

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Newsletter



23rd January 2026

ATTENDANCE SPOTLIGHT:

This week's attendance

93%

Target attendance

97%

Best attendance this week



YEAR R
97%

Remember: Every Day Counts!

Dear Parents and Carers,

In this week's Celebration of the Word assembly we heard a reading from John's Gospel where John the Baptist calls Jesus the 'lamb of God'. I talked to the children about how names can help us understand what somebody is like. The children learnt that Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter (rock) when he was chosen as one of the first disciples and Pope Francis chose the name Francis because he wanted to fight for the poor like Francis of Assisi.

Jesus (which means saviour) had many names given to him and they help us understand who he was and how much he loves and cares for us such as 'Good Shepherd'. Knowing God's love can change us. It also changes those that we show love towards. I told the children a story about a boy who changes a grumpy waitress after leaving her an unexpected tip. See if your children can tell you what happened. It was a simple act of love that must have had a huge impact. I asked the children to think of ways that they could show others that they know Jesus and what he wants us to do like the boy in the story.

Have a lovely weekend everybody

Mr Doherty



DIARY DATES

- Mon 26th - Clothing recycling collection - 9am
- Mon 26th - Phonics Parent Session - **Year 1** - 9.00-9.40am
- Mon 26th - Skateboarding After School Club - **Years 1-6**
- Tues 27th - Phonics Parent Session - **Year 1** - 9.00-9.40am
- Tues 27th - Gymnastics Festival at the Grange - **Y1/2**
- Tues 27th - Art After School Club - **Year 4, Year 5, Year 6**
- Tues 27th - Abs Football After School Club - **Years 1-6**
- Wed 28th - Phonics Parent Session - **Year 1** - 9.00-9.40am
- Wed 28th - Coding After School Club - **Years 2-6**
- Thurs 29th - Phonics Parent Session - **Year 1** - 9.00-9.40am
- Thurs 29th - Tennis After School Club - **Years 1-4**
- Fri 30th - Gymnastics After School Club - **Years 1-6**



Family Mass (1st February).

Next Sunday (1st February) is a very special Mass at St Joseph's church, celebrated on the first Sunday of each month and dedicated to the families of our parish.

This week, in hymn practice, the children sang so beautifully. It would make the celebration of Mass so very special to have as many children as possible there next week.

We are also looking for readers. If you would like your child to read at Mass on Sunday 1st February please email the school office and we will send the readings home to practice next week.



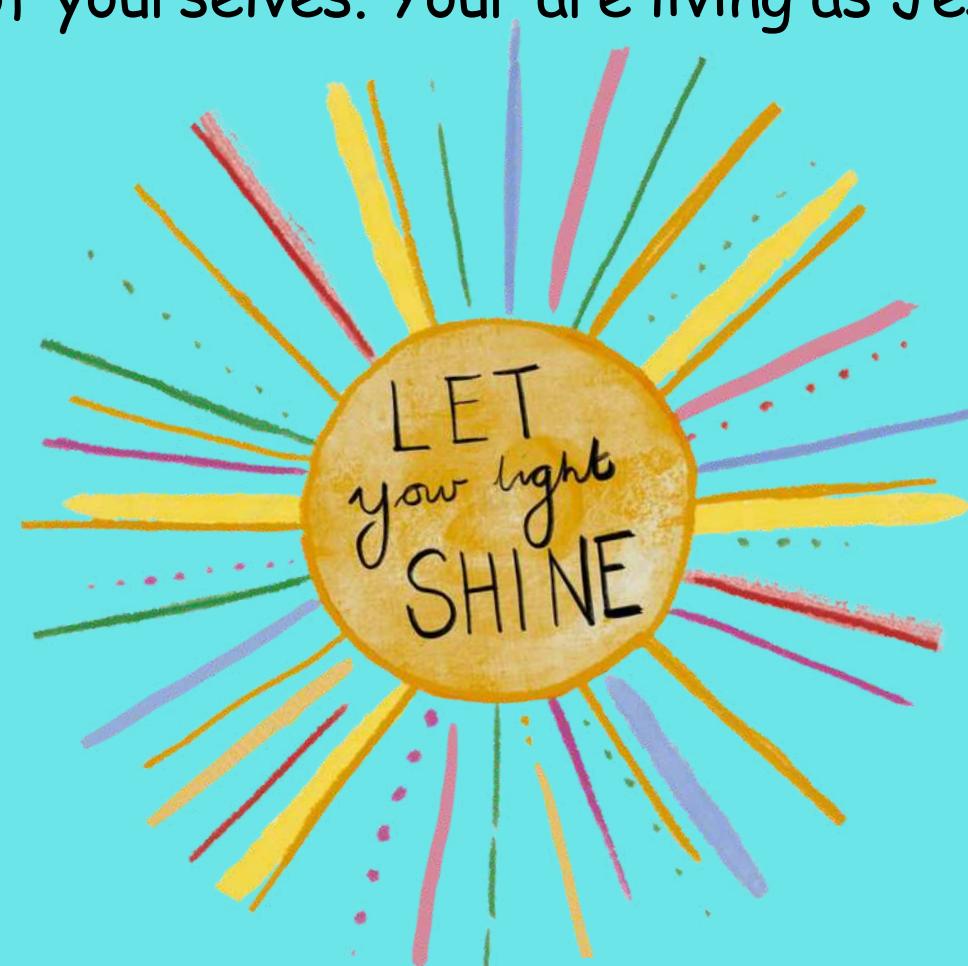
Best attendance

Well done to our Ducklings class for having the highest attendance this week with 97%. Overall school attendance this week was 93%.



Let your light shine awards

Perhaps the most special of awards to win in school is a 'Let your light shine' award. Last week the following children (Stanley, Archie, Thomas, Mya, Devlin, Eva, Elijah, Ted and Eddie) were awarded certificates for their acts of kindness and attitude to learning in school. You should all be very proud of yourselves. You are living as Jesus did.





