



# SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



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13<sup>th</sup> February 2026

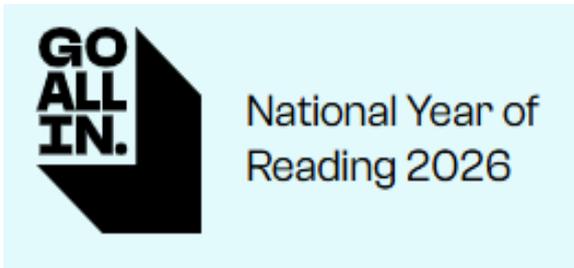
*"He who takes a rest gets ahead."*

Dear Parents/Carers,

Once again, we have arrived at the end of another half term and are now officially halfway through the academic year! 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! You can read more about what the children have been up to in their classrooms this week when you reach the 'Shobnall Showcase' further on in the newsletter.



It has been great to have seen so many of you in school this week for parent consultations and we've loved hearing so much positive feedback from you – thank you! The teaching staff are so pleased with how much progress the children are making and with how enthusiastic they are about their learning. They have enjoyed sharing this with you and we hope that you are as proud of them as we are! Thank you for supporting the Scholastic Book Fair that visited us on both nights. With this year being [The National Year of Reading](#), it was great to see so many of you 'go all in' and your support means the school will be rewarded with some free books for our library. If you would like to explore some of the reading events that are taking place in February, please visit the website [here](#).



This week, we were also delighted to be engaging in **Children's Mental Health Week**, an annual week-long campaign run by children's mental health charity [Place2Be](#). This year's theme is This is My Place, focusing on fostering a sense of belonging in children and young people which is what the children have been thinking about and strengthening this week. There are many ways parents can support their children to maintain a positive wellbeing. Please click [here](#) to access the videos and support.



A HUGE thank you to the PFA for organising last week's valentine themed disco for the children! A total of **£512.69** was raised which will go towards supporting the development of our outdoor learning environment! The PFA are looking forward to the next event – the return of 'Easter Bingo' on **Friday 20 March 2026!** More in formation will follow in due course!

In addition to wishing everyone a very restful, relaxing, and enjoyable half



term, we would also like to wish all our families who are joining in with this special time of year a very Happy Ramadan, which begins next week. As our friends and families begin the holy month of fasting, we wish them, along with the millions of Muslims around the world a blessed and generous month. Ramadan Mubarak!

I hope that whatever it is you have planned for half term, it is restful and relaxing. We reopen to pupils on **Monday 23 February 2026** at 8.45am. Have a very happy holiday and we look forward to seeing you again in just over a week's time! Enjoy!



### Safer Internet Day

The children have also been engaging with Safer Internet Day this week and exploring the '**Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI**'. 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>

Also, please don't forget about our **Online Safety Parent Coffee Morning on Friday 27 February 2026** in the school hall from 9 – 10am, which our Safeguarding Advocates are currently finalising thanks to your responses from our recent questionnaire. We look forward to seeing you there!



### Shrove Tuesday

Next week, we celebrate Shrove Tuesday, or as you may know it...Pancake Day! But what is the meaning behind this special day? How and why is it celebrated around the world? It's time to find out with some **Shrove Tuesday** facts...

- ✚ **Shrove Tuesday** is a **Christian festival** celebrated in many countries across the globe. It falls on the Tuesday before the beginning of **Lent** – a period of around six weeks leading up to **Easter**. During Lent, Christians give up luxuries to remember when Jesus went into the desert for 40 days to fast and pray.
- ✚ The exact date of Shrove Tuesday changes from year to year. But one thing stays the same — it's always **47 days before Easter Sunday**. And yes, you guessed it, it's always on a Tuesday!

- ✚ The name comes from the old word 'shricing', which means to listen to someone's sins and forgive them. In **Anglo-Saxon England**, Christians would go to church on Shrove Tuesday to confess their sins and clean their soul. In other words, they would be 'shriven'.
- ✚ In the **United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and Canada**, Shrove Tuesday has another name... **Pancake Day!** Traditionally during Lent, Christians would give up rich, tasty foods such as butter, eggs, sugar and fat (some Christians continue to do so, in fact). Shrove Tuesday was the last chance to eat them – and what better way to do so than with a delicious pancake!

