



January Newsletter 2026

Welcome to the January Edition of our Newsletter!

Head's Welcome

Happy New Year to all of our families, and a very warm welcome to the first newsletter of 2026!

As we begin the new year, this newsletter offers a chance to reflect on some of the wonderful festive highlights from the end of the Autumn term, while also looking ahead to what promises to be an exciting and busy Spring term.

We had a fantastic end to the Autumn term, with the magic of Christmas truly filling our school. The children and staff enjoyed a wonderfully busy few weeks preparing for the festive season. From the beautiful Nativity performance to our KS2 production of Oliver with a Twist, the standard of performance was outstanding and a real credit to everyone involved.

The celebrations continued with a delicious Christmas lunch, class Christmas parties (thank you to Paul and Lucy!), and a fantastic trip to the Hall for Cornwall (thank you FOSMS team!). We ended the term on a real high with a heart-warming carol service in the Church, shared with friends and family, which was a truly special way to close the term.

As we look ahead to the Spring term, we already have lots planned. Our swimming weeks have now been booked (please see the dates below), along with a range of sporting events already in the diary. Clubs have also begun, and we hope there is something to appeal to everyone. If you have not yet signed up, please speak to Mrs Worrall, who will be happy to check availability.

We have many exciting activities and events planned for the term ahead. Please keep an eye on the dates listed below, as these will continue to be added to over the coming weeks.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We wish you all a very happy and successful start to 2026.

Mrs King

Staffing updates

We are delighted to inform you that **Miss Jessica Elsey** has been appointed as the new full-time class teacher for **Kestrel Class**. Miss Elsey is very much looking forward to getting to know the children, and we are pleased to welcome her to our school community.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank **Mrs Kelly** for her commitment and support in teaching Kestrel Class during the last half-term.

As some of you may be aware, **Mrs Chandler** will be absent for the next two weeks following a planned procedure. To ensure continuity for Kestrel Class, **Mrs Olivey** will be supporting the class as Teaching Assistant during this period. **Mrs Burnham** will continue to remain in **Starlings Class**.

Mrs Muller will be undergoing surgery on her hand this week. We are expecting her to return to work on **Wednesday 28th January**. During this short period of absence, **Miss Clayton** will continue to work alongside an experienced supply teacher to ensure consistency for our children.

We are also very pleased to welcome **Mr Gerry** back to school and **Wagtails Class** following a period of absence last term.

Finally, we are delighted that our **nursery numbers are rapidly increasing**. To accommodate this growth, we have advertised for a **Teaching Assistant** to work alongside Mrs Muller and Miss Clayton. The closing date for applications is **Monday 12th January**. Further details can be found on the **Kernow Learning website**.

Key Stage 2 - Oliver with a Twist!

We were absolutely delighted to welcome families to our Key Stage 2 production of ***Oliver with a Twist*** this December. What a show it was! The children were truly incredible and showcased some real talent in acting, dancing and singing. Every performance was delivered with confidence, enthusiasm and a wonderful sense of humour, making the production both brilliant and very funny from start to finish. All of the children should be extremely proud of themselves — they worked so hard and completely rose to the challenge. They certainly made us all very proud and put on a fantastic show that will be remembered for a long time. It was a joyful and

uplifting way to end the term. A huge thank you must also go to our amazing parent helpers who supported the production behind the scenes. From set painting and costume help to lighting and sound support, your time and effort were very much appreciated.











News from FOSMS

Christmas roundup

What a wonderful run up to Christmas we had, starting with the children creating their own designs for Christmas gifts. Then our wreath making workshop and serving festive drinks before all the evening performances. Unfortunately the weather was against us for Christmas fun and carols but we were still able to run a few games and give out chocolates after the church service. And of course not forgetting ending the school year with a big treat for all the children. The nursery children visited Father Christmas, while the rest of the school had a trip to the Hall for Cornwall to see Aladdin pantomime.

We would like to say thank you to Kernow Chocolate for donating the lovely hamper for our raffle and to everyone for supporting all our events. We will announce how much was raised soon.

2026

We have had our first meeting for 2026 and once again already planning for the coming months.

