

# Christ Church CE (VA) Junior School

## NEWSLETTER



SPRING TERM

Friday 20th March 2026

### Headteacher Message Board:

What a quick term this has been! This is our last newsletter of the Spring term and there has been so much to celebrate. As a school, we are excitedly looking forward to being a primary school on our return from the Easter holidays and will formally be known as:

**Christ Church, Sowerby Bridge, CE (VA) Primary School**

It has taken so long to this point, but it is a very significant point in our journey. We can't wait to welcome younger children onto site in the coming months! Please watch this space for further updates as we get them.

- Please remember that any children not attending the Residential trips next week **MUST** be in school. Any absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Please look out for letters regarding Parents Evening next week. Parents Evening will be in the first week back after Easter, so appointments will need to be booked next week. Please make sure you return slips before we break up for the holidays.
- Please remember that all dinners must be pre-ordered. Whilst we can provide ad-hoc dinners on the day, children will not get a choice of what they would like, and we will not be able to accommodate specific diets on the day. Many thanks for your assistance with this matter.
- Well done to all the children who entered our World Book Day plate competition. The winners have been chosen and received their book voucher prizes this morning.

Have a lovely Easter holiday everyone! Here's hoping for lots of sunshine...



### Upcoming Dates:

- WC 23.3.2026 Residential Trips to Robin-wood
- Friday 27th March School breaks up for Easter Holidays
- Monday 13th April School reopens for the summer term
- Friday 1st May School closed for INSET day
- WC Monday 11th May Year 6 SATS Week

### HEADTEACHER'S AWARD

Well done this week to our Headteacher's Award winner this week!



Caius

Thank you for everything you have done to earn the HT Award this week!

### Forest School Blog

#### 4th & 11th March—Feeding the Birds

**We have made fat balls! The children used lard and wild birdseed mix to make tasty treats for the birds. We spoke about how there may be mother birds out there getting ready to lay eggs and feed young chicks and the fat balls would be great for them. The children warmed the lard up in their hands then squished in the seeds, added a rope handle then shaped it into a ball. Some enjoyed the texture of the lard and likened it to slime, others said it felt gross like glue. The children picked their own place to hang their fat balls and yesterday, we saw that some of the ones from last week had been pecked at! Please, if you see any birds eating the fat balls try to get a picture and send it to school.**

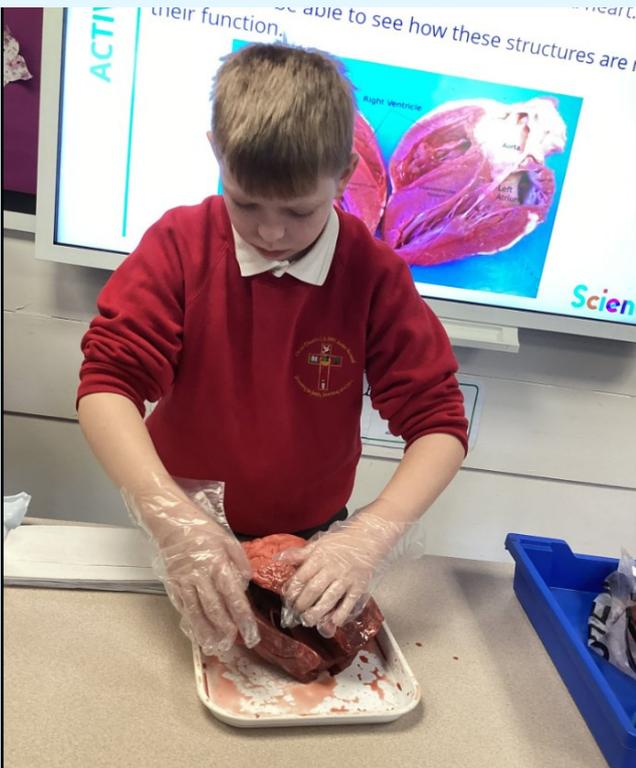


### Attendance

National Attendance Target = 96%

Class	Attendance %	Number of lates (after 9.00am)
Maples	92.8	0
Chestnuts	93.7	0
Sycamores	96.5 ★	0
Whole School	<b>94.3</b>	<b>0</b>

Year 6 Science — A member of staff from Ryburn visited Year 6 to carry out an investigation relating to the circulatory system.



Our Online Safety Information this week:

With grateful thanks to the National Online Safety team ([www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com))

All The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](http://nationalcollege.com).

