



# Axbridge C of E Academy

Together We Inspire, Thrive & Excel



## February

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> - PTA Film Night  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> @ 9.10am - Church Service.

## March

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> - Book Week  
Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> - Bedtime Stories  
Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> - World Book Day  
Friday 6<sup>th</sup> - Silent Disco  
Monday 9<sup>th</sup> - Science Week  
Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> @ 10am - Mothering Sunday Church service  
Friday 20<sup>th</sup> - Red Nose Day  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> - PTA Uniform & Doughnut Sale

## April

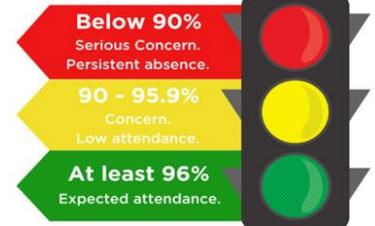
Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> @ 9am - Rocksteady Concert  
Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> @ 4 to 7pm - Parents Evening  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 9.10am - Church Service  
Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 4 to 7pm - Parents Evening

**Friday 3rd April - school closes for Good Friday**  
**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> - Easter Monday**

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April - return to School**

## ATTENDANCE

Every day counts!



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

*"I have come so that you may have life, life in all its fullness"*

John 10:10

### Issue # 21

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026

Dear Families,

I hope you all enjoyed a restful and refreshing half-term break, with time to recharge and enjoy being together; despite the all of the rain! We're only a day in, but it has been a real pleasure to welcome the children back into school; seeing their smiles, energy and enthusiasm filling the classrooms and corridors, reminding us just how special our school community is.

As we begin the second half of the spring term, there is a real sense of purpose and excitement across the school as we look forward to so many wonderful events, visitors and experiences, on top of the purposeful learning that already takes place in the classrooms. I know that my staff are very much looking forward to starting their new inquiries with their classes! To that end, please take note of the Parent's Evening dates, where we will look to discuss, share and celebrate your child's learning this term. This time, all bookings will be made via the My Child At School App.

Later this term, we'll be celebrating British Science Week and we have some fantastic experiments and whole school projects to look forward to, with information around this to be shared shortly. There are also many PTA events to look forward to, with the launch of some new initiatives that we are very excited to roll out!

With a spring in our step and hopes for some warming sunshine, I wish you and your families my warmest wishes for the Spring Term.

Dominic Shillabeer

## EXCEL

A huge well done to Reggie in Year 4, who has been clocking up some impressive scores on Times Tables Rock Stars these past few weeks. Just by practising a few times a week, he has made such incredible progress!

Well done!



**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**

## **National Year of Reading - Reading Champions**

As part of our involvement in the National Year of Reading, we are excited to celebrate and promote the importance of reading for pleasure across the school. Each week, we will be sharing our Reading Champions on the newsletter. This will be children who show a particularly positive attitude towards reading. This might include recommending books to friends, talking enthusiastically about authors or genres or books, sharing their love of stories, getting lost in a book or inspiring others through thoughtful conversations about what they read. We look forward to celebrating the many different ways our children show a love of reading at Axbridge!



### **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IS A RESPONSIBILITY OF US ALL**

**Safeguarding Lead: Mr Dominic Shillabeer**

**Deputy Safeguarding Leads: Miss Kellie Nash and Mrs Kate Febrey**

**A:** Axbridge C of E Academy, Axbridge, Somerset, BS26 2BA

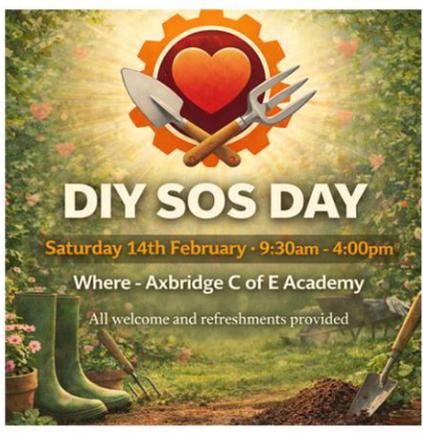
**E:** office@axbridgefirstschool.co.uk | **W:** www.axbridgefirstschool.co.uk | **T:** 01934 732391





Our recent DIY SOS Day was a huge success, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who gave up their time on Valentine's Day to show the school a little love. Thanks to your generosity and hard work, our school environment has been given a real lift. The memorial garden area is now ready for the next phase of development, the installation of a base and greenhouse. The benefits of outdoor learning, of gardening, and the sense of responsibility that comes with an area such as this are innumerable. We can't wait for the children to begin accessing and using this space.

Thank you to all involved!



# World Book Week Events

## Book Fair

 Monday 2nd - Fri 6th March

 3.20pm - 4.00pm (School Hall)

- All children will browse during the week, the fair is open to all after school.
- Every pound spent makes a huge difference for the books we are able to purchase for the children in school.
- **Card payments only**
- Children will receive a **£1 World Book Day book voucher**, which can be redeemed against any book priced £2.99 or more.

## Parent/Carer Reading Guests

 Monday - Thursday (end of day)

 2.55pm - 3.15pm

Parents/carers are warmly invited to come in and share a favourite story.

 Please let your class teacher know if you'd like to take part.

## Bedtime Stories Afternoon

 Tuesday 3rd March

 1.20pm - 3.10pm

Children can bring **pyjamas, dressing gown, slippers & a teddy** for a cosy afternoon of stories, plus hot chocolate and a cookie.

 Please inform staff of any dietary requirements.

