



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 # 18

26th January 2026

Dear Families,

It's been wonderful to visit the classrooms lately, seeing the children deeply engrossed in their learning and showing great pride in the work. Year 2s are already putting their SS Great Britain knowledge to great use, following their recent visit to Bristol and Year 4 have already begun some creative story writing following their visit to the Roman Baths. These trips really do bring learning to life and create meaningful experiences that stay long in the memory.

Following a successful PTA meeting last week, there a whole raft of events scheduled in for the coming weeks and months that we need to make you aware of. The ever popular 'Break The Rules' day is back on the 6th February, a Valentines Crafternoon on Thursday 5th February, as well as a World Book Week costume/uniform/book sale after the half-term and a visit from the Space Explorer Dome in March. We are also in early talks with Devito's Circus for a week-long visit this summer - watch this space!

If that wasn't enough, we also have our first Silent Disco booked in for Children's Mental Health week, paid for by our amazing PTA. A silent disco is a positive and inclusive treat, as it encourages movement, self-expression and spreads a little joy too. We are even hoping to try and run a free after-school session for parents to join in and have a little boogie with your children. You might even catch some of the teachers strutting their stuff too!

Finally, I include in this newsletter a letter from Gavin Ball, CEO of the WLT. Gavin has always championed the work we do at Axbridge and supported us every step of the way. On behalf of the staff, children and wider community, we wish him the very best of luck in his retirement.

Many thanks to those families who have responded to the food survey from the WLT, as well as the DIY SOS day request for help - even an hour of your time will make a difference!

Mr Dominic Shillabeer
Head teacher



January

Monday 26th @ 2.45 - Phonics information session

Friday 30th @ 9am - Church Service everyone welcome

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

February

Friday 6th - Break the Rules Day

Friday 6th - NHS dental checks for 5 years old.

Monday 9th - Children's Mental Health Week

Tuesday 10th - Safer Internet Day

Tuesday 10th - Silent Disco during school

Wednesday 11th - Silent Disco during school

Thursday 12th - Valentine's - wear red for School in A Bag

Thursday 12th - PTA Valentines Crafternoon - 3:25 - 4 :25pm

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

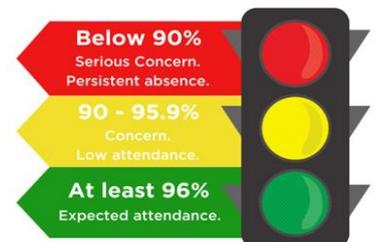
Friday 13th is an INSET Day

Saturday 14th February - DIY SOS day

Monday 23rd February - return to school

ATTENDANCE

Every day counts!



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

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	Reggie	Archie	Arabella	Felicia	India
Christian Values	Emmie	Eadie	Vika	Dylan	Clara
Learning Skills	Demian	Kitty	Anabelle	Billie	Maya

Headteacher's Awards

Star of the Week	Tahlia B-S Chestnut	Christian Values	Leo W Chestnut	Learning Skills	Arlo O Hazel
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House Points

	Black Rock	Crook Peak	King's Wood	Strawberry Line
This week	148	103	146	90



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IS A RESPONSIBILITY OF US ALL

Safeguarding Lead: Mr Dominic Shillabeer

Deputy Safeguarding Leads: Miss Kellie Nash and Mrs Kate Febrey



Wessex Learning Trust

We Learn Together

23 January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

I am writing to inform you that I will be retiring from my role as Chief Executive of the Wessex Learning Trust at the end of this academic year.

It has been a privilege to grow and serve the Trust, and to work with our schools and settings on behalf of the children and young people in our care. I have been consistently impressed by the dedication of our staff and the strong partnerships we share with families and communities.

I am hugely proud of the progress our schools have made and of the values that underpin our work: high expectations, care for every child, and a commitment to continuous improvement. The Board of Trustees is overseeing leadership succession to ensure stability and continuity, and I am confident the Trust will continue to go from strength to strength.

I would like to thank you for your trust, support, and engagement with our schools. It has been an honour to lead the organisation since 2017 on this chapter of its journey.