Events

Doughnuts

Again we will be holding a Krispy Kreme tuck shop at the end of January, pre order forms should be in school bags next week.

Big Breakfast is back!

Save the date **Friday 13th February** Full details to follow.

Fundraising

This term we will be raising money for the school library.

Reminders

Pre-Love Uniform Shop

Have you seen our new shop? If you haven't pop into the old nursery where there is a big selection of pre-loved school uniform.

Keeping up to date

Join our Facebook group and keep an eye on the blackboard for the latest information.

Monthly meeting

Tuesday 2nd February 6:30pm Farmers Arms

Diary Dates

January

- 30th Krispy Kreme tuck shop

February

- 2nd Monthly Meeting
- 13th Big Breakfast

Sports Updates



Sports News & Clubs

We are looking forward to another busy and exciting term of sporting events, building on the many achievements and successes of last year. As always, we are extremely proud of all the children who represent our school, and the feedback we receive continues to be very positive.

We encourage all children to take part in the sporting opportunities available this term, as participation helps to develop confidence, teamwork, and a love of physical activity.

Upcoming Dates

- 12.01.26 – KS2 Cross-Country
- 26.01.26 – Gifted & Talented Academy
- 09.02.26 – Netball Festival

Clubs

We offer a wide range of extra-curricular clubs that run after school during the week. Please see the separate registration form to sign your child up. This half-term, clubs will run from Monday 5th January to Friday 13th February.

As always, we kindly ask that children who sign up for a club commit to attending regularly.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs Lewis PE Lead

Celebrating our musical successes

We are incredibly proud of the wonderful musical achievements showcased in our Christmas plays this year. The enthusiasm, confidence, and talent displayed by the children were a real joy to see, and their performances truly brought the festive season to life. A huge well done to all pupils involved, as well as to the staff who supported and prepared them so carefully. We are also delighted to share some exciting news about music across the school. This term, we have seen a significant increase in the number of children taking up individual music lessons. As a result, we are pleased to now offer **peripatetic music lessons on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons**, providing even more opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills. It is fantastic to see such growing enthusiasm for music within our school community. Thank you to families for your ongoing support—watch this space for more musical moments to come.

Success outside of the classroom



Congratulations! We are delighted to share that Sophia has progressed to the next stage of the BBC 500 Words Competition with her story, *"The Three Children and the Evil Duck."* Tens of thousands of entries were submitted nationwide, with only around 5,000 selected to move forward to the second round of judging by The Reading Agency. This is a fantastic achievement, and we are incredibly proud of you, Sophia!

Inclusion Update

Making Everyday Demands Easier for Children

Some children experience anxiety when faced with everyday requests, which can lead to what's called demand avoidance. This isn't about being stubborn—it's about feeling overwhelmed. This guide helps to spot common triggers like bright lights, loud noise, or sudden changes, and offers simple swaps such as turning "You need to do this" into "Would you like some help?". It also shares practical strategies like using visual schedules, offering choices, and adding a touch of

humour to reduce pressure. These small changes can make home and school life calmer and more positive for everyone.



Wild Tribe Update

Wild Tribe Sessions – Parent Helper Support Needed

During the last term, we were unfortunately unable to run Wild Tribe sessions for the Wagtails, Starlings, Kestrels, and Barn Owls classes due to staff shortages. We recognise how valuable these forest school-style sessions are for our children and are keen to reintroduce them as soon as it is safely possible. In order to resume Wild Tribe lessons, we are seeking **parent helpers** who would be willing to support staff during these sessions. Volunteers would need to commit to **one afternoon per week for the duration of a full term**, providing consistency and continuity for the children. We appreciate that this is a significant commitment and understand it may not be possible for everyone. However, Wild Tribe sessions offer rich opportunities for outdoor learning, teamwork, confidence-building, and enjoyment, and we know how much the children benefit from and value these experiences. If you are interested in supporting Wild Tribe sessions

or would like further information, please contact the school office. Your involvement could make a meaningful difference in enabling these much-loved sessions to return. Please talk to your teacher or Mrs Muller.