If you fancy making pancakes over half-term, here is a link to a very easy recipe you can follow:

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/easy-pancakes>



### Shobnall Super Stars!

After half term, we are excited to introduce a new part of our Friday Celebration Assembly called **Shobnall Superstars**, where we will celebrate the wonderful achievements of our children outside of school. This is an opportunity for pupils to share sporting successes, musical accomplishments, club awards, competition results and other special achievements they are proud of. If your child has a certificate or trophy they would like to be included, these must be brought into school and given to their class teacher by Friday morning. The class teacher will then bring the items to assembly.

Please note that this is not 'show and tell' — we kindly ask that no toys are brought in. We look forward to celebrating the many talents of our Shobnall pupils!

### Goodbye Mr Rowley

We would like to let you know that Mr Rowley will be leaving Shobnall Primary & Nursery School on 27 February to begin an exciting new role at Burton College as a Maths and English Engagement and Support Officer. Mr Rowley has been a valued member of our team for the past six years, working as a Teaching Assistant and supporting so many of our children both in and out of the classroom. He has made a real difference to the school community and will be greatly missed by pupils and staff alike. We would like to thank him for his dedication and commitment to the school, and we wish him every success and happiness in his new role.



### Gung Hay Fat Choy!

Lunar New Year, or Chinese New Year, begins next week and we would like to take this opportunity to wish all our families who celebrate, "Gung Hay Fat Choy!" We would like to share with you some facts about this tradition:

- ✚ In Chinese legend, the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac were asked to meet the Jade Emperor and each had a year named after them. It was then decided that all those born in the animal's years would have their personalities as well.
- ✚ Red is a lucky colour because it represents fire and is thought to drive away bad luck. This is why people wear red clothes, hang red lanterns and give out red envelopes for Chinese New Year.
- ✚ The traditional Chinese New Year celebration lasts for 15 days. It is the longest and most important festival.
- ✚ People do their spring cleaning at Chinese New Year as it is believed bad luck is swept away with the dirt.
- ✚ It is a tradition to stay up until midnight to greet the new year. This practise is called *Shou Sui*. Doors and windows are open on the stroke of midnight to allow the old year to flow out.

This year is the **Year of the Horse**. As the seventh animal in the twelve-year zodiac cycle, the Horse represents freedom, energy, ambition, and speed. 2026 is specifically a Fire Horse year, symbolising intense, transformative, and sometimes volatile energy. The Fire element, which appears every 60 years for the horse, is thought to magnify the horse's traits, leading to a more dynamic, action-oriented, and sometimes impulsive year. People born in the Year of the Horse are considered energetic, confident, and charismatic but can be impulsive or stubborn.

## Ramadan

Ramadan is one of the most important months in the Islamic calendar. It is a time of fasting, prayer, and reflection for Muslims across the world. It is a time when families gather together to pray and reflect on the teachings of the Qur'an. Here are some interesting facts about Ramadan that we thought you would like to know, from the history of Ramadan to its spiritual significance:



- ❖ Ramadan falls on the ninth lunar month in the Islamic Calendar. The lunar calendar means the start of each month is based on various factors, such as the sighting of the moon. Therefore, like all Islamic months, the month of Ramadan rotates every year.
- ❖ The month of Ramadan is believed to be the month in which the Holy Qur'an was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as a guidance for all mankind.
- ❖ Ramadan is the month of fasting. Fasting (sawm) is one of the Five Pillars of Islam.
- ❖ In between the hours of sunrise and sunset, fasting isn't just accomplished by abstaining from food and drink. It involves refraining from sinful acts such as cursing, lying and bad intentions, amongst many other things. These can negate the validity of a fast.
- ❖ The beginning of a fast is initiated with a dua (prayer) of niyah (intention).
- ❖ Eating dates is a popular way to break the fast. It is said that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used dates to break his fast with. But what is actually in a date? The health benefits of dates are vast. They contain natural sugars, are high in fibre, are excellent for digestion, high in countless vitamins and nutrients, and so much more!
- ❖ Ramadan is an auspicious month for generosity and giving. The sawab (reward) for charity and benevolence in this month are immense. It is known as a month of humbleness and simplicity, and to remember those who are less fortunate than us. Many people choose to commit to Ramadan donations in this month. Some opt to contribute regularly, some dedicate their time to one of the many campaigns, and some volunteer to help in fundraising towards a good cause.
- ❖ Ramadan concludes with Eid al-Fitr, a celebration which follows the period of fasting. It is commonly known as a day of joy and thanking Allah for the strength in accomplishing the spiritual month. It is a day of gratitude, prayers, unity and happiness. For a large number of people, the day usually consists of attending the Mosque, praying, visiting family and friends, exchanging gifts, giving to charity, and a lot of eating!