Reading

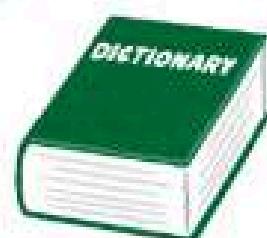


As you may be aware St Joseph's is the top school in BCP for greater depth in reading in 2025. This only happens if we continue to encourage every one of our children to read for at least 20 minutes a day. 20 is plenty! Please do your very best to support your children so they can continue to flourish. Below are some of the benefits from reading for just 20 minutes a day:



20 is plenty

Children who read for 20 minutes every day will ...



be exposed to 1.8 million words a year



have stress levels and anxiety reduced



learn how to develop empathy



have a broad vocabulary



have better general knowledge



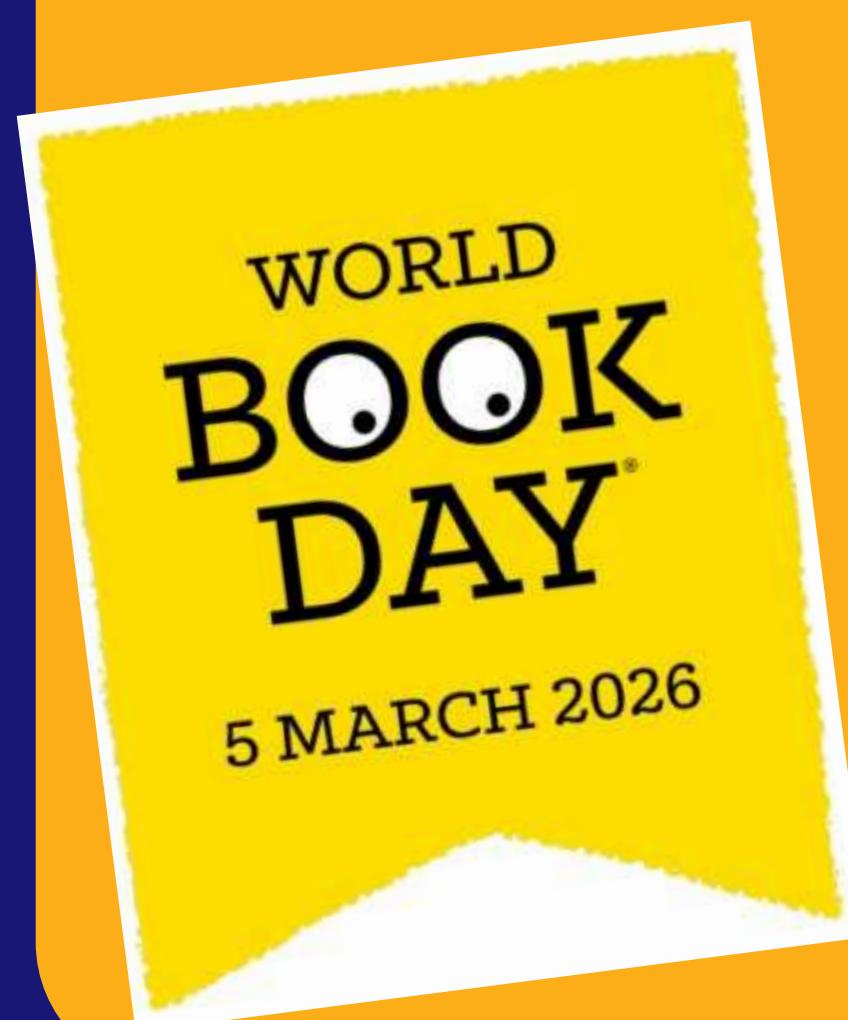
improve critical thinking skills



improve communication skills



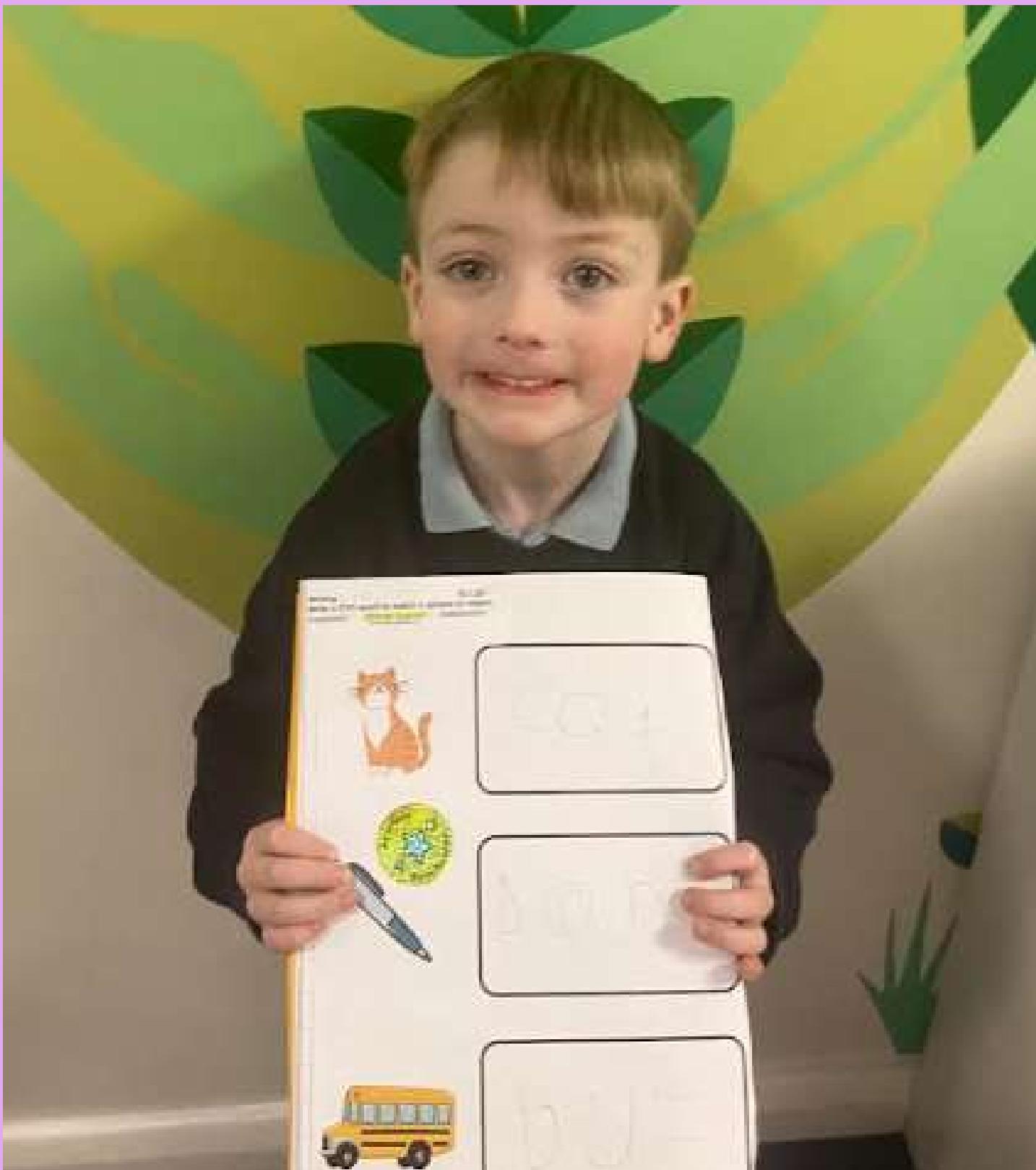
improve their test results



Celebrating World Book Day.