Spelling Shed and Active Learn Maths

Spelling and handwriting are two of our whole school priorities and there will be weekly spellings your child brings home to practise. **Please help your child to practise these spellings each week. The weekly spellings will also be available on Spelling Shed – a fun way to practise each week's spellings.** Please see the front of reading records for log in details.

Children can also access 'Active Learn' online from home, where there are maths games to enhance their learning, and also TT Rockstars, which helps children to increase their recall of their times tables. Details of their log ins are also in their reading records.



Reading at home

Why Reading at Home Matters: Helping Children Thrive

Reading is one of the most powerful tools we can give our children. It supports not only their academic success, but also their confidence, imagination, and emotional wellbeing. While children do plenty of reading at school, regular reading at home makes a huge difference—and we know that for some families, this can be challenging to fit into busy routines.

Why is reading at home so important?

- **Stronger learning across all subjects** Children who read regularly develop better vocabulary, comprehension, and communication skills. These skills support learning in every subject, from maths to science and beyond.
- **Improved concentration and confidence** Reading helps children learn to focus for longer periods and builds confidence as they become more fluent and independent readers.

- **A love of stories and imagination** Books open doors to new worlds, ideas, and experiences. Reading for pleasure encourages creativity and curiosity—qualities that last a lifetime.
- **Emotional development** Stories help children understand feelings, relationships, and different perspectives, supporting empathy and emotional intelligence.

What if my child is reluctant to read?

You're not alone. Many children find reading challenging or would rather choose screens or other activities. The good news is that small, positive steps can make a big impact.

Simple ways to support reading at home:

- Aim for **10–15 minutes a day**—little and often is better than long sessions.
- Let your child **choose books** that interest them, even if they seem easy or are comics or magazines.
- **Read together**—take turns, read aloud, or share a story at bedtime.
- Talk about the book: ask what they liked, what surprised them, or what might happen next.
- Be a **reading role model**—children who see adults reading are more likely to value it themselves.
- Praise effort, not just accuracy, to keep reading a positive experience.

Working together

When school and home work together, children benefit most. By encouraging regular reading at home, you are giving your child a gift that supports their learning now and sets them up for future success.

Thank you for your continued support in helping your child grow into a confident and enthusiastic reader.

[**St Merryn School Council**](#)

This term we are looking at taking part in the Big Bird Watch as part of our thinking about the environment and the impact we have on it.

Please take part in the Big Bird Watch by signing up for it at home. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch>¹

Some of our classes will be taking part with this as part of a School Bird Watch as well.

Reading For Pleasure



Live Assembly from Antarctica

Recently, classes across the school took part in an exciting live assembly streamed directly from Antarctica. Pupils were captivated as they learned about life in one of the world's most extreme environments, the wildlife that lives there, and the important scientific work taking place. The session was highly engaging, sparked lots of curiosity, and led to thoughtful questions and discussions back in class. It was a fantastic opportunity to bring learning to life and inspire pupils' interest in the wider world.

As we step into the new year, we are excited to celebrate our love of reading across the school. Alongside reading for pleasure, classes are enjoying a range of engaging class texts linked to our history and geography topics, helping to bring learning to life and deepen understanding of the world around us. Through sharing stories, novels and non-fiction texts, children are developing curiosity, vocabulary and a genuine enjoyment of reading, reinforcing the importance of reading both for learning and for pleasure.

¹<https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rspb.org.uk%2Fwhats-happening%2Fbig-garden-birdwatch&data=05|02|cgerry%40kernowlearning.co.uk|d7532573e3e24bd2deb008de4ee5a3b0|4069dd172dda44348f72fc516948a319|0|0|639034945359220177|Unknown|TWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIYiOiwLjAuMDAwMCIsIiAiOijXaW4zMilsIkFOljoiTWFpbCisIldUljoyfQ%3D%3D|0|||&sdata=i0O7qSD5bK4eMlvzmdA28lmK1WUe96P6Vp4OxpOyAc%3D&reserved=0>

More Reading for Pleasure Book Recommendations

EYFS

- The Snail and the Whale – Julia Donaldson
- Handa's Surprise – Eileen Browne
- Lost and Found – Oliver Jeffers
- The Lion Inside – Rachel Bright
- The Little Red Hen – traditional tale

