



# Whitwick St John the Baptist CE Primary School

Spring 2 2026

Newsletter



## Head teacher

Dear Parents and Carers,

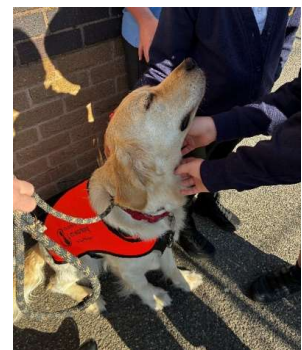
The second half of the spring term has continued to be full of positive energy, enthusiasm and purposeful learning across the school. Building on the strong start to our six-week topics, children have remained engaged and motivated, showing great pride in all they have achieved. It has been a pleasure to see their confidence grow as they deepen their understanding across the curriculum.

In collective worship, we completed our focus on **Dignity** and introduced our new value: **Tolerance**. We have been exploring this through the shared understanding that ***tolerance means choosing kindness because everyone is different – and that's a good thing***. Living our lives with kindness is a theme that runs through all of our values, and it is something we consistently see demonstrated by the children in school. Their ability to show respect, empathy and understanding towards one another is something we are very proud of.

**Penguin Power** has continued to shine in abundance this half term. Children have embraced challenges, supported one another and celebrated successes, both big and small. Whether in the classroom, on the playground or through wider school opportunities, their positive attitudes have made a real difference to the school community.

Pippa has, as always, been incredibly busy. Alongside her regular classroom visits and reading time, she has enjoyed spending time on the playground during break and lunchtime. The children continue to show great care and understanding in how they approach her, ensuring she feels safe and happy. This half term also marked Pippa's first anniversary as our school dog. We invited the children to reflect on how she has helped them, and it was heartwarming to hear their thoughtful responses. Many shared that she helps them to feel calm, safe and happy, and that she always makes them smile.

As we come to the end of the spring term, we would like to thank you for your continued support. We wish you all a very happy and restful Easter break and look forward to welcoming the children back on Monday 13th April, ready for another exciting term ahead.



# Preschool

This term, our preschoolers have been busy exploring the fascinating world of growth and change in nature. We have started planting sunflowers in our garden and have been learning all about the life cycles of both plants and animals. A highlight was visiting the school pond, where we were able to observe the frog life cycle in action.

The children have shown great care and responsibility while looking after nature and supporting one another as kind friends. We have also been developing our early literacy skills, with the children doing a fantastic job at recognising rhymes and identifying initial sounds.

Creativity has been shining through in our classroom, especially during our painting sessions. The children enjoyed expressing themselves through music and experimenting with a variety of materials, producing some wonderful artwork.

We are very proud of all their hard work and enthusiasm!



# EYFS

This half term, the children have been incredibly busy and have enjoyed lots of exciting learning and creativity in the classroom. We have loved exploring the signs of spring, printing flowers using recycled materials for our classroom trees and creating colourful tulips using forks and paint. The children have also experimented with different art techniques, including painting to music, making collages, creating flowers with handmade tools and carefully colouring flowers with wax crayons. Our WOW work wall is now full of their fantastic creations.



Inspired by our learning, the children have completed their own Jack and the Beanstalk stories and have enjoyed using our role play areas, with *Jack and the Beanstalk* inside and a garden centre outside. They have also been busy exploring the classroom on word hunts, drawing maps of Whitwick, and creating pictures to show how to plant a seed, ready to help them write instructions.

The children have made great progress with their phonics this half term and have now completed all of the Phase 3 sounds, showing growing confidence when reading and spotting words around the classroom.



In their maths learning, the children have explored doubling, odd and even numbers, partitioning numbers and number bonds to 10, even creating some fantastic odd and even aliens along the way.



We also had a fabulous World Book Day, celebrating our love of stories and reading together. It has been a wonderful half term full of creativity, exploration and fantastic learning.



We hope you all have a wonderful and well-deserved Easter break.

## Year 1

This spring term, the children have been incredibly busy with a wide range of learning experiences. From exploring seasonal changes in science, to learning new phonics sounds and writing non-chronological reports about rats, they have shown great enthusiasm and dedication. The children have also enjoyed learning about the Easter story, deepening their understanding of its meaning.

A particular highlight of the term has been their hard work on the Easter performance. The children have truly amazed us with the effort they put into learning their lines and building the confidence to perform on stage in front of an audience. With wonderful support from home in practising their lines, we can confidently say the performance was a great success.