## 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

# CREATIVE WAYS TO ENCOURAGE READING

Reading regularly has a life-long impact, yet recent data from the National Literacy Trust shows a decline in reading for pleasure among 8- to 18-year-olds, with just 32.7% enjoying it in 2025. Despite growing distractions, there are practical ways adults can spark a love of reading. This guide offers strategies and resources to help inspire young readers.

### 1 VALUE ALL READING

When we think about reading, it's very easy to picture a young person reading a fictional novel. However, reading is so much more than this. To help them understand why not show them how to create a 24-hour reading diary? Jot down all reading and then discuss this with them. By doing this, you can demonstrate the many ways we turn to reading.

### 2 WIDEN THE SELECTION

Once we know reading can be varied, we need to think about the selection of reading material they can access. Visit a shop selling magazines, the library and a bookshop, and consider the range of material that is available within them. Then consider how you might broaden their reading choices, so all young people have access to a wide and varied selection.

### 3 GIFT A BOOK

One simple way to encourage reading is to make books feel special. Gifting a book adds value and shows it's something to be treasured, whether it's as a reward or for a celebration like a birthday. Let the young person choose a title or pick one you know they will enjoy. You could also include a personal note inside.

### 4 CONNECT WITH AUTHORS

Meeting authors can certainly spark an interest in their reading material. This might be through a live event in a school/bookshop or by using the wealth of online material that is now available. Encourage young people to look at ways to connect with authors using free resources such as *Authorly* and *Just Imagine's Children's Authors Live*.

### 5 BUILD YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Access training about reading for pleasure to widen your understanding of this topic and, more importantly, how to develop it. Explore a wide range of free resources that can be found online. The more you know, the better placed you are to inspire a love of reading in others.

### 6 TALK BOOKS

There are times when we need silence to read and focus on our book, however, we know that reading is a social experience, so we must also factor in discussion time. Reading the same book gives two people a connection and the opportunity to voice their thoughts and questions about it. Why not buy two copies of a book and read it together? Start the connection.

### 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

As well as talking about the content of books, we can share what we are reading or have read recently. This can often act as a trigger for someone else to explore it. How often have you watched a film or series because someone else has recommended it? It's the same with books. If you know the young person well, you can tailor your recommendations and share why you think they'll enjoy it.

### 8 GO DIGITAL

With the rise in online digital material, we can easily focus on the negatives, however, it also brings a wealth of opportunities. Resources can add and enhance the reading experience for young people. They can read along with audiobooks, transcripts, and track their reading goals with resources like *Polyline* and apps like *Goodreads* for older children. Augmented reality books also bring books to life and offer a great way for engagement.

### 9 RECONNECT

There can come a time when a love of reading seems to disappear. It does not mean it's gone forever; it generally means they have lost the connection. How do we get it back? Find the next piece of reading material that sparks their current interests. The National Year of Reading focus of 'Go All In' captures this well as it is their key theme. As children grow and change, so do their interests. A visit to the local library is a great way to support the reconnection.

### 10 LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Let them see you reading. If you make time to read, you send a strong message to children: reading matters. Share why you enjoy it, is it to relax, escape the world, learn something new or to be entertained? When children see reading as a normal and valued part of everyday life, they are more likely to adopt it themselves.

### Meet Our Expert

Carl Pattison is a literacy adviser and early reading expert at The National College. Through his programmes, he supports schools to enhance reading and writing. In addition to his independent work, he also works for a large academy trust in the East Midlands as the strategic lead for their English Hub and Literacy Excellence Centre.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

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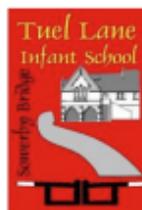
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Term Dates: 2025-6

Please note that these dates are for both Christ Church and Tuel Lane.



Tuel Lane Infant School  
and  
Christ Church CE (VA) Junior School



Term Dates 2025-26

Autumn Term	Re-open	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September
	Half-term	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October
	Re-open	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November
	Christmas holiday	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December
Spring Term	Re-open	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January
	Half-term	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February
	Re-open	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February
	Easter holiday	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March
Summer Term	Re-open	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April
	May bank holiday	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May
	Half-term	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May
	Re-open	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June
	Summer holiday	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July
	INSET Days	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> September Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> May Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July

# CHRIST CHURCH CE (VA) JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

## Year 3 Mornings:

What a wonderful week in Year 3. This week, we have carried out our Spring assessments and I can honestly say that the children have absolutely blown us away. They have shown just how hard they have been working and the hard work has definitely paid off. In Literacy, we have finished writing our holiday brochures for a visit to Skara Brae. The children have enjoyed finding out about what life must have been like in the Stone Age and have had the chance to use persuasive language to make people want to visit there. Their writing was really impressive and it was excellent to see them implementing the devices we have discovered throughout the year. In RE, we have looked at how Christianity can be represented around the world. We looked at artwork based on the Easter Story from Africa, India and China and the children created their own work in these styles. They were beauti-