World Book Day is on Thursday 5th March. This year, we would like children to dress up as a book character and be able to tell the children in their class who they have dressed up as. Last year, our book swap was extremely successful, so we will be doing the same this year. We will also be inviting parents in to read with their children in the afternoon. Please put this date in your diary. More information will come out in the next couple of weeks.

Rising star Robert



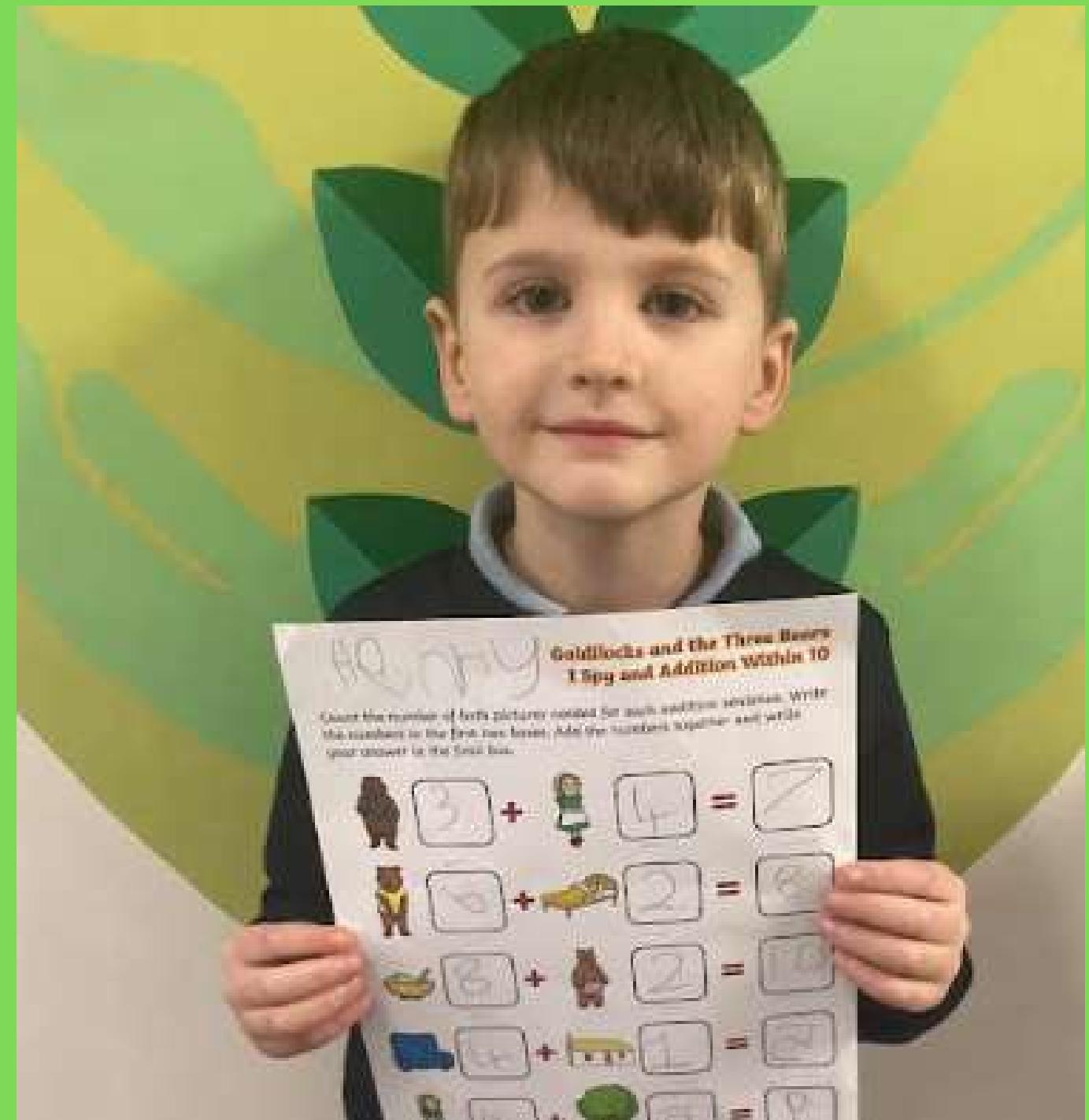
Well done to Robert in Ducklings class who was sent to see me because he is making amazing progress with his phonics. Robert was able to identify the word from the picture and write them independently. Well done Robert. Your teachers are so proud of you.

Forest school bugs

I had a lovely visit from the children in Ducklings to show me their bugs made in Forest School this week. They hammered nails into blocks of wood to make legs and tails. Well done children. They looked great.



Maths star of the week



Well done to Henry who was sent to see me with his amazing addition work. Henry's teachers tell me that he is always completing extra challenges in maths. Henry this is a wonderful approach to learning. You should be very proud. I know that your teachers are.

Super speller!



Well done to Alice in Year 3 who was very proud to show me her super spelling result this week. Alice told me she has been practicing at home. Hard work pays off.

Multi skills event at The Grange



Thank you to Mrs Ramos who took a group of Year 1 and 2 children to this weeks multi skills event at The Grange competing against other Christchurch schools. Mrs Ramos tells me that the children were a credit to St Joseph's. They persevered, tried their best in every activity, and were fantastic role models in terms of behaviour and attitude throughout the afternoon.

The team: Amelia (Yr 1), Faith (Yr 1), Arthur (Yr 1), Stanley (Yr 1) and Rosalie (Yr 2). Well done children. We are so proud of you.