It has been fantastic to see the children's confidence grow. Whether delivering a speaking part or performing a dance, every child contributed in their own way, helping to build their self-esteem and sense of achievement. The story of the performance, centered around the theme of new life, has also supported their understanding of seasonal changes in science, particularly the transformations that take place during spring

## Year 2

### **Year 2 Launch Their New Topic with a *Soup-er* Start!**

What an exciting beginning to our new topic this term. Year 2 have truly started with a bang — by becoming real-life chefs and creating their very own soup from scratch.

We kicked things off with a taste-testing session, exploring a range of ingredients that would eventually make their way into our recipe. Staff were genuinely impressed by the children's enthusiasm and bravery. Trying unfamiliar foods can feel like a big challenge for some, yet our pupils showed incredible *penguin power* as they stepped out of their comfort zones and gave everything a go. It was wonderful to see so many proud, smiling faces as they discovered new flavours.

Next came the hands-on skills. The children learned how to safely slice and dice their vegetables using the *bridge* and *claw* techniques. It took patience, concentration, and a lot of careful practice, but Year 2 rose to the challenge beautifully. Watching them master these new skills was a real highlight of the week.

Then came what felt like the longest wait in history. With all the chopping complete, our ingredients were whisked away to the kitchen — a huge thank you to our fantastic kitchen team for cooking the soup for us. The anticipation built and built until, at last, the moment arrived. Soup was served, and everyone finally had the chance to taste our very own creation. And what a triumph it was. Year 2, you should be incredibly proud of yourselves.

Now, with our soup adventure complete, the countdown to Beaumanor officially begins. Exciting times ahead!

## Year 3

Year 3 have had a fantastic few weeks filled with creativity, confidence, and exciting new learning opportunities.

The children worked incredibly hard preparing for their class performance of “Jack and the Baked Beanstalk”. They delivered an amazing show, full of energy and enthusiasm. It was wonderful to see their growing confidence on stage, as well as the clear enjoyment they all shared throughout the performance. We are very proud of each and every one of them!

This week, we have begun our brand-new topic, The Romans. The children have already shown great interest and curiosity, particularly when exploring Roman mosaics. They enjoyed studying different designs before creating their own beautiful mosaic artwork, demonstrating both creativity and careful attention to detail. We are excited to continue our journey into the fascinating world of the Romans!

In addition, Year 3 recently visited the church, where they took part in engaging workshops based on the story of Easter. The children were thoughtful and reflective, and they gained a deeper understanding of the meaning behind this important celebration.

## Year 4

Year 4 have had a wonderfully busy and exciting term filled with creativity, discovery, and new experiences. One of the highlights has been our work on volcanoes, where the children created their own erupting volcano models and explored the science behind what causes them to erupt. Alongside this, we discussed both the human and physical impacts volcanoes can have on communities around the world.



In English, we enjoyed learning and retelling the story of the *Volcano Goddess*. This inspired some fantastic writing, including informal letters where pupils used persuasive language to share their ideas.

In PE, we have been developing our Tag Rugby skills. Although the wet weather has occasionally prevented us from getting outside, the children have shown great patience and tolerance when plans have had to change. Their positive attitudes have been fantastic to see.

Our curiosity has also been sparked in Science with our new topic on electricity. The children have shown great enthusiasm while exploring circuits and how electricity works, knowledge that will support their upcoming Design and Technology projects next term.

Alongside all of this brilliant classroom learning, we had a fantastic visit to the local Leisure Centre where we met pupils from other local schools. During the day, the children tried their hand at some basic first aid, learned important road and water safety skills, discovered how to call the emergency services, and explored ways to look after their mental well-being. As always, the pupils' behaviour was outstanding ★ and it was wonderful to see them making new friends for the day.

Year 4 have truly grown and blossomed this term. We are now beginning to prepare for our upcoming residential trip, which we are all very excited about. We cannot wait to share more about this adventure with you in the next newsletter!



## Year 5

Year 5 have continued their fascinating journey into the world of Ancient Greece, exploring Greek myths, legends and the powerful gods that shaped the stories of the time. The children have shown great curiosity when learning about the lives, beliefs and mythology of the Ancient Greeks, building on their knowledge from earlier lessons and engaging in thoughtful discussions about famous characters from Greek myths.