## 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.

## Shobnall Stars Booking Forms

Please don't forget to book your places a week in advance for **Shobnall Stars Early Birds**, or **Shobnall Stars Night Owls** which is our after-school club. You will need to complete one form per child, on a weekly basis. Forms will need to be submitted by 12noon the Friday before you wish to book. Please also select your breakfast options in advance to assist with catering, specifying dietary requirements if necessary. You can book your place by accessing the information booklets [here](#) or by scanning the QR codes below.



## 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.](#)



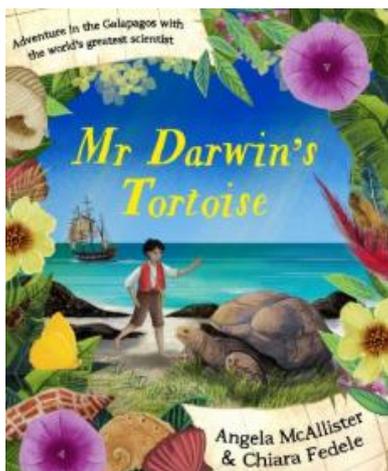
## Shobnall Stars – After School Club Closure, Monday 9 March 2026

It is with regret that **After School Club** will not be open on **Monday 9 March 2026**. This is due to staff having to attend essential training that cannot be rescheduled. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause but the rest of the sessions run as normal.

## Safety Tip!

Feeling a sense of belonging plays a vital role in children's wellbeing, confidence and gives them the ability to thrive, both academically and emotionally. This guide explores why belonging matters and how small, everyday interactions can make a meaningful difference in helping children feel accepted and included.

Offering ten practical, easy-to-apply tips, the guide supports parents and educators in building positive relationships, celebrating individuality and fostering inclusive cultures at home and in school. Featuring information on language choices, emotional validation and shared decision-making, this edition highlights simple ways to strengthen connection and nurture a genuine sense of togetherness.



## Reading Corner

This week's recommended read is for children aged 5+...

### Mr Darwin's Tortoise

Written by Angela McAllister

It's the 1830s. Antonio, the young boy at the heart of this picture book, lives on the Galápagos Islands, surrounded by an amazing variety of creatures, from flamingos, pelicans and seals, to penguins, iguanas, and giant tortoises. Antonio is endlessly inquisitive and never stops asking questions. One day, someone arrives on the island who is as eager to understand its wildlife as Antonio. That man is Charles Darwin, and he recognises a kindred spirit in Antonio.

## Hot Lunch Options 23.02.26 – 27.02.26

WEEK 2	<b>MEAT FREE</b> MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<b>Main dish</b>	Margherita pizza with baked potato wedges	Meatballs in tomato sauce with rice.	Roast beef, with Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes & gravy	Italian pasta bolognese	Crispy battered fish & chunky chips
<b>Vegetarian Main dish</b>	Roasted vegetable pizza	Vegan sausage ragu with rice.	Quorn™ fillet with roast potatoes & gravy	Vegetarian bolognese	Vegetarian burger with chunky chips
<b>Accompaniments</b>	Corn on the cob & broccoli ----- Salad bar	Peas & cauliflower ----- Salad bar	Carrots & parsnips ----- Salad bar	Roasted vegetables ----- Salad bar	Peas & baked beans ----- Salad bar
<b>Desserts</b>	Fruit sponge & custard	Fresh fruit & whip	Spiced apple cake	Oaty jam squares	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

**KEEP FIT AND ACTIVE**



### KEY

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



**"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.

## 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. **Children can come to school with mild respiratory illnesses.** 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!** Well done! Here are the latest figures...