KS1

- Meerkat Mail – Emily Gravett
- The Day the Crayons Quit – Drew Daywalt
- Grace Darling – Sue Reid
- Paddington – Michael Bond
- The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch – Ronda & David Armitage

KS2

- The Butterfly Lion – Michael Morpurgo
- Escape from Pompeii – Christina Balit
- Journey to the River Sea – Eva Ibbotson
- Running Wild – Michael Morpurgo
- The Nowhere Emporium – Ross MacKenzie

St Merryn Gardening Club

Our Gardening Club has been very busy this term, getting the garden ready for the winter season. The children have been **weeding, pruning the apple trees**, and preparing the beds for new growth. Together, we have been **planting lettuces, pak choi, beetroot, and spinach**, and we're looking forward to seeing how they grow over the coming weeks. The anticipation of enjoying vegetables that we have grown ourselves makes this project even more exciting! We are also planning to add some herbs to the planters by the poly tunnel to make a sensory herb garden for us to explore and to brighten up our school for the colder months and the coming

spring. If you happen to have any **shrubs or plants** that you are removing from your garden, please let **Mrs Worrall or Mrs Muller** know — they would be delighted to give them a new home in our school garden.

Attendance at St Merryn School

Every School Day Counts

We all want the best for our children, and one simple way to support their learning and wellbeing is through regular attendance. Research shows that pupils who attend school more than 95% of the time tend to achieve significantly better outcomes in both primary and secondary school—even missing just a few extra days can make a difference.

By establishing consistent routines, keeping open communication with our school, and seeking support early if needed, we can help our children thrive. Together, we can give every child the best possible start in life through strong, regular attendance.

A National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence, including unauthorised holiday absence, has been introduced following changes to the law. These Government regulations came into effect from 19 August 2024 and now affect when penalty notices are issued in Cornwall.

As you will be aware, you can no longer take your child out of school for one week's holiday without the consideration of a penalty notice being issued.

The **Local Authority** has recently updated its guidance regarding attendance. A child must now be present for a **full session** in order to be marked as attending.

- **Morning session:** 9:00am – 12:00pm
- **Afternoon session:** 1:00pm – 3:10pm

If a child is not in school for the full duration of a session, this will be recorded as an absence.

If you have any concerns re your child's attendance, please see Mrs Worrall in the first instance.

E-Safety January Updates

Be smart on the internet

Childnet
International
www.Childnet.com

S

SAFE

Keep safe by being careful not to give out personal information – such as your full name, email address, phone number, home address, photos or school name – to people you are chatting with online.



m

MEETING

Meeting someone you have only been in touch with online can be dangerous. Only do so with your parents' or carers' permission and even then only when they can be present.



a

ACCEPTING

Accepting emails, IM messages, or opening files, pictures or texts from people you don't know or trust can lead

to problems – they may contain viruses or nasty messages!



r

RELIABLE

Information you find on the internet may not be true, or someone online may be lying about who they are.



t

TELL

Tell your parent, carer or a trusted adult if someone or something makes you feel uncomfortable or worried, or if you or someone you know is being bullied online.

THINK
U
KNOW
.CO.UK



You can report online abuse to the police at www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.kidsmart.org.uk

KidSMART



Visit Childnet's Kidsmart website to play interactive games and test your online safety knowledge. You can also share your favourite websites and online safety tips by Joining Hands with people all around the world.



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All National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many areas which we believe should ideally should be covered in a Parental and Online Safety guide for further advice, tips and sign for adults.

Top Tips for SETTING UP PARENTAL CONTROLS ON NEW DEVICES

In children's eagerness to start enjoying new digital gadgets immediately, it can be easy to overlook setting up the type of parental controls that can help to protect them. If you don't sort these out from the very start, it can be an uphill battle – technologically and psychologically – to impose such controls later. Here's our rundown of what you need to consider when setting up the various internet-enabled devices that might be lurking under the tree at the start of year.