In English, the children have been writing persuasive letters from the perspective of Medusa, asking the mighty god Zeus to remove her curse. The children worked hard to include persuasive language, strong arguments and emotive vocabulary to convince Zeus that Medusa deserved another chance. Their writing has been thoughtful, creative and full of powerful reasoning.

In Maths, Year 5 have been developing their understanding of area and perimeter, learning how to calculate these for a variety of shapes. They have also been working with tables and graphs, interpreting data and presenting information clearly while continuing to strengthen their confidence with multiplication facts.

In Science, the classes have been learning about life cycles, exploring how different animals grow and change over time. They have particularly enjoyed studying metamorphosis, comparing the life cycles of insects with those of mammals and other animals, and discussing how living things develop throughout their lives. Seeing how much life was in our school pond was great!

In DT, the children have been designing and making their own cam toy mechanisms, inspired by Ancient Greek themes. They have shown fantastic creativity while learning how cams create movement, developing both their design thinking and practical making skills.

One of the highlights of the term was our Family Assembly, where the children had the opportunity to share their learning and perform in front of friends and family. They did an absolutely fantastic job, showing confidence, enthusiasm and teamwork. It was wonderful to see so many families there to support them.

Well done, Year 5, for your continued enthusiasm, creativity and hard work across all areas of learning!

# Year 6

## Short Term, Big Impact – Year 6 Shine Again!

It may have been a shorter half term but it has certainly been our busiest one yet. Year 6 have approached every challenge that has come their way with enthusiasm and determination, gaining so much from a wide range of learning experiences.

A standout moment has been the children's fantastic effort during their Mock SATs. They all showed real resilience and, most importantly, have seen for themselves just how rewarding hard work, determination and effort can be. Their results have been incredibly positive and we are sure you are just as proud of them as we are.

The children have also loved their learning across the curriculum. In Computing, they explored spreadsheets, learning how to collate and present data in different ways. World Book Day was another highlight, with a visit to our Year 6 Book Café and the chance to create some imaginative stories where characters crossed into different books.

In P.E. the children have enjoyed learning the fast-paced game of handball, while in Science, they have developed their understanding of classifying animals, including identifying vertebrates and invertebrates found around the school grounds. In Art, they have begun their exciting Street Art unit, exploring how artwork can be used to share powerful messages. All whilst they have continued to work hard in Grammar, Writing, Reading and Maths too.

It is clear that Year 6 have thrived this half term and we are incredibly proud of their effort, attitude and enthusiasm. What a brilliant five weeks it has been!



# Sporting News

## Cross-Country

The cross-country season concluded with the final race at Sir John Moore Primary School. Well done to all our runners for their effort throughout the season.

A special congratulations to:

- EFS girls, Year 2 boys and Year 4 girls — all winning their team events.
- The 10 KS2 children who represented North-West Leicestershire in the county race. Fantastic achievements all round!

## Year 5–6 Development Swimming Gala – Tuesday 3rd March

Our Year 5 and 6 Development Swimming Team took part in the gala at Coalville and Whitwick Leisure Centre. The children represented the school brilliantly, showing determination and great team spirit throughout the event. We are delighted to report that they finished **3rd overall** – a fantastic achievement!

## Year 3–4 Girls McDermott Shield Football Team

On Thursday 5th March, the Year 3–4 Girls' McDermott Shield team played their first pool match of the competition, held at home against Swannington Primary School. Despite the opposition taking an early lead, our team showed excellent resilience, teamwork and skill. Their hard work paid off as they came back strongly to secure an impressive 5–1 victory. Their second fixture was against Broom Leys. Well done to the team.



## Year 4–5 – Rose Bowl Mixed Football Team

On Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March our Year 4-5 Rose Bowl Mixed football team played their first fixture against Ashby CE Primary School at home. The game was end to end but the home side came out on top 4-3.

On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March, the team played their second match of the competition against Willesley Primary School. The team worked extremely hard throughout the game, demonstrating superb collaboration and commitment. It was another valuable experience for the players as they develop their match confidence this season. They will play their third and final pool match against Holy Cross after Easter.

## Year 5–6 – Tony Moore Cup (Team A) Quarter-Final

Having already topped their pool, our Year 5–6 Girls' Football Team played their knockout match at home against Broom Leys. On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March, the girls produced a splendid performance, combining strong defence with excellent attacking play and secured a well-deserved 5–1 win. They now progress to the semi-final, where they will face Woodstone at home after the Easter holidays.



