



Axbridge C of E Academy

Together We Inspire, Thrive & Excel

"I have come so that you may have life, life in all its fullness"
John 10:10

Issue # 16

12th January 2026

Dear Families,

Last week was a wonderful first week back, with the children picking up where they left off. I was particularly impressed with the manners shown to each other and to the staff; lots of 'thank you very much', 'please' and holding of doors open for others. I was incredibly proud of the standards the children are upholding within the school, they really are wonderful young role-models! Please celebrate this with them ☺

This term, I have given the children (and staff) a simple New Year's Resolution for us all to work towards, and that is;

One Kind Thing Every Day

We have already been celebrating this in school and across the classes, but we would love it if you could pick up on this theme at home and discuss with your child any acts of kindness they've helped with or been impressed by.

Many thanks for those who have taken part in the Learning Conversation over the weekend too, it's been wonderful to see all the acts of kindness and creativity from our children and their families.

With this message in mind and linking to our Christian Value of Love, we will be running a school **DIY SOS Day on Saturday 14th February, Valentines Day, in order to give the school a little love.** We aim to prepare and ready the memorial garden area, in preparation for the greenhouse construction and outdoor learning area. We need help with digging, weeding, moving of gravel and laying of membrane. We would also love any help with disposing of old school furniture at the local recycling centre. For those preferring inside work, we have some painting and decorating we would love your help with too. Of course, there will be a steady supply of hot food and drink to keep everyone fuelled up. These days have been a huge success in the past and it helps us ensure the school remains a vibrant space for all of our children, staff and families; and your support is always welcomed! Thank you.

Mr Dominic Shillabeer
Head teacher

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January

Wednesday 14th - Year 2 trip to SS Great Britain

Thursday 15th 3.30 to 5pm - PTA Film Night

Friday 16th - Crook Peak Multi-Day

Monday 19th - PTA meeting at the Lamb Inn, 7:00pm onwards

Wednesday 21st - Year 4 trip to the Roman Baths

Monday 26th - 2.45pm Phonics Information session

Friday 30th @ 9am - Church Service everyone welcome

Friday 30th - PTA Ceilidh and Burns Night Event - 6-9pm

February

Monday 9th - Children's Mental Health Week

Tuesday 10th - Safer Internet Day

Thursday 12th February - school closes for Half-Term at 3:20pm

Friday 13th is an INSET Day

Saturday 14th February - DIY SOS day

Monday 23rd February - return to school

ATTENDANCE

Every day counts!

Below 90%

Serious Concern.
Persistent absence.

90 - 95.9%

Concern.
Low attendance.

At least 96%

Expected attendance.



Expected attendance means having no more than seven days off this school year!

Whole School Attendance was 98.3 % for the first week back.



Our Christian Values are:
Community
Courage
Love

Our Christian Vision is;
"I have come so that you may have life, life in all its fullness"
John 10:10

Our Learning Skills are:
Thinking
Social
Self-management
Communication
Research

Congratulations to our certificate winners this week, we are so proud of you!

	Pine	Hazel	Chestnut	Redwood	Oak
Star of the Week	Rosie	Zachary	Saxon	Hermione	William
Christian Values	Rupert	Eadie	Anabelle	Thomas	Reggie
Learning Skills	Rafferty	Cara	Jesse	Seth	Oliver L

Headteacher's Awards

Star of the Week	Billie B Redwood	Christian Values	Kip + Sofia Oak	Learning Skills	Alfie P Pine
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House Points

	Black Rock	Crook Peak	King's Wood	Strawberry Line
This week	144	94	134	96



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IS A RESPONSIBILITY OF US ALL

Safeguarding Lead: Mr Dominic Shillabeer

Deputy Safeguarding Leads: Miss Kellie Nash and Mrs Kate Febrey



DIY SOS Day - Saturday 14th February

To support our Christian Value of **Love**, we are inviting families to join us for a school DIY SOS Day. Key details:

- Focus on preparing the memorial garden for the new greenhouse and outdoor learning space.
- Tasks include digging, weeding, moving gravel and laying membrane.
- Support needed to dispose of old school furniture at the local recycling centre. Trailers/ vans are welcome!
- Indoor jobs available such as painting and decorating.
- Hot food and drinks provided throughout the day.
- A great way to help keep our school a vibrant, welcoming space for all children, staff and families.

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PTA Film Night - £3 per child

To book, please email the PTA with your child's name and class to

pta@axbridgefirstschool.co.uk





PTA CEILIDH

*Come and join us for a
Family Friendly evening
and learn how to Ceilidh!*

Tickets £8 (adult) and
£4 (kids) or £20 (family
ticket with up to 4
kids) which includes
chilli!

Email

pta@axbridgefirstschool.co.uk

with confirmation of
payment into the PTA bank

account

Friday, January 30th | 6pm - 9pm

AXBRIDGE SCHOOL HALL

**Happy New Year
from the Messy Church Team
at St Andrew's Church, Cheddar**

(including all the Churches in the
Benefice of Cheddar, Draycott and Rodney Stoke)

**Come and join us
for our first Messy
Church of 2026!**

17 | JANUARY
2026

Just drop an email to
Samm on
beneficecdrs@gmail.com
to let us know if you plan to
come along.

Children must be
accompanied by an adult
please.