IPHONE
If your child's lucky enough to be getting their first iPhone, parental controls can avoid issues like screen addiction and inappropriate content. Go to Settings and scroll down to 'Screen Time'. From here, you can set up a screen time settings including time limits on using the device, content restrictions and content blockers. You can also lock your device behind a password.

ANDROID
With Android devices, Google's Family Link app is your friend. First, download the app onto your phone – and a separate one for your child, which you also need to download onto their device. Then, in Family Link on your own phone, you can add your child's account details. This lets you specify limits on daily usage, restrict certain apps, block particular content and more.

PLAYSTATION
You can prep for a PlayStation before it's even unboxed. After you've set up the console on account, then go to Account Management > PlayStation Network Management > Add Family Member to set up your child's account. You can then log on to the console. You can restrict the age rating of the games they play and who they can talk to. On the PS5, you can also exceptions for any games you think are appropriate despite their high age rating.

IPAD
iPad parental controls are identical to those on iPhones. However, if you've got kids who are really into iPads and your children aren't seeing anything they're not meant to, then you can turn the device, there's a feature called 'Guided Access' in the Settings > Accessibility > Guided Access. With this turned on, young ones can only use the app that's currently open.

XBOX
The Xbox Family Settings app helps you to manage what your child can play (and when). You'll need to set up a child profile, then add a child profile, and then add a child profile. Make sure you set up a screen time limit so your child can't alter your choices later. You can do this through the Functions of setup, but you can also do it automatically via Settings > Account > Family Settings.

NINTENDO SWITCH
Download the Nintendo Switch Family app on your phone, and you'll be shown how to set up your child's account. Once that's done, you can limit how long your child can play each day, decide what on the console they can play and you'll also get weekly updates on how often they play. You can also see what content are accessible through the console itself, but the app is usually easier.

WINDOWS 11 PCs
On Windows 11, account management is key. Set up the device with a Microsoft account. Then go to Settings > Accounts > Family & other users > Add someone to your account (if you've already done this on a previous Windows 10 device, skip to the next section). Microsoft Family Safety (either the app or the site) then lets you control screen time and the content children can view and more.

CHROMEBOOKS
Chromebooks parental controls are managed via the Family Link app. Log on to your device and then go to Settings > Accounts > Family & other users > Add someone to your account. Your child can then log in to the device and control what they're up to via Family Link.

MACS
Like phones, parental controls for Macs are managed via the Screen Time feature. You'll need to log in to your Mac yourself as the administrator before you can set up parental controls. In the settings, look for Users & Groups to manage your child's account. Set a limit on their profile – use the screen time option to play for a set amount of time, use a limit and see what your child can communicate with (and vice versa).

SMART TVs
Smart TVs typically have their own integrated parental controls. One of the most popular brands is Samsung, which has the TV's own parental controls to limit content available to your child. In the settings menu, you can set up screen time, lock channels and restrict content by its rating. However, some apps (like YouTube) might still let children access unsuitable material.

Meet Our Expert
Steve Collier is a parenting expert with over 20 years experience of working for the media on the Sunday Times, What's On TV, Money Mail, and the Daily Mail. He has also written for numerous publications and media, including the BBC Newsnight, Radio 4, and the TV Week on Ten. Steve is also a regular guest on the BBC Breakfast and Good Morning Britain, and has appeared on numerous TV and radio shows.

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1 - Advice for setting up parental controls on new devices

At The National College, our *WakeUpWednesday* guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and well-being. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, visit www.thenationalcollege.org.uk

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about YOUTUBE

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows YouTube. The Google-owned site lets anyone upload their own videos and allows users to upload, view and share them. It is a free platform with free access to material covering every conceivable topic. But with over 500 hours of video uploaded every minute, not all of it will be appropriate for young eyes.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTubers can be accessed via numerous devices, even without creating a YouTube account. Many are flagged as age-restricted (requiring the user to be 18 or over, or a verified age of 16), but children can still view them. This can include profanity and violence, which can be young users may find upsetting.

CONNECT WITH STRANGERS

YouTube's comments section is designed to encourage users to interact with previously posted content that will interest them. This can lead to binge-watching and screen time that is not age-appropriate. Users without an account are also able to comment on videos 24 hours, which might not always be suitable for children.