Imaginative prayer



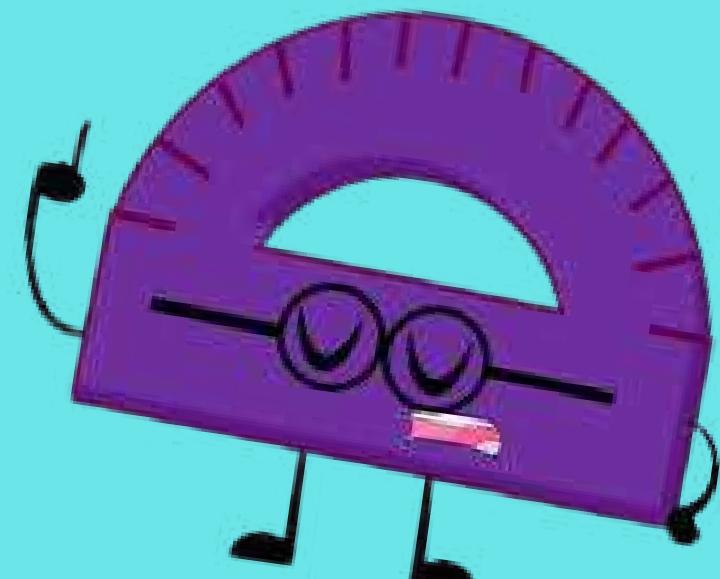
Thank you to Maria from Compass Connections who delivered another imaginative prayer session to our Year 6 children on Thursday. The sessions teach the children about wellbeing and relaxation and nurture their spirituality through imaginative prayer and contemplative exploration. This enables the children to have an encounter with God and to experience and develop a deeper and more personal relationship with Him. Thank you to Maria for continuing to provide our children with these wonderful opportunities.



Angles work in Year 6



Well done to the Year 6 pupils sent to see me with their wonderful angles work this week. using protractors to measure accurately. It was lovely to see how proud they were of their achievements.





Year 6 SATS talk

Thank you to all of our parents and carers who attended Miss Thomas' SATS information workshop on Monday. It was lovely to see so many of you there. Making sure our children are fully prepared and as a result calm before their end of year tests is what we aim for at St Joseph's. Before anything else, preparation is the key to success. If you were unable to make the session, Miss Thomas has emailed parents with the presentation. Thank you to Miss Thomas for organising and delivering such an informative workshop.

Children's Liturgy.

Our parish will be offering Children's Liturgy of the Word during selected Sunday Masses. This is a wonderful opportunity for children to hear and reflect on the Gospel message at their own level of understanding.

During the Liturgy of the Word, children of all ages will be invited to come forward and will be led to a separate space where they will listen to and discuss the Gospel and enjoy a craft or drama activity. We warmly invite you to encourage your children to participate. It will take place in St Joseph's Church, 67 Purewell,, Christchurch, BH23 1EH during mass on the following dates:

- January 25th
- February 1st - Family Mass
- February 8th
-



We are grateful for all those who volunteer to run this for the children and are always eager to add to our team. If you are interested in volunteering as a helper or leader, please don't hesitate to contact the parish office or speak to one of our volunteers during the service. Thank you.

School Governors Learning Walk



This week our Governors were invited in to observe oracy across the school. Oracy is an important part of our current School Development Plan and we have lots of exciting ideas to develop our children's confidence in speaking over the coming months. We will keep you updated so that you can support at home. Being able to speak confidently and hold engaging conversations (which includes listening) is a wonderful gift that will take our children far in life. Make sure you are talking to your children about what they have been doing at school. Rather than asking 'How was your day?' try using some of the questions below:

- "What was the best lesson today?"
- "What was the hardest thing you did today?"
- "Who did you play with today/ who did you sit with at lunch and what did you talk about?"
- "Tell me something that made you/ would have made me laugh today."
- "Can you show me/ tell me one thing you learned today?"
- "Did you help anyone today? Did anyone help you?"
- "Did you feel confused about anything today?"
- "What are you looking forward to when you go back to school tomorrow/on Monday?"
- "Did you learn anything I might have found interesting?"
- "Did you speak in class today? What did you say?"



