

# Weekly School News Roundup

**Withycombe Raleigh  
C of E Primary School**

**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026**



Mrs Emma Jones, Headteacher  
Withycombe Village Road  
Exmouth, Devon, EX8 3BA

Please ring us on: (01395) 263397  
email: [admin@wrpschool.org](mailto:admin@wrpschool.org)  
website: [wrpschool.org](http://wrpschool.org)

## News from your Headteacher

It is just a short week next week and therefore only 4 days before the Easter holidays. I am sure you and your children are looking forward to a break from early mornings, I know I am! There are lots of clubs and activities going on in and around Exmouth if you are looking for things to do. There are several clubs running here at Withycombe over the holiday including LD Active's Football Camp and also the Football Fun Factory. Bookings can be made via their websites. Other events in East Devon for the holidays can be found at this link.

<https://devonwithkids.co.uk/whats-on-in-devon-this-april/>



I am really sad to announce that Mrs White has decided to leave her role at Withycombe after almost 21 years. If your child has been supported by Mrs White you will know what an amazing individual she is! Her dedication to our school has been immense and her expertise in supporting children with additional needs is second to none. In short, she has made a significant difference to the lives and outcomes of so many children.

Mrs White is also an extremely kind and caring colleague, who always looks out for others - always checking in on her team and reminding us to get a drink or take a break. Withycombe won't be the same without her! Mrs White's last day will be 1st April.

### Absences

During the school holidays, including this Easter, some families may be looking forward to enjoying a holiday or short break! I would like to take this opportunity to remind our families that any holiday taken during term time will be **unauthorised** unless circumstances are deemed as 'exceptional' (under the specific terms that we assess against).

The Government published a **white paper** where they set out their priorities for schools over the next few years. One area they are keen to target is attendance. Schools are being asked to closely monitor pupil attendance and to act swiftly when a child's attendance falls below 90%. As a school our attendance levels have always been very good, but we have noticed a downward trend in our data with an increasing number of children being classed as 'persistently absent' (Attendance below 90%).

Devon County Council monitor school attendance and support schools in their efforts to raise school attendance. All schools have a legal obligation to inform Devon County Council of any child not attending regularly. We have been set a target by DCC to improve our overall attendance to 95% or above - our current attendance is average is 94.4% per pupil so we are currently short of our target. If you're interested in reading more, our Attendance Policy can be found on our website - this explains our procedures for dealing with persistent absence. It is of course the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that all their children of compulsory school age are receiving an efficient full-time education by regular attendance at a school or otherwise.

One of our procedures is to notify all parents and carers if their child's attendance drops below 90%; this includes absences due to illness or any unauthorised absences. If you receive a letter or text from school over the next couple of weeks stating that your child's attendance has dropped below 90%, please understand that this is part of our absence monitoring procedures and within our duty of care to ensure that children attend school whenever possible.

*Continued...*



Growing

Happy

Caring

Hearts

and

Minds



# Weekly School News Roundup

Our aim has not changed, and we continue to offer families support when attendance becomes an issue to ensure that they have full access to their teaching and learning and the wider opportunities that their schooling brings – I do not feel the need to repeat how important children’s education is in moulding their future life-chances.

Should you have any concerns about your child’s attendance, or if you need additional support, please make an appointment to see me or Mr Smith. Further information about school attendance and absence can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>

Please allow us to remind you that we are a nut-free school across the whole site. We have several children with severe nut allergies, and for them any exposure can trigger life-threatening anaphylaxis. A serious reaction can be triggered just by touching the same door handles as someone who has eaten nuts. We know nuts can be a healthy snack for most people, but please reserve them for outside of school to protect our friends.

Have a lovely weekend, Mrs E Jones, Headteacher

## Our Big Brush Club Achieves Gold!



We are part of the Big Brush Club and we recently had our quality assurance assessment - being observed during one of our lessons. As a result we have been recognised as a **model setting** and achieved a **Gold Level Certification!**

Here are some extracts from the report:

“It was an absolute pleasure to visit your setting recently. It was wonderful to see such confident, enthusiastic participation from the children taking part in the supervised toothbrushing programme.

I am delighted to share that your school has been recognised as a **Model Setting** and has achieved our Gold Level Certification. This is an exceptional achievement, and your whole team should be incredibly proud. The standard of delivery, organisation, and commitment to children’s oral health was **outstanding** throughout. I’ve attached your quality assurance certificate, which reflects the **high-quality practice** we observed.”

