

Weekly School News Roundup

**Withycombe Raleigh
C of E Primary School**

Date: 16th January 2026



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News from your Headteacher

Last week we shared with you the Learning Overview and Termly Newsletter for each year group. These are also available on our website on the Home Connect Page: <https://www.wrpschool.org/homeconnect-2026>. There are lots of exciting learning opportunities planned for the next few weeks.

I hope your children have enjoyed their experiences in school this week. I have had lots of children visit me to share their amazing learning; it has been wonderful to see the progress some of our children have made, particularly in their reading and writing in such a short amount of time. We love to compare their work from the start of the year to now and the children find this motivating too.



As you are aware **reading** is a key focus for us as a school and we continue to see the positive impact of the Little Wandle reading and phonics scheme for those children using this. One of our main aims for children at our school is that they leave us as confident readers who love books.

Parents often ask what more they can do to support their children's learning, and reading is one of the main ways in which **parents can make a massive difference** to children's progress. Hearing children read to you regularly as well as reading stories to your children encourages their love of literature, **develops their language and vocabulary** as well as opening up a whole new world of opportunities. If you are able to read and share books (including the Little Wandle / Collins ebooks) with your children regularly, it does make such a massive difference.

[left: One of our well stocked school libraries]

I would particularly encourage you to access the **ebooks** assigned to your child, as these are pitched exactly at their level and are the same books used during the week at school, allowing your child to really show off their reading ability to you with a familiar text (this is great for their self-esteem!)



If your child enjoys reading and books and you want to give them another exciting challenge, you can join the Exmouth Library Reading Challenges – or, why not apply for a **Blue Peter Reading Badge**? I don't know about you, but I always wanted a Blue Peter Badge when I was a child! Further details can be found here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/findoutmore/blue-peter-apply-for-a-book-badge>

School Lunches

We are so fortunate to have a dedicated catering team who prepare wonderful meals for the children each day (I enjoy our school meals regularly too). All our lunches are prepared freshly each day using quality ingredients from local suppliers. Our menus fully comply with the Government's Food Standards, with the appropriate frequency and range of healthy foods included on the menu. On a typical Wednesday (roast day) we peel and prepare over 60kg of potatoes, 20kg of fresh carrots and 8kg of broccoli!

Continued...



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To find out more about our school lunches, please take a look at our 'myth busters' leaflet on the school website:
https://www.wrpschool.org/files/ugd/15d226_f9f4ddc28b4d4447b9489a0892b14fd2.pdf

Please remember to make your child's meal choices via Parentpay. You can make the choices for the whole half term. If you're having difficulties managing the Parentpay system, please contact our school office who will be happy to support you.

If your child is entitled to Universal Infant School Meals you will be aware that we encourage all of our children to eat school-based lunches with their peers. This has proved a popular way of children trying new foods and having a sociable lunchtime with their peers. However, from time to time, children are either:

- not ready for a school-based meal
- having particular challenges around certain foods
- or, have a medical need or a very specific dietary requirement.

To support in some of these areas, we have set up a number of **Meal Time Champions** who will spend time encouraging and supporting children who struggle with a school-based option. If your child struggles with school meals, even if it is simply that there is nothing that they like on the menu on one specific day, please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance so we can make a plan to support your child and ensure they get enough to eat at lunchtime.



MHAs

At Withycombe Primary School children from years 5 and 6 can apply to become Mental Health Ambassadors (MHAs). Our Ambassadors are pupils who work closely with Mrs L Jones, our Wellbeing TA, to help our school continue to promote good mental health.

We have recently recruited 6 new MHAs from Year 5, and this week they completed their MHA training.

The training for our new MHAs allowed them to explore:

- ✓ What is mental health
- ✓ The 10 choices we can all make to help mental health (our 'pick & mix' jigsaw)
- ✓ Using our senses to calm
- ✓ How to sort worries
- ✓ When to seek help
- ✓ Using active listening skills.

We now have a total of **11 Ambassadors** for our school, from Years 5 and 6. They are an amazing group of interested pupils who are passionate about good mental health. The new MHAs received a certificate and will wear a lanyard in school displaying their MHA badge along with the 10 mental health choices we promote across our school. The lanyard will be visible to all pupils across the school and any pupils can go to chat to our MHAs about ways to help their mental health.

The MHAs first big project for 2026 is to plan and run an assembly for the whole school during the 2nd week in February, which is **Children's Mental Health Week**. Congratulations to all our new MHAs!

Have a good weekend
Mrs E Jones, Headteacher

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Safeguarding: NSPCC PANTS Rule – Helping Keep Children Safe



Let's refresh our minds about the NSPCC's PANTS rule, designed to help parents talk to children about staying safe. It's a simple, age-appropriate way to teach children that their body belongs to them, and that they should speak up if something makes them feel uncomfortable. We use this approach in school to teach children about keeping themselves safe and to introduce concepts such as consent.

- ✓ **P**rivates are private
- ✓ **A**lways remember your body belongs to you
- ✓ **N**o means no
- ✓ **T**alk about secrets that upset you
- ✓ **S**peak up – someone can help

You can find child-friendly videos, guides, and more information on the NSPCC website. We encourage parents to have regular, simple conversations at home to help children feel confident and safe.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/pants-underwear-rule/>

When is the right time to talk PANTS? (as advised by NSPCC)

Every family is different, and when and where you have these conversations may depend on your child's age, or how grown up they are - it's all about whatever feels natural for you and them.

Some examples of occasions you could bring up the PANTS topic:

- After school – if they've had a lesson on personal relationships or Talk PANTS at school, ask them what they remember when they get home.
- Bath time – you could start a conversation when you're running your child's bath, or helping them get dressed.
- Car journeys – this can be a great time to talk, and your child will have plenty of time to ask questions if they need.
- Reading our new PANTS storybook together.
- Singing – sing along to our PANTS song with **Pantosaurus!**
- Swimming – a great time to say that what's covered by swimwear is private.
- Walking – walking home from school, or a weekend walk to the shops can help you both feel more at ease as you stroll and chat.
- Watching TV – if a TV show features a sensitive storyline you can encourage them to talk about anything that upsets them.



Please contact your child's class teacher or let me know if you would like further advice about this topic.

Mr Smith,
Designated Safeguarding Lead

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Oliver from Willow Class was proud to earn his Chief Scout Bronze award at Beavers this week. Brilliant Oliver!



We would like to add our **'thank you'** to everyone in the Exmouth Community who came together this week when there was an emergency incident at the Marina.

We are proud to belong to a community where help and support was so quickly and generously offered to our friends and families affected by the evacuation.

Now that everyone has been able to return to their homes we hope you can enjoy a peaceful weekend.

Year 4's Anglo Saxon day hit the target!

Our thoroughly engaging Anglo Saxon Day was led by special guests from 'History Workshops Devon'. The children were greeted into the hall in the morning with rousing drum music - and the high energy remained through the day!



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LD ACTIVE



HOLIDAY CAMP

*Outdoor
Activities*

ACTIVITIES

- Inflatables
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- Dodgeball
- Basketball
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