Year 1 enrichment

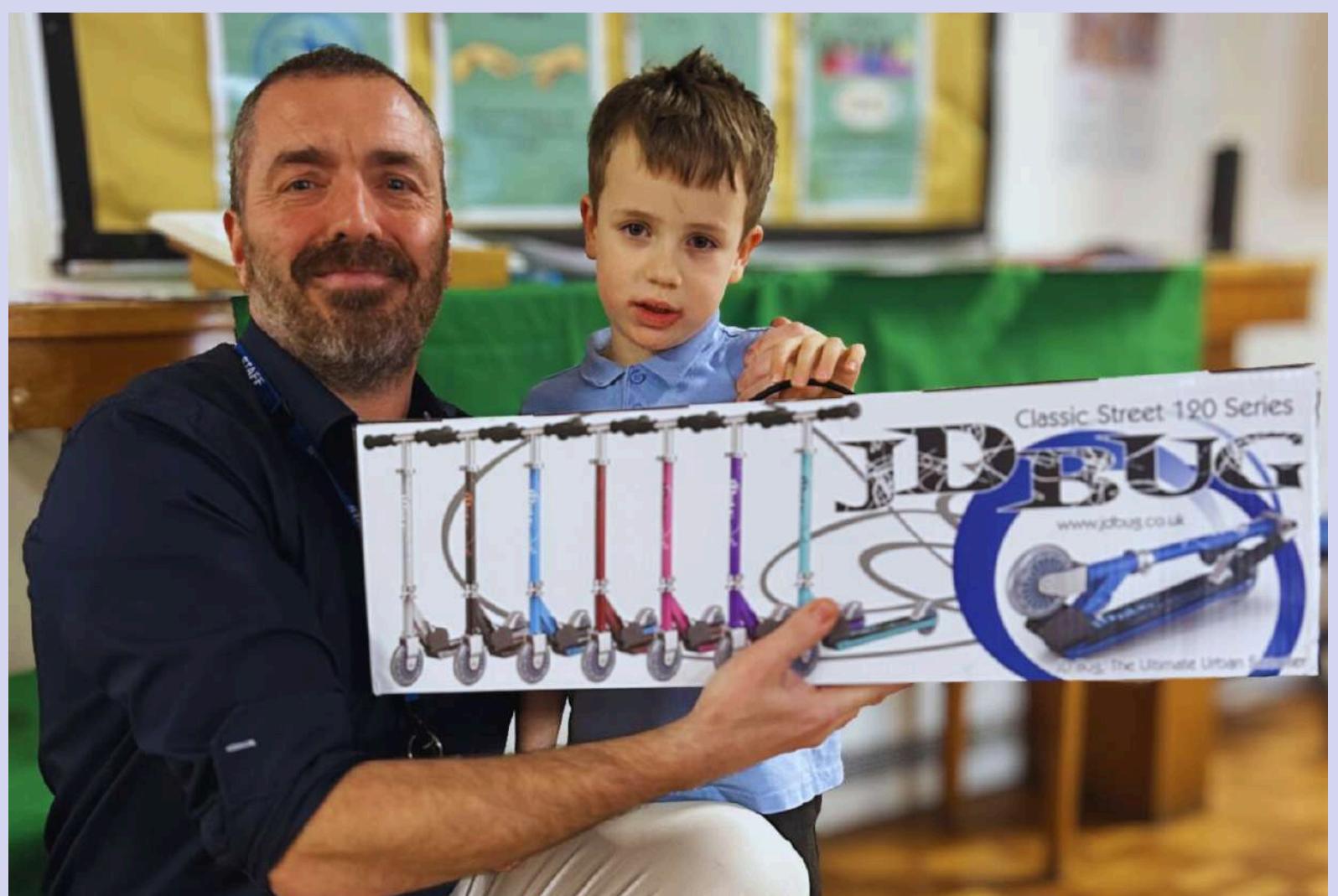


As part of their enrichment time the children made these wonderful penguins in the Phiz Lab with Mrs Walls and learnt all about Antarctica (which means land without bears). Once again our teachers are making learning fun, creative and memorable.

Walk to School winner!

Congratulations to Brodie in Year 1 who was awarded a brand new scooter after making an extra special effort during the 'Leg it to Lapland' challenge. The challenge was all about promoting sustainable travel to school and the scooter was awarded by the Wheel Walk Cycle Trust.

Remember that walking, riding and scootering to school has so many benefits for us and for our environment.



SCHOOL LIFE



Plastic bottle appeal

Mrs McCarthy is asking for any empty 500ml plastic bottles you may have. These will be used in science lessons to create torches. Please send in with your children to give to their class teachers.



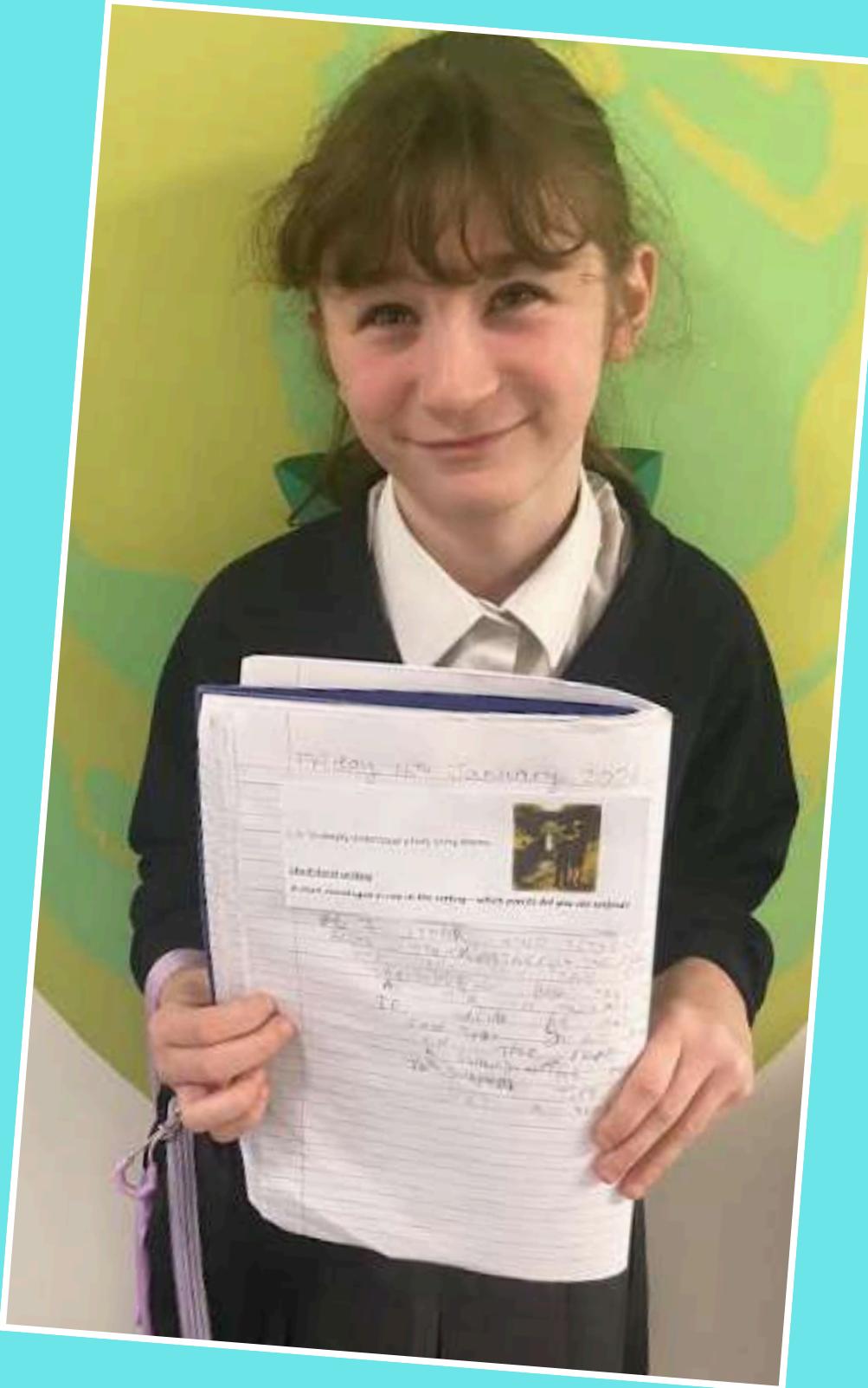
Musical maestros

When the school informed me that they were going to teach the violin to 30 children at the same time I thought they were crazy! Turns out it is possible! What a wonderful opportunity for our children. Thank you to our current music teacher Mrs Hughes for being ambitious and having the highest of expectations as to what our children can achieve. Well done to the children also. You were so impressive.