RADICALISATION

YouTube's algorithm tends to promote content that is controversial – a lot of which can be quite extreme. This can include videos of fake news, fake news and hateful ideologies can capture the attention of impressionable minds all too easily. Radicals will continue to push the more they're recommended.

18+ CHANNELS

For older children, there is an option to turn on a setting that prevents YouTube from displaying content that is 18+ (adults only) and includes graphic violence, sex and sexual content. This can stop children from viewing age-inappropriate content that may be inappropriate for their age. It's worth turning this on for children under the age of 18 to access YouTube. It's worth also turning the setting on for children under 18 as YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending content that is inappropriate.

TRY GOOGLE FAMILY

Creating a Google Family account allows parents and carers to monitor what their children are watching and interacting with other users. It will also display their recommended videos. In general, a Google Family account is a good way to ensure that their child uses sites like YouTube and helps to ensure that they are only accessing appropriate content.

MONITOR ENGAGEMENT

YouTube is the most popular platform of choice for billions of people, many of whom are children. Your children can watch different content to other ones, of course. You can monitor what your children interact with this material – and, if necessary, block certain content. To understand what they're interested in, however, it's important to monitor their web presence elsewhere, so don't ignore their web presence elsewhere.

18+ CHANNELS

It's possible to sidestep most inappropriate content by turning on a setting in the YouTube Kids app for Android handsets and iPhone. This turns on a setting that prevents children under 18 from viewing "adults only" (ages 18 to 30) and "older content" (ages 16 to 18). This is a good option for parental supervision, as the app's filtering system is not perfect, and Google can't manually review all videos.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

YouTube gives users the option of uploading videos that can only be viewed by people who could be shared exclusively with family and friends. This means that the video can also be distributed and channels that a child creates can be shared with others. The child is only uploading videos set as "public" and can receive comments and receive direct messages from strangers.

LIMIT SPENDING

Although YouTube is free, it does offer some premium features, such as Premium, Premium and Buy TV shows and movies to watch. If you're worried about your child spending money, limit their access to online payment methods. Many parents are shocked to learn that a child rapidly consuming a paid-for series quickly leads to an unexpected bill!

Advice for Parents & Educators

APPLY RESTRICTED MODE

For older children, there is an option to turn on a setting that prevents YouTube from displaying content that is 18+ (adults only) and includes graphic violence, sex and sexual content. This can stop children from viewing age-inappropriate content that may be inappropriate for their age. It's worth turning this on for children under the age of 18 to access YouTube. It's worth also turning the setting on for children under 18 as YouTube's algorithm automatically recommending content that is inappropriate.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Morris is an experienced technology journalist who has written for The Sunday Times, The Herald, The Sunday Herald, The Sunday Times and The New Statesman.

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2 - How to use YouTube safely and appropriately

At The National College, our *WakeUpWednesday* guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and well-being and change. Formerly delivered by helpline Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators

RECOGNISING & MANAGING STRESS

According to recent studies, over 60% of young people report feeling regularly overwhelmed – with stress impacting their mental health and well-being. This guide offers ten practical, evidence-based strategies to help children and young people recognise, manage and recover from stress in healthy ways.



1 SPOT THE SUBTLE SIGNS

Look out for changes in mood, behaviour, or physical health. These may include moodiness, irritability, clinginess, or frequent headaches. These may indicate that a child is stressed. Tuning into these cues early and offering a calm, non-judgmental space to talk, can help a child feel safe and supported before they escalate.

2 KEEP CONVERSATIONS FLOWING

Make time for open, honest, and active communication. It's during our journeys, over dinner, or in quiet classroom moments that children are most likely to open up about what's bothering them. Regulate your own stress levels by creating a safe space where emotions are validated, not dismissed.

3 MAKE MOVEMENT PART OF THE DAY

Physical activity can dramatically reduce stress levels. Encourage children to move their bodies. Encourage movement through activities children genuinely enjoy – from team sports to dancing to stretching. Encourage children to notice the stretching or walking the dog can help us all unwind.