## Year 5–6 – Kirby Shield Semi-Final

After finishing top of their group, our Year 5–6 mixed Kirby Shield Football Team played their semi-final match at home against New Swannington. The whole team showed determination and teamwork throughout the game. The final result was 3-1 in the home team's favour. The team will now play in the final at Coalville Town FC against Willesley after Easter.



## Year 3–4 Excel Hockey

On Tuesday 10th March, two Year 3–4 Excel Hockey teams travelled to Ivanhoe School in Ashby to take part in their first ever competitive matches. Both teams played extremely well, demonstrated fantastic sportsmanship and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. For many of the Year 3 players, this was their first time representing the school, making the occasion even more special. Well done to both teams.



## Year 3– Development Hockey

On Thursday 12th March, our Year 3–4 Development Hockey Team competed in round-robin fixtures at Ibstock Community College. The children were enthusiastic, played with great teamwork and enjoyed their first experience playing together as a development squad. Their hard work was rewarded with a brilliant 3rd-place finish. A huge well done to all involved!



## Year 5–6 Excel Hockey

On Tuesday 17th March, two Year 5–6 Excel Hockey teams travelled to Ivanhoe School to participate in a competitive fixture. Both teams performed admirably, showing strong skills, commitment and excellent sportsmanship throughout their matches.



## Year 5–6 Development Hockey

On Thursday 19th March, a Year 5–6 Development Hockey Team took part in a round-robin event at Ibstock Community College. The players showed great teamwork and enthusiasm as they enjoyed valuable match experience against local schools.

## Year 5 Orienteering

Some of our Year 5 children took part in an orienteering event in the grounds of Coalville and Whitwick Leisure Centre on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March. The children enjoyed the experience learning new skills and working as a team to complete the course.



## Year 5 & 6 Girls Shine in Tony Moore Plate

We are incredibly proud to celebrate the fantastic efforts of our newly formed Year 5 and 6 girls' Tony Moore Plate team! For many of the girls, this was their first experience of competitive football, making their journey even more impressive. Despite being new to the format, the team showed remarkable promise, securing one well-earned victory and putting up a strong fight in two challenging matches. What has stood out most, however, goes far beyond the results. The girls have demonstrated outstanding determination - never giving up even when matches were tough. Their positivity on and off the pitch has been inspiring, with constant encouragement for one another and a real sense of team spirit shining through.

This has been an awesome team effort from a truly fantastic group of girls. We look forward to seeing their confidence and abilities continue to grow as they gain more experience. Well done to all involved—you've represented the school brilliantly!



## Leicestershire Gymnastics County Finals Success

Last week, both our **Level 1 and Level 4 Gymnastics teams** represented **North West Leicestershire** in the **Leicestershire Gymnastics County Finals**.

Each team display of skills on the floor, vault and ribbon, all of our gymnasts performed their routines to an impressively high standard. This has come about through their hard work and dedication during practice sessions, where they have all improved their own skills, flair and technique over time.

**Our Level 1 Gymnastics Team** started off the event, collectively gaining the highest overall score. They won the 1<sup>st</sup> place team award and they have now become **Level 1 Leicestershire County Champions!**

Out of 40 competitors, Jessica Watt and Orlaith Grant placed in the top half of the table, whilst Scarlett Bailey came 4<sup>th</sup> individually and Poppy Spendlove took 1<sup>st</sup> place.

Next was the turn of our **Level 4 Gymnastics Team** to compete.

They, too, impressed the judges with some incredible floor, vault and ribbon routines. Their scores really did reflect the hard work and effort they have put into a higher level of skills during their training and practice session.

As a Team, they took the **bronze medal at County Level**, which is an amazing achievement!

Individually, against 40 competitors, Madison, Alba and Ivy all placed within the top 12, and Robyn Irons came in 5<sup>th</sup> place. Huge congratulations to both teams, not only on winning their County Gymnastics medals, but also for their hard work and incredible team spirit throughout the competition, which was truly inspiring!





## Donations

A huge thank you to everyone at Whitwick St John Baptist Church for the seeds and plant donations for the school's gardening club  
Their generosity helps everything grow, both in the garden and in the community!



## Uniform

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our school uniform expectations. We appreciate your continued support in ensuring that all our pupils come to school dressed appropriately and ready to learn.