Nursery	87.2%	Target
Reception	97.8%	Whole School – 97%
Year 1	96.6%	
Year 2	94.4%	
Year 3	98.0%	
Year 4	96.4%	Overall (to date)
Year 5	94.3%	95.9%
Year 6	98.3%	
Overall	96.0%	

### Head Teacher's Awards

Nursery	EVERYONE!	
Reception	EVERYONE!	
Year 1	Azaan K	Gianna R
Year 2	Haider H	Kadeem H
Year 3	Hassan A	Savannah N
Year 4	Inaaya A	Zayn C
Year 5	George N	Gordon Z
Year 6	Eisa L	Alfie H

### OPAL Play Awards

Nursery	
Reception	Rory P
Year 1	Hunter-James SW
Year 2	Ava C
Year 3	Zakaria B
Year 4	Arham A
Year 5	Aiza L
Year 6	Inam U

### Team Points

Team Points	Claymills	Rosliston	Sinai	Trent
Points (Week Ending 13.02.26)	77	37	77	46
Position	1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 points	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 2 points	1 <sup>st</sup> – 4 points	2 <sup>nd</sup> – 3 points
Running Total	13	8	13	12

## Team Point Champions

Congratulations to **Claymills** and **Sinai** who have successfully won the team point challenge for this half term! As a reward, they can wear non-school uniform (ideally something **red** or **yellow**) on **Friday 27 February 2026**.

# SHOBNALL SHOWCASE!

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

## Nursery

It has been a fantastic end to the first half of the Spring term!

We started the week by making chocolate submarines. We watched as the chocolate melted and then carefully poured it into the moulds. After it had set, we had fun popping them out. They tasted delicious!

On Tuesday we took part in some special Spiderman yoga to join in with Mental Health week. We used some amazing poses and breathing techniques and all very relaxed and toasty by the end of it.

Love has certainly been in the air as we celebrated Valentines Day. We had a fantastic discussion about the people we love and the kind things we do for them. There was lots of fun as we joined in with Valentine's activities with lots of hearts and smiles throughout our fabulous provision.

The Valentine pop-up sweet stall visited our class on Friday, and we were very excited to purchase some yummy, sweet treats. A wonderful end to a wonderful half term!



## Reception

This week in Reception we have been very busy with lots of exciting learning! In Maths, the children have been exploring length, comparing short and long ribbons and using mathematical language to describe what they notice. In Art, we worked together to create a collaborative firework painting, learning how to share ideas and space while producing a beautiful piece of group artwork. We have also been thinking about healthy and unhealthy foods, and the children had a go at

designing their own healthy meals, showing a great understanding of balanced choices. To finish the week, we got creative making some lovely Valentine's decorations using sequins, confetti and laminating pouches, the classroom is looking wonderfully sparkly!

## Year 1

What a fabulous last week of the term we have had in Year 1! We have been completing Spiderman yoga and practising happy breathing as part of celebrating Children's Mental Health Week. In maths, we have continued adding numbers together by counting on, as well as using our knowledge of doubles and near doubles. In English, we have been exploring our model text through lots of oracy activities to help us retell the diary entry of Captain No-Beard. In science, we have been taste-testing and using our sense of smell while trying new foods. Our last Forest School session was an exciting one as we got to have a fire and make popcorn! We finished off the week celebrating Safer Internet Day and thinking carefully about how we can stay safe online. Have a restful break, Year 1, and I cannot wait to see you in a week's time!





## Year 2

This week in Year 2 has been lovely! In English, we've started our new topic, *How to Make Bread*, and the children loved our hook lesson, trying different types of bread and writing about how they look, feel, and taste. In Maths, we've been exploring multiplication, division, and grouping, which the children have really enjoyed. In Science, we looked at the life cycle of a chicken and compared it to the human life cycle, spotting all the differences. In DT, we finished our sewing project with our pouches. Everyone worked independently and did an amazing job, even if a few stitches decided to go on their own little

adventure! We've had a wonderful half term and hope everyone enjoys a fun and relaxing week off.