With warmest regards,

GAVIN BALL
Chief Executive

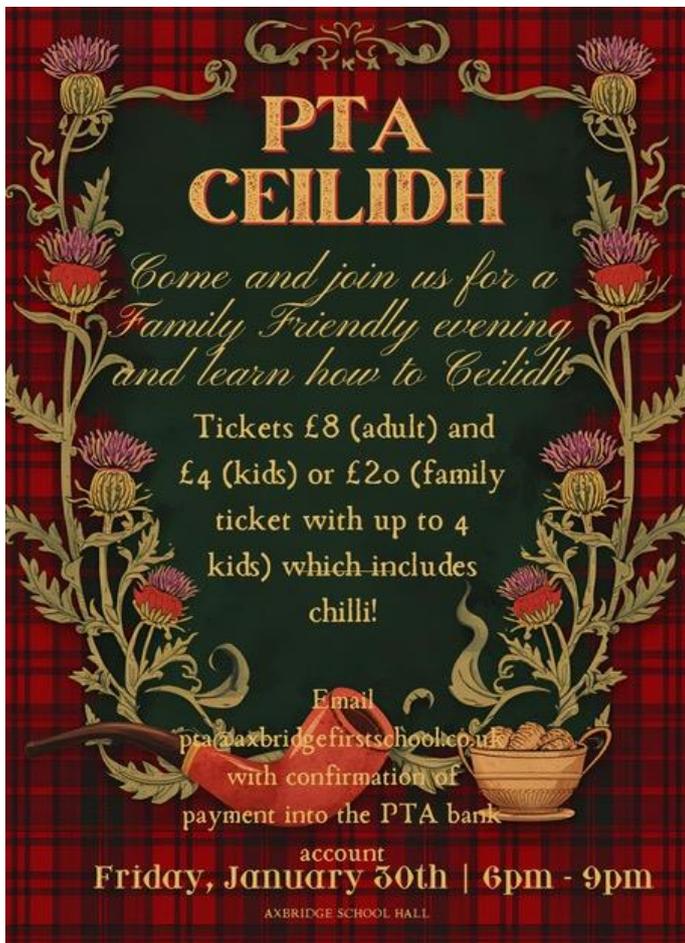
Wessex Learning Trust

A: Station Road, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3AQ

E: office@wessexlearningtrust.co.uk

W: wessexlearningtrust.co.uk

T: 01934 745363



PTA Events

CEILIDH - Friday 30th January

Don't forget to book your tickets for this

Fun filled family event!

pta@axbridgefirstschool.co.uk

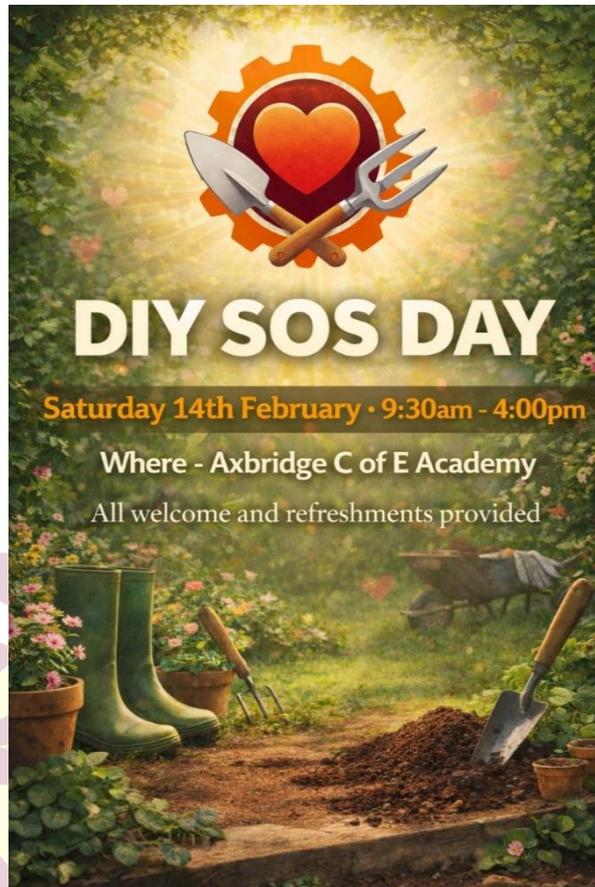


Valentines Crafts

To book your child's place please email the PTA

pta@axbridgefirstschool.co.uk





DIY SOS Day - Saturday 14th February

Sign up here: [DIY SOS Day - Fill in form](#)

To support our Christian Value of **Love** and showing the school site a small amount of this, we are inviting families to join us for a school DIY SOS Day. Jobs include:

- Focus on preparing the memorial garden for the new greenhouse and outdoor learning space.
- 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.
- Perfect for any ex-pupils undertaking Duke of Edinburgh or parents whose employers provide a day to support such causes.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IS A RESPONSIBILITY OF US ALL

Safeguarding Lead: Mr Dominic Shillabeer

Deputy Safeguarding Leads: Miss Kellie Nash and Mrs Kate Febrey

Tell Us What You Think?