Theme: The Lost Sheep



MORE INFORMATION :

- 🕒 3pm - 4.30pm
- 📍 Cheddar Village Hall
- 🌐 www.beneficecdrs.org



**Paul & Simon
in
CONCERT**

SATURDAY
24TH
JANUARY
2026

**St Andrew's
Church
Cheddar**

**Tickets
£12.50**

Bar from 6pm in
the Village Hall

Paul & Simon bring the
classic songs of **SIMON
& GARFUNKEL** to the
wonderful medieval
setting of St Andrew's
Church
7pm Sat 24/01/2026

tickets online from
ticketsource.co.uk/st-andrews-cheddar
or from the Church Office (cash only)
Mon 2-3pm, Thurs 10-3pm
(excl. Mon 22/12/25 to Mon 5/1/2026)

**WESSEX LEARNING TRUST
POSTER DESIGN COMPETITION**

Poster theme about - Exploring the safe and
responsible use of AI

COMPETITION RULES:

1. The design should
promote Safer Internet
Day on **February 10th
2026**
2. Poster size - A4 Portrait
3. Posters must be
submitted to your school
by Monday 19th January
4. Winning posters will be
shared across all Wessex
Learning Trust Schools



On the back of your poster,
we need your:
First NAME only
AGE
Name of SCHOOL



**HAPPY
New
Year** *we ♥*
CREATE! Sunday

**CHRISTINGLES
& CRAFTS** **FREE**

Sunday 18 January 4-6 pm

@Churchill Methodist, BS25 5NG



- ♥ Fun for families
- ♥ FREE Crafts Workshop
- ♥ Bible Storytime
- ♥ Buffet Tea



Churchill Methodist Church

Contact us:

churchillmethodistchurch@gmail.com
churchillmethodistchurch.org.uk

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**Wessex
Learning Trust**
We Learn Together!

THE SPACE

Parent Club

Being a parent is HARD! Do you sometimes just want to talk to like-minded people without judgement?

Does your child experience school avoidance or have SEN? Or maybe you just need a gentle chat with someone who understands?



 We are here for YOU!

Parent Club offers a safe, welcoming space with:

 Hot coffee  Friendly faces  Support, advice & signposting

 Every Wednesday  9am-10:30am



No need to book — just drop in!

Prefer to reserve a spot? Text 07940 177399

We also have activities to keep little ones occupied!



New Evening sessions

Evening sessions available by appointment only

1st Monday of every month
From 6pm
Coffee @ The Hub

Please email Victoria
VBoorman@thespacesomerset.org.uk
to book your space

Monday 5th January
available for booking now

**COFFEE @ THE HUB, 1-2 LOWER NORTH STREET,
CHEDDAR, BS27 3HA (OPPOSITE TESCO EXPRESS)**

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI TOYS

This festive season, the newest toys on the shelves do not just blink or make noise; they listen. Many now come with artificial intelligence (AI), allowing them to talk, learn, and even respond to a child's emotions. These toys can be educational and engaging, but they also collect, store, and process information. This guide explains what that means for families and why it matters.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

TOYS THAT LISTEN AND LEARN

When a toy uses AI, it collects data such as voice recordings, interactions, and background sounds. This information is sent to remote servers, where it is analysed to improve responses. Your child's voice becomes training data, which may be stored indefinitely or shared with third parties.

WEAK SECURITY PROTECTIONS

Some AI toys have poor password protection or open network connections. Others may have microphones or cameras that stay on, even when the toy appears to be off. This can lead to recordings being made without your knowledge, including conversations unrelated to play.

ARTIFICIAL VOICES, REAL INFLUENCE

For very young children, an AI companion may become one of the first voices they interact with regularly. How that voice shows humour, empathy, or authority can shape how a child learns to communicate. If the model is artificial, then part of what is learned is artificial as well.

PRESSURE TO KEEP ENGAGING

Some toys reward repeated use or track engagement, encouraging children to interact more. When children compare how their toys perform, it creates pressure to play more often. This increases the amount of data collected and can make learning feel like competition.

MARKETING THROUGH PLAY

Toys that learn a child's preferences may feed that data into future advertising. A toy that knows a child's favourite colour or hobby could help a company design more targeted marketing to that child and their family.

PLAYTIME AS DATA TRAINING

The information collected from children helps train AI systems. Their voice, emotional responses, and behaviour shape how machines 'understand' people. Play becomes part of a much larger system that influences how future technologies behave.

Advice for Parents & Educators

START WITH A CONVERSATION

Talk to young people. Explain that some toys learn from what they say and do. Help them understand that even friendly technology should have boundaries, and to ask questions about it. Curiosity is healthy, blind trust is not.

SET LIMITS ON USE

Turn off Wi-Fi or Bluetooth when the toy is not in use. Check for updates regularly, as they can change privacy or safety settings. Treat connected toys like any smart device; they should be monitored, updated, and switched off when not in use.

MODEL DIGITAL AWARENESS

Children learn from adults. If they see you checking privacy settings, reading terms, and talking openly about online safety, they are likely to do the same. Show them how to question technology in a healthy way.

RESEARCH BEFORE YOU BUY

Look for toys that work offline or store data locally. Check for a free or demo version so you can test how it behaves. Read privacy policies to understand what data is collected, where it goes, and whether it's shared with others.

REVIEW PRIVACY SETTINGS

Find out where the data is stored and who has access to it. Some companies sell or share data with advertisers. If the toy connects through an app, check what it requests access to and limit those permissions whenever possible.

BALANCE AI WITH REAL PLAY

AI toys can be fun and creative, but they are not a replacement for real human interaction. Encourage time away from technology with activities that foster emotional and social development. Use AI toys to support learning, not define it.

Meet Our Expert

Clara Hawking is Executive Director of Kompass Education. She advises governments, school trusts, and global organisations on AI governance and safeguarding, helping schools and families understand how technology shapes learning, wellbeing, and the digital future of children.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College