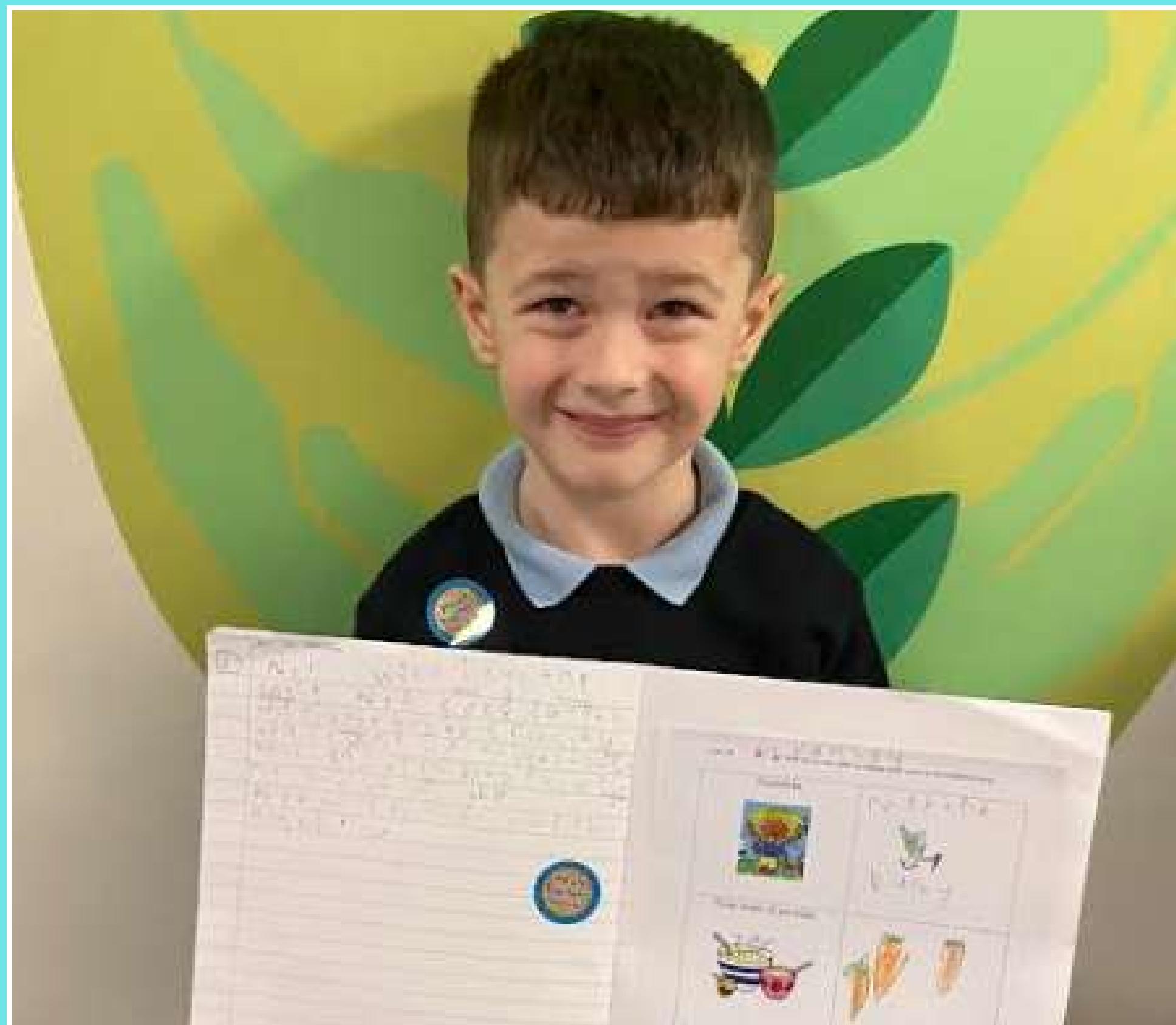


Wonderful writers of the week

There has been so much incredible writing in school this week that I had to dedicate three pages and rename it 'writers' of the week!



Well done to Julia, Bella and Isaac who were sent to see me with their fantastic writing this week. Year 5 have been writing a story entitled 'The Canal' in their Talk for Writing lessons. It was so lovely to see their use of adventurous language. Well done children.



Well done to Stanley in Year 1 who re-wrote the story of Goldilocks and The Three Bears by replacing some of the key ingredients of the tale. I didn't think you could improve on a classic but Stanley did!

Wonderful writers of the week

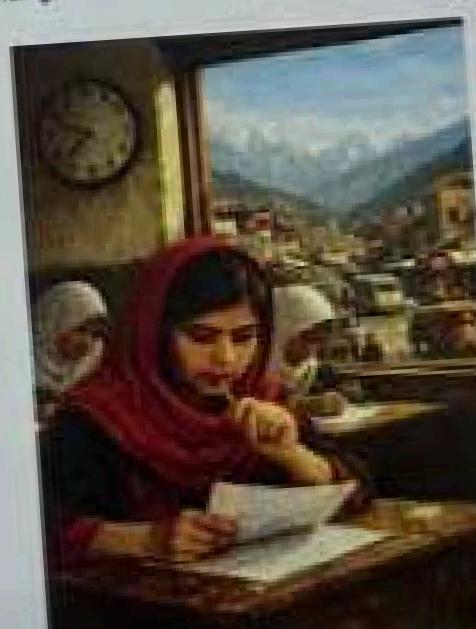
If you've ever wondered what exceptional writing looks like in Year 6 then look no further. Year 6 have been learning about Malala - the girl who fought and continues to fight for girls' rights to education in her part of the world. Tilly wrote this narrative of the day Malala was shot. Well done Tilly!

LO: To write a narrative

Before starting on her well studied for test, Malala said a quick prayer to Allah. Chewing nervously on her pencil, she began to block out the chaos of Mingora - the angry honk of horns and the bustling streets of outside. Malala glanced at the ticking clock in anticipation. I got top marks last year, thought Malala, can I do it again? The test began. Despite staying up the whole night before studying, Malala was alert and awake. Silence descended on the room. The only noise she could hear was the rustling of paper. Malala and the other girls were hushed in concentration. I'm not just doing this for me, decided Malala, I'm doing this for every girl who lost their right to go to school and every girl who is scared. I am doing this for them.