## World Book Day

 Thursday 5th March - all day

- Dress up as a **favourite book character**
- Bring a book to share
- Special visitor: **Storyteller Jane Flood**, sharing tales from around the world, returning on Friday morning too!

## Family Reading Event

 Friday 6th March

 2.30pm - 3.10pm

Families are invited into school to read together in our library and school hall. (Grandparents and family members welcome too!)

## Extra Challenges

- **Extreme Reading Challenge** - send a photo via ClassDojo
  - **60-Second Book Sell** - record a short pitch for your favourite book
-  **Deadline: Wednesday 4th March**
-  Prizes include certificates, badges and a **£10 book voucher**

# Monitoring and Filtering by Smoothwall - Information for Parents



**Wessex**  
Learning Trust  
We Learn Together

January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers

## Smoothwall Filtering and Monitoring – Parent Information

As part of our ongoing commitment to keeping all pupils safe online, both in school and when using school devices, we are improving Filtering and Monitoring across all Wessex Learning Trust schools using a product called Smoothwall.

Smoothwall is a nationally recognised system used by schools across the UK to help safeguard children by monitoring online activity and filtering inappropriate or harmful content. It provides early alerts to designated safeguarding staff if concerning online behaviour is detected.

### What this means for your child:

- All internet activity on school devices and on the school network will be monitored and filtered
- Alerts are sent to trained staff if potentially unsafe or worrying activity is detected
- Monitoring helps identify early signs that a child may need additional support
- It strengthens our online safety approach

### Privacy and Data Protection:

We use web filtering and, where appropriate, monitoring on school devices and networks to help keep pupils safe online and meet statutory obligations under the Department for Education's Filtering and Monitoring Standards and the Department for Education's statutory guidance for schools which is known as 'Keeping Children Safe in Education.' This involves logging your school username, device details, the websites you attempt to access, and search terms. We use this information to prevent access to illegal or harmful content and to identify safeguarding concerns. Our legal basis is Article 6(1)(c) of the UK GDPR: legal obligation with Keeping Children Safe in Education. We keep routine logs for 90 days; items linked to safeguarding concerns may be retained longer in a child protection file. Only authorised staff can access the filtering and monitoring system.

For questions or to exercise your data rights, please contact your child's school and ask to discuss with the Data Protection Lead.

Smoothwall is designed for safeguarding. It monitors behaviours, not personal files or unrelated private messages. All data is handled securely and in line with data protection law.

### Why are we introducing this now?

Our schools have always had systems in place for monitoring, but online safety risks continue to evolve. Smoothwall helps us respond swiftly and provides reassurance that pupils' digital activity is safeguarded effectively.

If you have any questions, please contact your school office who will either be able to answer your query or put you in touch with a member of the safeguarding team.

Yours sincerely

The Wessex Learning Trust

# FILM NIGHT

**BLUEY: THE SIGN**

**OLAF'S FROZEN ADVENTURE**

**TOY STORY: THAT TIME FORGOT**

**TUESDAY  
24TH FEB  
3:30-5PM**

**£4 PER CHILD**

To book please email [pta@axbridgefirstschool.co.uk](mailto:pta@axbridgefirstschool.co.uk) with Child's name and class

Account details to transfer are  
Name: Axbridge First School PTA  
Sort code: 30-91-84  
Account number: 00284059

### In Touch

in Axbridge, Shipham & Rowberrow Benefice & Crook Peak Parish  
Sunday 22 February  
Lent 1

#### Sunday 22 February

1000	CHRISTON	Holy Communion
1000	SHIPHAM	Holy Communion & Prayer for Healing
1800	AXBRIDGE	Evening Praise
1800	BADGWORTH	Evening Prayer

#### Taking place this week

##### Monday 23 February

1100	Axbridge Warm Spot, Church Rooms (ends 1300)
1700	Crook Peak Special Choir Practice, Badgworth (ends 1830)
1930	ASR Homegroup, Diney's, Glebe House (ends 2100)

##### Tuesday 24 February

1930	CP Homegroup, Crooklands, Old Coach Rd, Cross (ends 2100)
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##### Wednesday 25 February

1200	Funeral for Mike Webb-Morris, Shipham Church
1945	Christian Meditation Group, Axbridge Church

##### Thursday 26 February

0900	Crook Peak online morning prayer <a href="https://www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/01-1258H/service-and-events/">https://www.achurchnearyou.com/benefice/01-1258H/service-and-events/</a>
1100	ASR Lent Course, 7 The Pennings (1/6)

##### Friday 27 February

1930	ASR Benefice Choir Practice (ends 2030)
1100	Lenny's Community Café, Shipham Church (ends 1400)

#### Next Sunday, 1 March, Lent 2

0900	WEARE	Agape Meal
1000	WEARE	Praise & Worship
1000	AXBRIDGE	United Benefice Communion Zoom Meeting ID: 893 3983 8684 Passcode: 294293
1500	AXBRIDGE	Mayor's Civic Service

Join us at the  
**Axbridge Blackberry  
Carnival AGM**

**7.30pm Mon 9th March | Axbridge CHURCH ROOMS**

**DISCUSSION AGENDA**      **FREE TEA, COFFEE & CAKE**

New Committee Members & volunteers required.  
2026 Carnival is in danger of being cancelled!  
Without growing our committee & volunteer base, it will just not be feasible for us to continue to organise this much loved community event.

*Do something amazing - volunteer!*

[Axbridgecarnival@gmail.com](mailto:Axbridgecarnival@gmail.com)

## 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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See full reference list on our website

#WakeUpWednesday®

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