

Spotlight on Spaxton C of E Primary



Friday 19th July 2024

Message from our Headteacher

Dear Parents, Carers and Members of our Community

As we near the end of this academic year, it gives me the perfect opportunity to reflect on the successes over the past year.

A key focus of the school this year has been the development of Early Reading through the implementation of our phonics program. As part of this, we have been involved with one of the English hubs, which has seen the school benefit from £6000 of funding. This has allowed us to invest heavily in the reading materials that support our phonics program, Little Wandle. We strongly believe in laying the correct foundations for early reading and are delighted that this has been reflected in our Year 1 Phonics Check this term with results exceeding the national average. We are also extremely grateful to the PTFA and parish council who have both donated significantly to see improvements in the texts offered to children to support the wider curriculum. In addition to the phonics results, we have been thrilled with the results from the other year groups across the school, including Early Years, Year 4 Multiplication check, and the Key Stage Two SATs. All the children have worked extremely hard this year and we could not be prouder of the progress they have made.

As well as providing an ambitious curriculum that supports the academic development of our pupils, we are also keen on their personal development. During the term, we have welcomed visits from the Somerset Library Service to share information regarding the summer reading challenge and the RNLI to deliver their water safety workshop. Our Key Stage Two classes enjoyed a wonderful visit to the Bristol Museum where they got to explore the exhibits and take part in workshops linked to Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt. Kingfisher class participated in the Kingfisher project and Year 6 enjoyed an activity day at Black Rock Outdoors. The whole school participated in our sports day which was kindly supported by Year 9 students from Haygrove. Well done to Hawkridge who were the overall winners on the day. We also held our KS2 swimming gala at Quantock Lodge – well done to Durleigh on this occasion for being overall winners.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish our Year 6 leavers all the very best as move onto secondary school. They have been delightful and have worked so hard to achieve wonderful outcomes. Thank you to all rest of the pupils for their enthusiasm and commitment to learning and thank you to the staff. It is a



joy to work alongside such committed individuals who care so deeply for the children of Spaxton and are always looking for ways to enhance and deepen their educational experiences. And finally, thank you to the families and wider community, including our Governors, for your continued support.

We wish you all a wonderful summer holiday and look forward to welcoming you back on Thursday 5th September.

Kindest regards,

Mrs Rood

Updates from the classes:

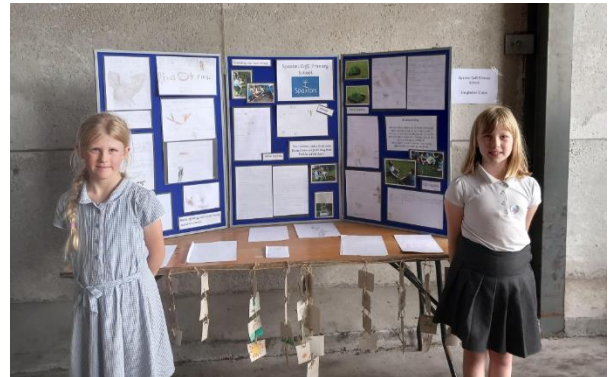
Starling

This half term we have been learning about the seaside and our oceans. We have been looking at the impact plastic is having on the sea life that lives there, alongside how Greta Thunberg became famous for her views on the environment. We have made posters to remind people of the importance of recycling and we have written a letter to the Prime Minister to ask him to do more to protect our ocean sea life.

We will be finishing the year with a steam train trip to Minehead which we are hoping the weather will be kind to us!

Kingfisher

Kingfisher class has had a very busy and productive half term. We have participated in the Kingfisher Award at Home Farm in Curry Rivel, creating an eye-catching display of all of our work linked to food production, farming and wildlife. We spent a day at the Bristol Museum and Gallery exploring the world of Ancient Egypt, getting to handle ancient artifacts and discovering how they used to live. In English, we have been enhancing our poetic writing using the book *Marshmallow Clouds* by Connie Wanek and Ted Kooser and looking at the devices used such as metaphors, alliteration and personification to create imagery. We have finished our maths journey by creating board games using the mathematical skills we have developed throughout the year as well as the year 4's achieving great scores in our Multiplication checks.



Peregrine

This term, Peregrine class has continued to flourish and achieve in all areas of the curriculum. In English, the children have been performing and creating rhythmic poetry based on the poet Karl Nova and have written some excellent instructions about how to capture a wolf and diary writing packed full of suspense. In maths, the children have been looking at decimals and the lifelong skill of converting units e.g. metres to kilometres. In DT, they have been looking at pulleys and gears and are currently constructing ancient Greek homes from matchsticks including a pulley



system. In History, the children have explored life in Ancient Greece and have become familiar with the way of life at this time.

As part of our wider curriculum, year 6 leavers had the pleasure of visiting Black Rock Adventure Centre at Goathurst and threw themselves into the challenges of high ropes, archery and paddle boarding. To draw the busy year to a close, the class are working hard to prepare for their upcoming production of 'Frankie and Me', which they are excited to perform to their family and friends.