Our current school uniform is as follows:

- **Navy cardigan or jumper** with the **school logo**
- **Black or grey trousers** (not tracksuit bottoms) or a **sk**
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- **irt/ / pinafore dress/shorts**
- **White or blue polo shirt** (no logo required)
- **Black shoes or trainers** with **minimal logos**

Pupils are welcome to wear **blue and white chequered summer dresses or jumpsuits**, in keeping with our school colours.

Please ensure that **all uniform items are clearly named**, so that any lost items can be quickly returned.

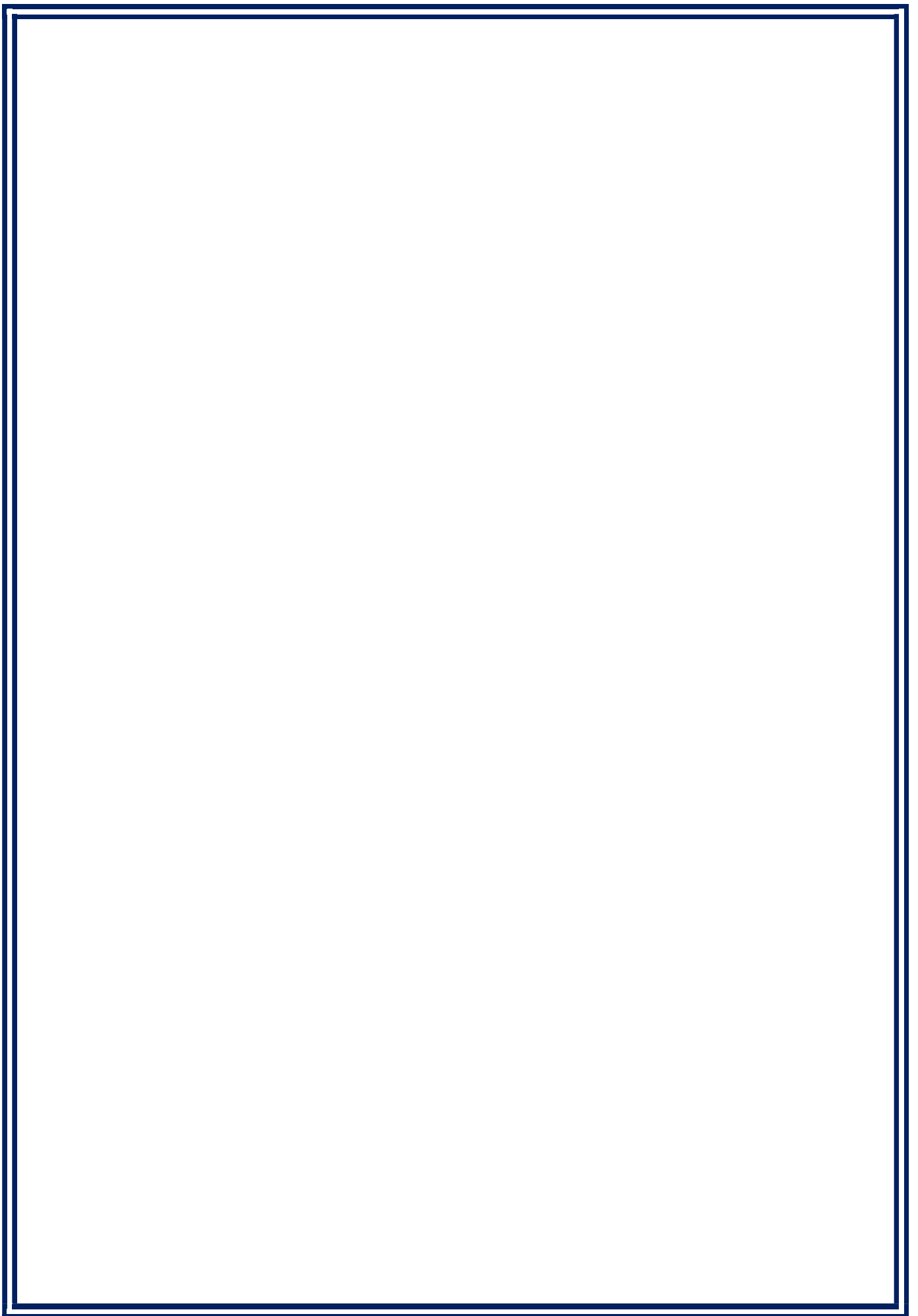
Wearing the correct uniform helps promote a **sense of belonging** and ensures that all our pupils feel part of the school community. Thank you for helping us maintain these high standards.