Exam day had passed like it always did. The two girls had purposely walked sluggishly out of the hall so they missed the first bus. Sat at the bus stop, Malala and Moniba giggled and gossiped about the most random of things. The searing heat didn't bother them. Hours could have passed but the two girls wouldn't have noticed. They were lost in conversation.

Malala and Moniba scrabbled to the first of three nearby benches. Twenty girls and two teachers stood in awe by the bus entrance as the bus driver did his usual magic trick. Crammed in like sardines, the girls all found their seats eventually and what was an atmosphere of anxiety for the tests now became an atmosphere of pure joy and happiness. The bus coughed, the wheels turned.

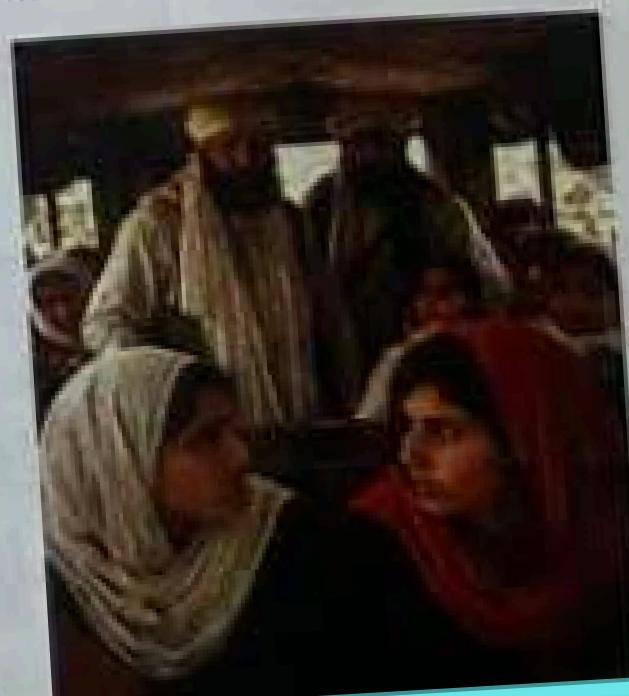



Wonderful writers of the week cont.....

and the girls talked. The heat of the Pakistani sun glazed down at the girls as they set off down the dusty, rush hour streets. Malala and Moniba giggled and gossiped about face cream, teachers and who got the highest scores. One girl began to sing a song and everyone joined in merrily. With a happy life like this, Malala was a winner.

Two men stopped the bus. The tires screeched as it came to an abrupt halt. Within seconds, the two men with flowing white robes and a gun stormed on the already cramped bus. Their thundering footsteps shook the whole bus. The girls could tell something was wrong by the menacing look in their eyes. The girls were scared. Extremely scared.

"Who is Malala?" the man with the gun questioned sharply. Sweat prickled down the girls' foreheads. Their breathing became shallow. Their eyes darted at Malala in concern and terror. That was enough. The man pointed the killing machine straight at Malala. Bang! Three shots broke the terrifying silence. Those shots were enough to kill. Those shots were enough to make the innocent, courageous Malala slump forward in her seat, unconscious.



PTA NEWS

Want to be our PTA Treasurer?

Want to be our next PTA treasurer? With a clear head for numbers, you will control the PTA funds in line with the committee's decisions, as well as charity law. You will also make sure upcoming events are affordable and profitable, and report financial information to the rest of the team. If you are interested in this role, or would like more information, please contact the school office on 01202 485976 or email admin@stjosephs.dorset.sch.uk

The treasurer's responsibilities:

- Manages the day-to-day finances.
- Keeps a detailed record of the PTA's financial activity.
- Reports on the finances at meetings in a clear, concise way.
- Banks the takings from events and fundraisers.
- Arranges floats for events.
- Ensures money is kept safely before and during events.
- Makes Gift Aid claims.
- Implements procedures for making payments and claiming expenses.
- Completes the Charity Commission annual return.
- Arranges audits for accounts.
- Reports at the AGM.
- Prepares the financial report.



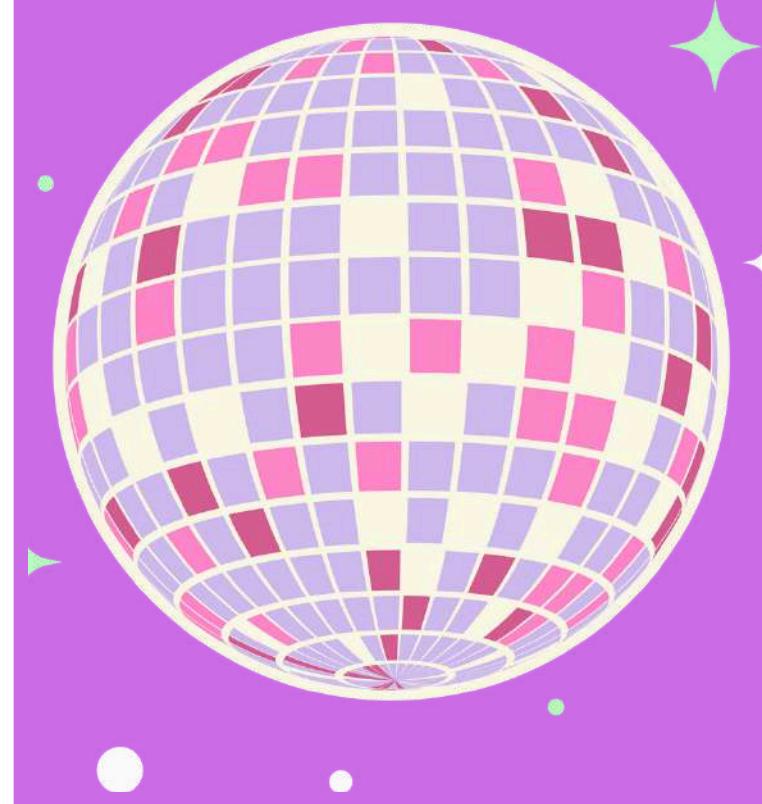
Our next clothes recycling collection!