Upcoming events/ Diary

- 19th July – Peregrine class end of year production
- 22nd July – PTFA meeting @ 6pm
- 23rd – Starling class trip to Minehead
- 24th – Leavers' service @ 9.15am
- 3rd and 4th September – Inset Days
- 5th September – First Day of the Autumn Term
- 28th October – 1st November – Autumn Half Term Break
- 8th November – Spirituality Day
- 22nd November – Inset Day
- 12th December – Whole School Pantomime Trip
- 23rd December – 3rd January – Christmas Holidays



PTFA News

Thank you so much to the PTFA who, although a small committee, have raised over £5000 this year through their fundraising efforts and by sourcing donations from the Community Store and Parish Council. This is an incredible amount and goes a long way to helping fund the extras at school, including the pantomime trip (it is already booked for December), contributions to other visits, a cooker to support our DT curriculum, resources to fix the play shed

and non-fiction books to support our wider curriculum.



A huge thank you to all the committee members and also the volunteers who help to run the events and it has been wonderful seeing some new parents getting involved. This term we have held the Summer Fair, school discos, family rounders and weekly ice-cream sales. If you feel you would like to get involved, please do come along to one of the meetings. The final one



being on Monday 22nd July at 6pm in Peregrine class – this is to start planning events for the Autumn term.

Finally a huge thank you to Ali, for being chair of the PTFA for the last 18 months. Ali has been a phenomenal support to the school and PTFA during her time as a parent at Spaxton but now is her time to pass on the role to Emily.

Local Governance Committee Update

As we come to the end of the summer term, we would like to thank Mrs Rood and the staff for a very positive and successful year. As Local Governors, our role is to support and challenge, but we must also celebrate the many successes that a small school like ours can achieve and the impact that these have on our children.



We are very proud of the progress that the school is making, and the results of our Y1 Phonics screening and Y4 Multiplication check are particularly encouraging. Our Y6 SATS results also show significant continuing improvement and progress and they should all feel very proud of what they have achieved. Well done everyone!

Our children are enjoying what we offer outside the curriculum - after-school activities, sports clubs, visits to the theatre & museums, residential trips, etc and the Sports Day and Swimming Gala were also fantastic opportunities for us to show you the enthusiasm that your children have for their school.

We must thank our PTFA for the amazing work they do in supporting Spaxton School, particularly the Summer Fair which was a great success! While we welcome Emily as their new Chair we must say a huge thank you to Ali for so many years of support and we look forward to continuing to work with all of you.

We are sad to say goodbye to our lovely group of Y6 children (most of whom I first met in 2017). We thank them for the huge part they have played during their time here and we wish them well as they move on to their secondary schools – I am sure they will enjoy the many celebrations planned for their last few days!

As you all know, we are a small school but with a big heart – please do get in touch if you think you could help or support us in any way. For example, could anyone 'lend a skill' for a couple of hours each week to run a gardening/craft/music club?

Please look out for our Open Days in October and I wish you all a very happy and enjoyable summer break.

Andrew Watson
Chair of Governors, Spaxton CofE Primary School.

Attendance



We know that good attendance leads to good outcomes for children. Children learn best if they are in school regularly and avoid gaps in their learning. We have set ourselves an ambitious target to achieve at least 95% this year. We are still just below this target but there has definitely been an improvement in attendance over the last term so thank you for your support in this. You can continue to help us reach our target by minimizing the number of sessions your child misses each year. No one can help being poorly and it is important to

stay at home if you are sick, but other absences such as holidays or appointments should be avoided, wherever possible.

Attendance Target	Current attendance (Year Average)	Current attendance (Term Average)
95%	93.72%	94.1%

From the start of the next academic year, I will be required to follow new statutory guidance released from the DfE regarding attendance. This includes a much stricter approach to attendance. The Department for Education expects children to attend school every day that it is open - unless they are ill. From August, all schools will be obliged to consider a fine when a pupil misses 10 or more school sessions for unauthorised reasons. A session counts as either a morning or an afternoon in school. Therefore 10 missed sessions are the equivalent to five whole days of school. These sessions do not need to be consecutive.

As the Headteacher, I will only be able to grant a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances and the DfE do not consider holidays to be exceptional. The current penalty is £60 per parent, which rises to £120 if not paid within 21 days. From August 2024, when the new policy is introduced, the fine for school absences across the country will rise to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.

Under the new rules, education chiefs are also pledging to tackle repeat offenders and those who may choose to regularly allow their children to miss school in favour of paying the fine. If a parent is given a second fine for the same child within a three-year period, this fine will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for a discount if paid early. Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution may be considered. If you're prosecuted and have to attend court because your child hasn't been going to school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

If you are interested in looking at the guidance, please do follow this link: [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/125442/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)

On the other hand, we are going to be looking at ways we can promote and celebrate excellent attendance so please do look out for these in the Autumn term.

Free School Meals

Is your child entitled to free school meals? Please note this is different from the universal free school meals that children in Starling class receive.

Parents and carers who receive any of the following are entitled to free school meals:

- Income Support (IS)
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related)
- Universal Credit with an annual household income of less than £7400 after tax
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit, with an annual taxable income (as assessed by HMRC) of less than £16,190

It is the responsibility of the parents or carers to register their entitlement and request free school meals for their children. If you think this could be you, please go to the Somerset Council website: [Free School Meals](#) to apply.

Safeguarding

Spaxton CofE Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. If you are worried about a child, please use the SHARP reporting tool on the website: [Spaxton Sharp Reporting](#) or ring Somerset Council directly on 0300 1232224.



INSET Days 2024/2025

Tuesday 3rd September 2024

Wednesday 4th September 2024

Friday 22nd November 2024

Monday 6th January 2025

Friday 14th March 2025

Monday 2nd June 2025

All term dates and INSET days can be found on the school website: [Spaxton CE Primary School - Academic Calendar with INSETS \(eschools.co.uk\)](#)