Your input is crucial! We're running four important surveys across our Trust schools to help us understand what matters most and enhance the overall experience for students, parents, and staff. We'd greatly appreciate your time.

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Parent Survey

The purpose of this questionnaire is to find out what matters to you most about food at your Child's school and how satisfied you are with the service.



[CLICK HERE](#)



Wessex
Learning Trust

Your views matter! Please take a moment to complete this survey.

The link to this survey has been shared on Class Dojo

Thank you



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 NINTENDO SWITCH 2

Nintendo launched its Switch 2 games console in early June 2025 – its first new console in eight years. While it builds on the original's success by remaining compatible with certain existing games, it also adds powerful hardware and new features like GameChat and a USB-C camera. As more children look to upgrade, it's important to understand how this new console might affect their play and safety.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EASIER TO ACCESS MATURE CONTENT

18
CENSORED

Despite Nintendo's reputation for family-friendly titles, mature games like *Cyberpunk 2077* and *Hitman* have been released onto the platform. With the Switch 2's improved performance, developers will be able to port even more mature-rated games. These may appeal to children due to their popularity, but they contain content that is highly unsuitable for young audiences.

IN-APP & GAME STORE PURCHASES

The Nintendo eShop enables purchases with just a few taps. If payment details are saved and PIN protection is disabled, children may unknowingly make costly purchases – including game add-ons, cosmetic items or entire new releases – without parental approval.

UNRESTRICTED ONLINE PLAY IN SOME GAMES

While GameChat is one feature, Switch 2 also connects to the broader Nintendo Switch Online service. Many free-to-play titles like *Fortnite* or *Splatoon 3* allow voice or text chat with strangers unless chat settings are adjusted, meaning children could encounter inappropriate language or unwanted contact.

GAMECHAT & REAL-TIME VOICE COMMUNICATION

GameChat enables live chatting with up to 12 people, even across different games, with optional video and screen-sharing. Though children under 16 are restricted to chatting only with approved friends, the sheer interactivity could raise privacy concerns or create pressure to remain online longer.

CAMERA COMPATIBILITY & PRIVACY CONCERNS

The optional USB-C camera supports video calling and facial overlays in games; however, this also raises the risk of cyberbullying or the unwanted sharing of personal images. The camera can be disabled, removed or covered, and parental controls are essential to manage how and when it is used.

POWERFUL PULL OF FAMILIAR CHARACTERS

Nintendo's mascot, Mario – along with Pikachu, Donkey Kong and others – remains hugely appealing to younger audiences, especially after the success of the recent film, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* (2023). These beloved icons are central to Nintendo's branding and often feature in merchandising, adverts and in-game promotions, creating strong emotional attachments in children and a sense of urgency to keep up with their peers.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHECK RATINGS & USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Every Switch and Switch 2 game comes with a PEGI age rating. Before buying one, ensure the content matches your child's age. Use the Nintendo Parental Controls app to monitor gameplay, set screen-time limits and manage friend requests.

REVIEW FRIEND LISTS AND CHAT PERMISSIONS

Child profiles are restricted to chatting with approved friends only, but it's good practice to regularly check their friend list and communication settings. Use the Parental Controls app to switch off voice or video chat if necessary.

REMOVE OR RESTRICT PAYMENT METHODS

Avoid accidental spending by unlinking credit cards from the device. Instead, consider adding funds via prepaid eShop cards or requiring a PIN for purchases. Some banking apps can also be set to approve transactions manually.

ENCOURAGE OPEN CONVERSATIONS

Teach children how to block, report and capture any behaviour or content that makes them uncomfortable. The console's built-in tools allow them to create screenshots and video clips, which can aid in reporting any issues. Keeping an open dialogue helps children feel supported and safe.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is the Games Editor of Daily Star and has been working in the gaming and tech industry for five years. A regular visitor to the App Store to try out new tools, he's also a parent and understands the importance of online safety. He's also a tech and fitness writer and has been published on sites including IGN, TechRadar, and plenty more.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College