A reminder that Rags2Riches4Schools will be arriving on Monday 26th January to collect any donated clothes for our recycling scheme. You can use any bags for your clean, donated clothes. Please remember, uniform is not accepted.

The money we raise from every kilo of clothes we collect will go towards our school. The collection is scheduled for Monday 26th January 2026. Please drop off your bags of clothes for recycling on the day of the collection. Please leave outside the school office.

PTA Valentine's Disco



The PTA will be organising a Valentine's Disco for Friday 6th February.

♦ KS1 4.45-5.45pm
KS2 6-7pm

Tickets will be £4 with a drink and snack included. Tickets will be sold on the playground on Thurs and Fri next week. More details to follow.

Easyfundraising

Did you know that you can raise funds for our school everytime you shop online? It's easy to join and every time you shop online you raise donations for our school at no extra cost to you! We have already raised £1,869.14 with 100 supporters. If you haven't already signed up it's easy to join - please follow this link to help us raise even more: [Easyfundraising](#)

Pre-loved uniform

Just a reminder that we have our very own second hand uniform shop on the Uniformd platform where we sell good quality pre-owned uniform with all funds raised going directly back to the school.

To view our catalogue of clothes and to purchase, please visit the Uniformd shop here: [Uniformd](#)



SCHOOL LIFE

Important Dates for your diary

EVENT	DATE
Gymnastics Festival at Highcliffe School Y1/2	Tuesday 27 th January
Eco Coding Adventure for Years 1-4	Tuesday 3 rd February
Step Into Sport Festival at The Grange Y3,4,5,6	Wednesday 4 th February
NCPCC National Number Day	Friday 6 th February
Scholastic Book Fair	Tuesday 10 th February - Friday 13 th February
Gymnastics Festival at The Grange Y3/4	Tuesday 10 th February
Netball Tournament at The Grange Y3/4	Wednesday 11 th February
Imaginative Prayer for Year 6	Thursday 12 th February
Year 2 Space Camp	Thursday 12 th February - overnight
February Half Term	Monday 16 th February - Friday 20 th February
Football Development Tournament Y4	Wednesday 25 th February
Live and Inspired Music Performance	Wednesday 4 th March
Shooting Stars Festival at The Grange 2,3,4	Thursday 5 th March
PTA Race Night Fundraiser	Friday 6 th March
Imaginative Prayer for Y6	Thursday 12 th March
Netball Tournament at Twynham Primary Y5/6	Thursday 12 th March
Class Photographs with Fraser Portraits	Friday 13 th March
Parents' Evening	Monday 16 th March
Cross Country at The Grange Y3,4,5,6	Tuesday 17 th March
Parents' Evening	Thursday 19 th March
St Joseph's Feast Day	Thursday 19 th March
Mass to celebrate St Joseph's Feast Day	Thursday 19 th March
Netball Tournament at Twynham Primary Y5/6	Thursday 19 th March
KS2 Mass at St Josephs at 10am	Wednesday 25 th March
Last day of term - finish at 1.30pm	Friday 27 th March
Return to school for Summer Term	Monday 13 th April
KS2 Science Fair	Friday 24 th April

Smartphone free childhood - sign the parent pact

Smartphone Free Childhood is a grassroots movement of parents who believe childhood is too short to be spent on a smartphone. Join the thousands of parents across Britain working together to make childhood better for their children. Sign up here: <https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/join>



CHANGE THENORM

Smartphone Free Childhood is a grassroots movement of parents who believe childhood's too short to be spent on a smartphone

We're on a mission to

01.

Bring parents together to start new and positive conversations about the problems of smartphones and social media in childhood

02.

Empower parents to wait to get their kids a smartphone until at least the end of Year 9, through signing up to the Parent Pact in their region

03.

Demonstrate that parents are demanding change at scale, and therefore force the government and tech companies to act

Why we're doing this now

We've been put in an impossible position by the tech companies. It's a lose lose - either allow our children access to something all the evidence tells us is damaging, or say no and risk alienating them among their peers at a crucial stage of their social development. **We believe something needs to change, and it starts with all of us.**

How you can get involved

Sign the Parent Pact - Join the growing movement of parents choosing to delay - it takes 30 seconds parentpact.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk

Join your WhatsApp community - Find solidarity, support and inspiration - we have one in every county in Britain whatsapp.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk

Help build the movement - Volunteer to be a Regional Leader and start making change in your community regionalleaders_signup.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk

Sign up to our newsletter - Get the latest news and campaign updates from SFC HQ smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/newsletter

Follow us on Instagram/LinkedIn
@smartphonefreechildhood
smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk



Scan to sign the Parent Pact
#smartphonefreechildhood

COMMUNITY

Bournemouth Rugby Club - free family tickets

FREE FAMILY ENTRY TO MATCH DAY

We are delighted for families to join us at Bournemouth Rugby's next home match at Chapel Gate on Saturday 31st January with a 2:00pm kick-off. As part of our ongoing work with local schools, we're offering a **FREE family ticket** to attend the match.

By registering online in advance, families will receive free entry for up to 2 adults and all under-18s. Please note: all children must be accompanied by an adult.

BOURNEMOUTH RUGBY CLUB

The graphic features the Bournemouth Rugby logo (a green lion standing on a shield with the text 'BOURNEMOUTH RUGBY') and social media links for Instagram and Facebook. It also includes several small images: a player in a red and black jersey, a group of people (adults and children) at a match, a player in a red and black jersey, and a group of young players in red and black jerseys.

Bournemouth Rugby is offering free family tickets for their home match at Chapel Gate on Saturday 31st January (2pm kick-off). Families can register online to receive free entry for up to 2 adults and accompanying under-18s. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Register here: <https://forms.office.com/e/1CAxratTn5>



ASD support for parents - coffee mornings

The Umbrella group meets on an informal basis in Christchurch for parents and carers of children and young people with ASD.

When: First Wednesday of the month unless otherwise specified & Some Friday mornings

Time: 10.30 -12.30 approx

Venue: Café Arcado, 71, High St, Christchurch BH23 1AS. arcado@thelounges.co.uk

Upcoming dates: 4th February, 4th March, 1st April, 6th May, 3rd June

For the coffee mornings you can just turn up but you can text the coordinator if you wish.

Contact Dawn Evans: 07834 379912. For more information please contact

Debbie: debbiewestbourne@gmail.com. Clare: 07450 210911.