## Year 3

What a wonderful week in Year 3 to end a jam-packed half term! The children have worked incredibly hard and should be very proud of all they have achieved.

In English, we have begun exploring poetry and discussing the effect that figurative language can have on the reader. The children have enjoyed identifying similes, metaphors and powerful word choices, and thinking carefully about how these create vivid images and feelings.

In Art, the class have been creating beautiful close-up drawings of plants inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe. It was brilliant to see the intricate details the children noticed and carefully captured in their work. Their focus and creativity really shone through!

In Science, we finished our learning about forces and magnets in a very exciting way. The children used compasses to take part in a scavenger hunt around the playground, applying their knowledge in a practical and engaging activity. It was fantastic to see such enthusiasm and teamwork.

We have also started rehearsals for our Year 3 class assembly, which will take place after half term. The children are already showing great confidence and expression – we can't wait to share it with you.

Well done, Year 3 – it's time for a very well-deserved break!



## Year 4

On Monday, we carried out our geography fieldwork at Shobnall Park, where the children asked members of the public questions and observed how the park is used. We analysed our findings on Wednesday by turning our tally charts into bar charts. We found that most people use the park for walking or walking their dog, usually once a week in the afternoon. We also discussed how results might differ if the fieldwork was completed in summer. In maths, we continued learning about perimeter, focusing on rectilinear shapes. In English, we explored poetry linked to our

science topic on states of matter. In science, we learned about the water cycle and evaluated our evaporation experiment, concluding that the warmer office temperature likely caused the most evaporation. For Children's

Mental Health Week, we reflected on the theme of belonging and wrote thoughtful acrostic poems. For Safer Internet Day, we discussed the safe use of AI and how to check whether online information is reliable. A fantastic end to a brilliant half term, well done, Year 4!

### Year 5

Year 5 have had a fantastic week filled with focus, creativity and hands-on learning. In Maths, the children have been learning how to order and compare decimals up to three decimal places. They have shown great care and accuracy when looking closely at place value to decide which numbers are greater or smaller. In English, the children have finished writing up their tragedy stories and have taken real pride in presenting their work with beautiful handwriting. In Science, the children became engineers as they designed and made their own mechanisms. They predicted how gears would rotate and then carried out investigations to test their ideas, showing fantastic curiosity and teamwork throughout.

### Year 6

In maths this week, Year 6 have continued their learning on percentages, focusing on how to find the percentage of a number, including using 1% as a starting point. The children have shown great perseverance and confidence when tackling these problems. In English, we have begun exploring a new text centred around chimney sweepers. The children have been thoroughly engaged and have especially enjoyed making links to our history lessons, which has led to some thoughtful discussion and excellent curiosity. It has been a pleasure to share the children's progress with you during parents' evening this week and thank you for your continued support. Well done for another fantastic week, Year 6! I hope you all have a restful and enjoyable half-term break.



### Diary Dates 2025-2026

Event	Date/Time
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2026
Year 3 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2026, 9.00am
PFA Easter Bingo	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Year 1 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2026, 9.00am
Year 5 Hampton Court Palace	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
School Closes for Easter	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026, 2.00pm
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
May Day Bank Holiday – School Closed	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
Key Stage 2 SATs Week	Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2026 to Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
PFA Midsummer Cinema Night	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
School Closes for Half-Term	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 2026
<b>INSET Day</b>	Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2026
School Reopens for Pupils	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2026
Year 4 Multiplication Check	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2026 to Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2026
Year 1 Phonics Screening Check	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2026 to Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2026
Year 4 Class Assembly	Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup> June 2026, 9.00am
<b>JTMAT INSET Day</b>	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2026
School Closes for Summer	Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2026, 2.00pm
<b>INSET Day</b>	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2026

### Spring Term Diary Dates

Event	Date/Time
School Reopens for Pupils	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2026
Year 3 Class Assembly	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2026