## Safeguarding

### Protection Children is everyone's business!!

At Whitwick St John the Baptist CE Primary School, we understand the utmost importance of having robust systems for protecting children and safeguarding their welfare. All our staff and volunteers are vigilant and alert to any potential concerns about our pupils. We have a comprehensive safeguarding and child protection policy, which is available upon request from the school office.

If you have any concerns, please speak to the head teacher. We will treat your concern seriously and with the utmost care.



# Parking



Please remember to park only in legal parking spots and to respect and adhere to all posted no-parking zones. Your cooperation in maintaining a safe environment around our school is greatly appreciated. Let us work together to ensure the safety of all our students and families.

We would kindly like to remind everyone to drive and park safely and considerately when dropping off or picking up children from school. Unfortunately, we have seen and heard reports of some dangerous and inconsiderate parking and manoeuvres.

The safety of our children is always our top priority, so please ensure you are parking appropriately and driving with care around the school.

## How Can You Help?

- **Park further away and walk to school**
- **Keep your speed down**
- **Park in a safe place following the Highway Code.**
- **Do not park on pavements**
- **Turn your engine off as soon as you have parked**
- **Keep the school gates clear at all times - stopping here, even to drop off your child for a short period of time, is dangerous**
- **Do not enter the school car park unless authorised to do so**
- **Do not block local residents' drives**
- **Leave the middle of the road free, with enough room for other road users to easily pass through**
- **Leave enough room for emergency vehicles to easily pass through**
- **Make sure your child leaves and enters your vehicle safely to and from the pavement**
- **Check for pedestrians and cyclists before opening a car door**
- **Take care when reversing**
- **Remember - it only takes one vehicle to be parked inconsiderately for there to be an impact on accessibility to emergency services or others. Do not be that one.**

Further to the notice sent on WEDUC on 23/01/25. Please note that parking violations can be reported through the following link. <https://www.leics.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us-beta/contact-us/driving-vehicles-traffic/report-illegal-parking/> Thank you to those drivers who put the safety of our pupils first.

## Free School Meals

If you think, your child may be entitled to free school meals, please claim these by contacting the following number: 0116 3055417 or visit <https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/free-school-meals> .



It is particularly important for parents of children in EYFS, Year 1, and Year 2 to register, even if your child is already receiving a free hot meal. Registering will enable the school to access funding for your child every year while they remain in primary school. They are not obliged to have a hot meal every day. This funding will help provide valuable support for your child.

## Nut Free School



Please can we remind you that we are a nut school due to children with allergies? Children **should not** be bringing anything into school that may contain any type of nut or anything that is brought in will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day. This includes Nutella products. Your cooperation in keeping our school environment safe for all students is greatly appreciated. Thank you for your understanding and support.

## 'Rockhopper' Breakfast and After School Club



If you require a space in our breakfast or after-school club, we kindly remind you to book via ParentPay. For any inquiries, please contact Miss Steadman on Weduc or phone **07745549658** or the school office 01530 832116.



## Term Date 2025-2026

### Autumn Term

Bank Holiday	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
Schools Open	Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> August 2025
Mid-Term Break	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
Schools Close	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2025

### Spring Term

Schools Open	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
Mid-Term Break	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 20 <sup>nd</sup> February 2026
Schools Close	Friday 27 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026

### Summer Term

Schools Open	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2026
May Day	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
Mid-Term Break	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> May - Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> May 2026
Schools Close	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2026

## Term Dates 2026-2027

### Autumn Term

Schools Open	Wednesday 26th August 2026
Bank Holiday	Monday 31st August 2026
Mid-Term Break	Monday 19th – Friday 23rd October 2026
Schools Close	Friday 18th December 2026

### Spring Term

Schools Open	Tuesday 5th January 2027
Mid-Term Break	Monday 15th – Friday 19th February 2027
Schools Close	Friday 19th March 2027

### Summer Term

Schools Open	Monday 5th April 2027
May Day	Monday 3rd May 2027
Mid-Term Break	Monday 31th May – Friday 4th June 2027
Schools Close	Friday 9th July 2027