiative. Charlotte will also help coordinate school organisers and guide the next steps with the SFC movement. If you're interested or would like to find out more, please contact your school office, or if you would like to read more about SFC and how to sign the Parent Pact please visit [Smartphone Free Childhood](#) website.

For Whimple, Mrs Harker is going to help us, as she has shown an interest in this initiative previously, but it would be great if others' could also help her.

We have booked an online talk with Nicola MacDonald from PAPAYA about the use of technology on Monday, 23rd March at 7.00pm. Nicola is a Resilience Coach and Author of Resilient Teen. She runs resilience workshops and specialises in mindfulness, tech addiction, youth mental health and conscious parenting. There is no cost to join. More information is in the posters below and the link is below. This is a really good way to find out about how you can help your child navigate the challenges of technology and has been very well-received by other school communities. Please do put the time and date in your diaries.

[East Exe Valley Federation — Papaya Parent Talk with Nicola MacDonald | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)



Let's talk about our kids and their tech

ONLINE PARENT TALK WITH NICOLA:

EAST EXE VALLEY FEDERATION
MONDAY 23rd MARCH 2026 — 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM

JOINING LINK:

ACCESS VIA THE TEAMS LINK [HERE](#)



Nicola MacDonald

Nicola MacDonald is a Resilience Coach and Author of the non-fiction book, Resilient Teen. She is the Founder of My Resilient Mind and Co-Founder of The Digital Detox Club. She runs resilience workshops and talks for schools, parents, and adults in the workplace. She specialises in mindfulness, tech addiction, youth mental health and conscious parenting.

Nicola is an empowering and uplifting speaker who shares her knowledge in a non-judgemental way linking to her own experiences of parenthood and her own previous struggles with teen anxiety.



Helping families to thrive in a digital age

Parenting in the **digital age** has never been more complex, with issues surrounding screen time, social media use, and gaming.

Many parents are concerned about their children's mental health, especially the impact of screens on it.

In this interactive talk, Nicola unpacks some of the **complex issues** surrounding smartphone use and, in a **non-judgmental** manner, aims to help you find solutions that work for your family.

Topics

- The link between mental health and wellbeing and spending too much time online
- Strategies for delaying the smartphone
- Strategies for families to achieve a healthy balance with technology
- Question and discussion time

"The talk is so relevant, full of insight and eye-opening. You will walk away inspired to connect, reflect, and find out more. I highly recommend it."

— Claire Curtis, parent and SFC volunteer.

Dates for your diary

January

Wednesday 28th	PTA meeting New Fountain 7pm
Friday 30th	Year 5 and 6 Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Exeter University
Friday 30th	Year 3 and 4 Forest School

February

Wednesday 4th	Singing Workshop - Oak and Ash Class
Friday 6th	Beech Class Forest School
Friday 13th	Oak Class Forest School
w/c Monday 16th	Half-term

May

Tuesday 5th to Wednesday 6th May	Year 3/4 residential
Monday 11th	KS2 SATs week

June

w/c Monday 1st	Multiplication Tables Check - Year 4
w/c Monday 8th	Phonics Screening - Year 1
Wednesday 17th to Friday 19th June	Year 5/6 residential

Term dates for pupils - 2025/26:

SPRING TERM 2026 **5th January to 2nd April 2026**

Half term: Monday 16th to Friday 20th February 2026

Non-pupil days (i.e. staff only): 5th January 2026

SUMMER TERM 2026 **20th April to 22nd July 2026**

Half term: Monday 25th May to Friday 29th May 2026

Non-pupil days (i.e. staff only): 26th June 2026

Headteacher: Mrs. Carole Shilston

Telephone/fax: 01404 822584

Email: admin@whimbleprimary.co.uk

Website: www.whimble-primary.devon.sch.uk