Parent Coffee Morning	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> February 2026, 9.00am – 10.00am
World Book Day	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
<b>Shobnall Stars Night Owls (After School Club)</b> <b>CLOSED for staff training</b>	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Comic Relief	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Eid al-Fitr	Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2026/Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
PFA Easter Bingo	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2026, 5.00pm
Mother's Day Lunches – Reception	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 1	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Key Stage 2 SATs Meeting for Parents	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> March 2026, 3.30pm, Year 6 Classroom
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 2	Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 3	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Year 5 Hampton Court Palace	Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 4	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
School Closes for Easter	Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026, 2.00pm
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 5	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
Mother's Day Lunches – Year 6	Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> April 2026



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## 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

# FOSTERING A SENSE OF BELONGING

Helping children feel like they belong is vital for their emotional wellbeing, academic success, and overall development. A true sense of belonging reduces anxiety, builds confidence, and supports resilience. These ten tips are designed to help parents and educators create inclusive, caring environments where children feel accepted, safe, and valued.

### 1 USE EVERYDAY MOMENTS



Belonging is built in the small moments. Use daily routines such as meals, school drop-offs, or quiet times, to check in, offer praise, or listen. These interactions don't need to be lengthy to be meaningful. Consistent gestures of connection and warmth show children they are important, making them feel seen, appreciated, and truly part of the home or classroom community.

### 2 INVOLVE THEM IN RULE-MAKING



Inviting children to help create rules or routines gives them a sense of shared ownership and responsibility. When their voices are heard, they feel respected and included in the decision-making process. This empowers children, fosters cooperation, and reduces resistance. Whether at home or school, co-created expectations are more likely to be followed because they come from a place of mutual respect.

### 3 VALIDATE ALL EMOTIONS



Acknowledging a child's emotions, whether positive or challenging, helps them feel accepted as they are. Validating statements like "I can see that made you upset," or "That sounds really exciting," support emotional expression and connection. Children who feel emotionally safe are more likely to seek help, participate openly, and trust the adults around them – all of which contribute to a sense of belonging.

### 4 HIGHLIGHT HIDDEN STRENGTHS



Go beyond academic success or good behaviour and take time to recognise a child's less visible qualities, such as thoughtfulness, resilience, or humour. Noticing these strengths sends a powerful message that they are valued for who they are, not just for what they do. This boosts self-esteem and helps children feel accepted in a world that often focuses on external achievements.

### 5 SHOW CURIOSITY ABOUT CULTURE



Ask respectful, open questions about a child's cultural background, family customs, or celebrations. These conversations create opportunities for children to share what matters to them and to feel proud of their identity. Whether at home or in school, valuing cultural experiences helps all children feel that their heritage is respected, and that they belong in a diverse, inclusive environment where every voice counts.

### 6 BELONGING BUDDIES



Pairing children with a peer they might not typically choose can foster new connections and break down social barriers. Assigning short projects, games, or shared responsibilities gives them a reason to interact. Buddy systems help quieter or less confident children feel included and supported. Over time, these intentional connections can develop into meaningful friendships, strengthening the wider sense of community and inclusion.

### 7 AVOID LABELS AND COMPARISONS



Avoid labelling children by behaviour or comparing them to others, as this can damage self-esteem and foster exclusion. Statements like "Why can't you be more like..." may unintentionally make a child feel less worthy. Instead, focus on individual progress and strengths. Encouraging children to celebrate their own achievements, however small, helps them develop confidence and feel valued for being themselves.

### 8 MAKE TIME FOR ONE-TO-ONES



Spending regular one-to-one time with a child shows that they matter on an individual level. These moments can be as simple as reading a book together or chatting during a walk. Focused attention, free from distraction, builds trust and emotional connection. It lets the child know they are important and cared for, which is crucial for developing a strong sense of belonging.

### 9 REFLECT THEIR INTERESTS



Whether at home or in school, including children's interests in daily life reinforces their importance. Display their artwork, talk about their favourite books, or include their hobbies in family activities or lesson plans. Seeing their identity reflected in their environment tells children they belong. It shows that their passions, preferences, and contributions are valued and that they have a place in the group.

### 10 EMPHASISE 'WE' OVER 'THEY'



Use inclusive language that reinforces unity and shared identity. Phrases like "Let's figure it out together," or "We all help each other here," promote collective responsibility and connection. Avoiding divisive terms like "those children," or "that class" helps children feel part of a supportive group. Language shapes experience, and inclusive language fosters environments where every child feels safe, welcomed, and included.

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