Feedback: Equipment was very well maintained, clean, and correctly labelled.

Organisation in delivering the programme was **exemplary**.

Highly effective preventative practice was consistently demonstrated.

Cross-infection control guidelines were followed with excellent attention to detail.

**Recommendations: None — your setting is a brilliant example of best practice!**



We have recently received several reports that some of our older children are riding bikes and scooters in an unsafe manner on the roads around the school. Concerns include children racing one another on the road, riding at speed, shouting loudly and using scooters in a potentially dangerous way both before and after school.

We would be grateful if you could speak with your child to remind them:

- ✓ To ride responsibly and be aware of traffic and pedestrians
- ✓ Not to race or perform risky behaviour on roads or pavements
- ✓ To prioritise their safety and the safety of others at all times when travelling to and from school.

# Weekly School News Roundup

## Wellbeing:

### The Power of Positive Connections

School staff work hard at building and maintaining positive connections with pupils to help them get the best from their learning, personal development and overall school experience. Our school vision, values, rules, and mental health choices all help support the positive connections we have with pupils.

**School Vision** - Growing Happy, Caring, Hearts and Minds

**School Values** - Generosity, Respect, Agape, Courage, Empathy

**School Rules** - Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe



The '10 Choices for Mental Health' promoted within school also support children to make positive choices to help themselves feel better. Please see our school Wellbeing Webpage for information about the 10 choices we can all make to help our own mental health.

Dan Hughes, a psychologist, developed an approach to help parents and carers to improve their positive connections and interactions with their children.



It is called:

PACE stands for Playfulness; Acceptance; Curiosity; Empathy

Here are some ideas of how to use PACE in your everyday interactions with your children:

**Playfulness:** Show enjoyment in being together with your child. Use a playful and light-hearted tone during interactions. Keeping the tone light can also help with more serious conversations and reduce feelings of shame.

**Acceptance:** Connect with your child's feelings and verbally acknowledge them. Try not to just reassure them away. Acceptance is not about condoning behaviour but means you are understanding their feelings in the context of their world. Connecting first and helping a child calm is important before any conversation about behaviour.

**Curiosity:** Be curious about your child - their thoughts, feelings, wishes, actions. Show interest in what is going on for them. Avoid 'Why' questions; use 'What' or 'How' instead. 'Why are you doing that?' sounds very different to 'What is going on for you at the moment?' or 'How are you doing right now?' Share your curiosity - 'I wonder if you might be feeling...'

**Empathy:** Using empathy means you are showing your child that they are important to you and that you will be there for them through difficult feelings or hard times.

**An adapted version of PACE for parents is PLACE - which includes the word Loving!**

Mrs L Jones, Wellbeing TA

# Weekly School News Roundup



## Our School Ethos Council

The Ethos Council, led by Mr Scudder, visited the **Exeter Waste Plant** on Wednesday, discovering how they turn waste into energy. We were allowed to see inside the control room as well as inside the massive plant.

The children played games to further their understanding of the importance of the three R's - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. We were amazed at some of the things that are thrown away - like an entire jetski!

We found out that all the waste from East Devon goes to the Exeter Energy Recovery Plant where it generates enough power for over 6000 homes! **Please help keep our environment clean!**



**Year 1** have been learning about different animals and the environments they live in. We visited our school's own **Wild Tribe** area and created homes for creatures such as woodlice and hedgehogs. We are learning how to care for animals and make a positive impact on our planet! *(thank you for supporting **Red Nose Day** too Year 1!)*



# Weekly School News Roundup

## Sports and Other Achievements

If your child would like to share their achievements, whether that's a sporting success, gaining library reading challenge certificates, or anything else – please email a photo and a short description to [admin@wrpschool.org](mailto:admin@wrpschool.org).



Alex in Rabbit Class and Nicholas in Oak Class competed at Peninsula Judo Open Competition on Sunday, 22 March representing Exmouth Vikings Judo Club. Alex competed in U8 age group achieving a certificate and a medal for winning a match against a higher grade. Nicholas was competing in 8+ age group and won two matches, achieving a gold medal! It was their first competition - they showed great techniques and fighting spirit!