## Year 4 Mornings:

Excellent week where we have explored a wide range of engaging learning across the curriculum. In PSHE, we have been looking at the rights and responsibilities of different people in society, including those whose important role is to safeguard us and help keep everyone safe. In Science, the children have been investigating how sounds can change, learning about volume and pitch through practical experiments and hands-on exploration. In RE, the class has created thoughtful pieces of artwork inspired by designs often found in churches, considering how colour, pattern and symbolism help convey meaning in places of worship. In English, the children have been developing rich setting descriptions of the Minotaur's labyrinth, using adventurous vocabulary and sensory detail to bring the dark, twisting tunnels of the mythical maze vividly to life.

## Maples

In the afternoons, we have been focusing on developing our fitness in PE, alongside strengthening teamwork skills through a range of collaborative activities. In History, we continued our topic on Ancient Greece, exploring how the Athenians and Spartans worked together to defeat the Persians. In Computing we have continued our unit of 'turtles' programming algorithms to enable the turtle to move.



## Sycamores:



It has been another great week in Sycamores. In Literacy, we have been working on writing the introduction for a story set in WW2 which needed to contain a flashback that takes the main character back in time to evacuation days. We discussed possible triggers that could lead the main character to get a flashback linked to war time and then children worked in pairs to write the first paragraph. In Maths, we have been drawing pie charts using our knowledge of fractions and percentages and we have also been using protractors to measure angles accurately. In History we have been learning about how people kept themselves safe during air raids and we found out about the different shelters that they used. On Wednesday, we had Miss Byrnes coming from Ryburn to teach the children about the heart (this links with our unit 'The Circulatory system') Our children were fabulous, polite and well-mannered and were very sensible during the heart dissection. It is always great to make links with our local high schools! Thank you Miss Byrnes and thank you Ryburn Valley High School.

It has also been assessment week and children have completed reading, maths and grammar tests. They all put a lot of effort and tried their best; we are so proud of all the work they're putting in and all the progress they have made so far. Well done Sycamores! Have a lovely and restful weekend everyone. Miss Mor and Miss Firth

# CHRIST CHURCH CE (VA) JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

## Chestnuts:

How are we nearly at half term already? The past two weeks, like many this term, have been incredibly jam-packed and fun filled. Year 5 have had a wonderful Easter activity visiting Crow Wood Park for an Easter Egg Hunt.

Whilst all the fun has been happening, we have still been busy in the classroom. Throughout History lessons we have explored Ancient Greek civilisations and looked in detail at different invasions and rulers throughout the time period. We have created timelines, and cause & consequence relationships. In RE, we welcomed Rvd. Tommy to speak to us about Jesus' Sacrifice at Easter and the significance this holds with many Christians in the past, and today. The children asked wonderfully thought out questions.

The Tale of the Three Trees-WOW!!! Everyone played their role exceptionally, charismatically and confidently. There were lots of nerves, but you would not have seen them. During the Dress Rehearsal, the children received many compliments from children and staff alike for their superb singing... it truly is fabulous!

I hope all of Year 5 have a lovely, restful weekend ahead of our residential next week. I cannot wait to see what we get up to!  
Miss Crawshaw, Miss Taylor and Miss Smith.



## Celebrations Photo Wall



## Safeguarding:

We keep children safe by...

Being part of the Mental Health Support Team group of schools.

## Mental Health Support Team

Christ Church is a MHST school and we work closely with the Education Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs) Our EMHP is Claire, who provides support for children who are experiencing difficulties with low self-esteem, mood and some low level anxiety. Staff have also been trained in a range of areas, such as managing emotions .

For more information please speak to your child's class teacher or contact Miss Embleton (Our Mental Health Lead and qualified Youth Mental Health First Aider) or Miss Firth, our Deputy Headteacher and SENDCO.

# Certificates

## CERTIFICATE WINNERS

Y3: Olivia and Maisy

Y4: Ellie and Ferne

Y5: Samuel and Matilda

Y6: Sienna and Owen

## Christian Values Certificates

Each week, we choose one person from each class who has exemplified one of our Christian Values throughout the week.

The winners this week are:

All of Y3 Maples

4: Jacob, Charlie D & Willow

Chestnuts Class

All of Sycamores