Isaac in Barn Owls achieved his Story Time, Get Creative and Aircraft badges. He worked incredibly hard at 3rd Exmouth Squirrel Scouts, even bringing in his own collection to teach friends about Concorde and different types of aircraft. Well done Isaac!



Harley from Barn Owl Class had a fantastic week in football. He was awarded the Focus Star Award at Brixington Blues U6s, as well as the LD Active Player of the Session award. Well done, Harley!



We're delighted to have been selected for the next round of the Tesco Stronger Starts grants programme!

The funding we receive will go towards new OPAL play equipment, helping us to bring amazing playtimes to life.

The project with the highest number of votes will receive £1,500, the second £1,000, and the third £500.

This round of voting begins 28<sup>th</sup> April so we'll remind you nearer the time. You can shop in any of the local stores: Exmouth Superstore, Budleigh Salterton Express Express, Exmouth Churchill Road Express, and Rolle Street Express, so look out for the Stronger Starts stand and drop your blue token in to vote for us! We'd really appreciate it!

# Stronger Starts.

# Weekly School News Roundup



**We need your help to raise some funds to buy additional Little Wandle books, so our children can borrow them and continue their brilliant phonics learning at home. We would once again be very grateful for any support you can give, if you are able.**

We'd like the children to work for these donations! Pick & Mix the best challenges **for your family:**

Would you rather take part in a **Sponsored** challenge?

Or, invite friends to come for a **Read-Over?**

Or, plan a **Selfless Saturday?**

Or would you rather **Just Donate?**

## **Sponsored activities:**

We will supply sponsorship forms. *Ask friends and neighbours to chip in!*

- \* Sponsor your child to **read** on their own (per page/per paragraph)?
- \* Or, sponsor your child to **read to their sibling** – they could read their younger sibling's bedtime story every day for a week/fortnight?
- \* Come up with your own sponsored challenge, or
- \* You could \*really\* challenge your children with a sponsored **silence!!**

## Have a **Read-Over:**

Invite a few best friends for a sleep over *with a difference*. Everyone brings their favourite book and reads quietly for an hour before bed! Charge your 'guests' a small fee to donate as a group.

## Plan a **Selfless Saturday:**

Does your child usually have some treats on the weekend? Perhaps it's pocket money day, or maybe they get a small toy, a take-away, or some sweet treats. They could decide to be selfless one day and donate the money that's usually spent on Selfless Saturday instead!

## **Just Donate:**

If your family is too busy to arrange sponsored activities at home but you'd still like to support the appeal, we also offer the option to Just Donate! We'll put a payment item on Parent Pay for your voluntary donations. Please feel free to amend the default amount downwards – or upwards!

We still need to raise LOTS more if you can help!

# Weekly School News Roundup



by arrangement with Cameron Mackintosh  
presents

**THE FLASH BANG WALLOP MUSICAL!**



Based on the H.G. Wells novel "KIPPS: The Story of a Simple Soul"  
and the original musical by Beverley Cross and David Heneker

Orchestrations by  
William David Brohn

Original Songs by  
David Heneker

New Songs and Additional Music and Lyrics  
by George Stiles and Anthony Drewe

Book by  
Julian Fellowes

Co-Created by  
Cameron Mackintosh

## Exmouth Pavilion

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> - Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2026**  
7:30pm (2:30pm Friday & Saturday)

Tickets £12 - £19

[www.exmouthpavilion.co.uk](http://www.exmouthpavilion.co.uk)

[www.centrestage-exmouth.co.uk](http://www.centrestage-exmouth.co.uk)  
Registered Charity NO. 1122596

This amateur production is presented by arrangement with Music Theatre International  
All authorised performance materials are also supplied by MTI  
[www.mtishows.co.uk](http://www.mtishows.co.uk)



# Weekly School News Roundup

## COLOUR CRAZE DAY!



THURSDAY 2ND APRIL

*Get ready to brighten up the school!*

*Come dressed in your most colourful outfits  
the brighter, the better!*



IDEAS TO STAND OUT:  
BRIGHT CLOTHES  
CRAZY SOCKS OR TIGHTS  
FUNKY HATS OR HEADBANDS



*Bring £1 or contribute via ParentPay  
All money raised goes back into the PTFA to enhance our  
play-based learning environment.*

*LET'S MAKE THE SCHOOL BURST WITH COLOUR!*