4 SUPPORT HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

Poor sleep makes stress harder to manage. Establish a calming evening routine that includes a warm bath, a story, and promotes winding down, such as reading, listening to music, or stretching. Good sleep hygiene helps reset mood, enhances concentration, and boosts emotional resilience.

5 PRACTISE MINDFULNESS

Encourage children to respect long periods of meditation. A few slow breaths before lessons or short family meditation sessions can help children feel more relaxed. These simple habits help children ground themselves in the present moment, and build inner calm over time.

6 SET DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Excessive screen time, especially before bed or during the day, can contribute to stress levels. Set clear expectations for when and where screen time is acceptable, and offer screen-free alternatives like crafts, nature walks or board games. This promotes digital balance and reduces overstimulation.

7 NURTURE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Strong relationships act as a buffer against stress. Encourage children to connect with family, a good friend, or a good friend. Ensure children have people to talk to and spend time with. Help them build those bonds through shared activities and meaningful interactions.

8 PROGRESS OVER PERFECTION

Set realistic goals and praise effort, not just outcomes. Encourage children to aim for perfect, stress naturally follows. Celebrate small wins along the way, such as sticking to a routine or learning a new skill. This helps build confidence and reduces the fear of failure.

9 TEACH EVERYDAY PROBLEM-SOLVING

Use real-life scenarios to build resilience. Encourage children to identify problems, consider possible solutions, and take action. Encourage them to break down a problem into smaller steps. Practicing these steps builds a sense of control and ownership, which helpslessness that often accompanies stress.

10 BE THE MODEL THEY NEED

Children model how we deal with challenges. Model healthy coping strategies such as taking breaks, asking for help, or calmly talking through problems. By showing them how to manage stress constructively, you help children do the same.

Meet Our Expert

Jane Thompson is Director of Helpline Education Ltd, Director for Wellbeing and Family Services at Lough Trust, and lead expert for mental health at The National College. She has developed mental health solutions for schools, supporting educators and families to build resilience, emotional literacy, and overall wellbeing for children across the UK.

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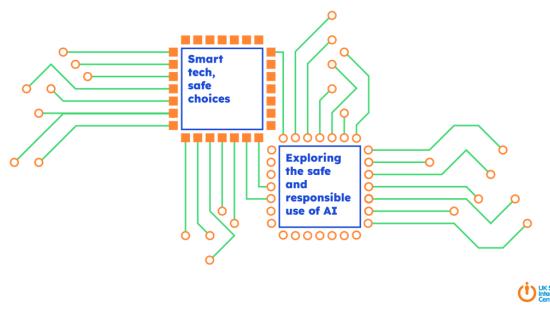
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3 - Recognising and managing stress



4 - What slang words you need to be aware of in this ever evolving world



5 - We are getting ready to celebrate Safer Internet Day 2026 on the 10th of February. You can find more information here: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2026>



6 - Instagram is revamping Teen Accounts to be inspired by movie ratings for ages 13+. This means, teens will see content that's similar to what they'd see in an age-appropriate movie, by default.

You can read more here: <https://about.instagram.com/blog/announcements/instagram-teen-content-safety-pg-13>

Train to teach in Cornwall...



Train to teach in Cornwall
Train to teach in one of the most beautiful parts of the country, with the only provider in Cornwall accredited by the National Institute of Teaching.

Next online information session on
Monday 19th January
5.00 - 6.00pm
To book your place e mail:
hello@kernowteaching.co.uk

#AsOne

Kernow initial Teacher Education
part of
KernowLearning
Accredited by
NATIONAL INSTITUTE of Teaching

in collaboration with **aspire**

Do you have a child for a place in reception class of 2026?



Together for Families

The deadline for applications is
15 January 2026

Do you have a child born **between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022?**

If so, you will need to apply for a place in a reception class in September 2026 for your child by the deadline of **15 January 2026**.



Please note: you will need to apply even if your child attends a school's nursery or pre-school class. If a school is oversubscribed the fact that a child attends a school's nursery or pre-school, or a local nursery or pre-school, does not automatically guarantee a place at that school. The school's oversubscription criteria will be used to allocate places. Visit our website or contact us for more information.

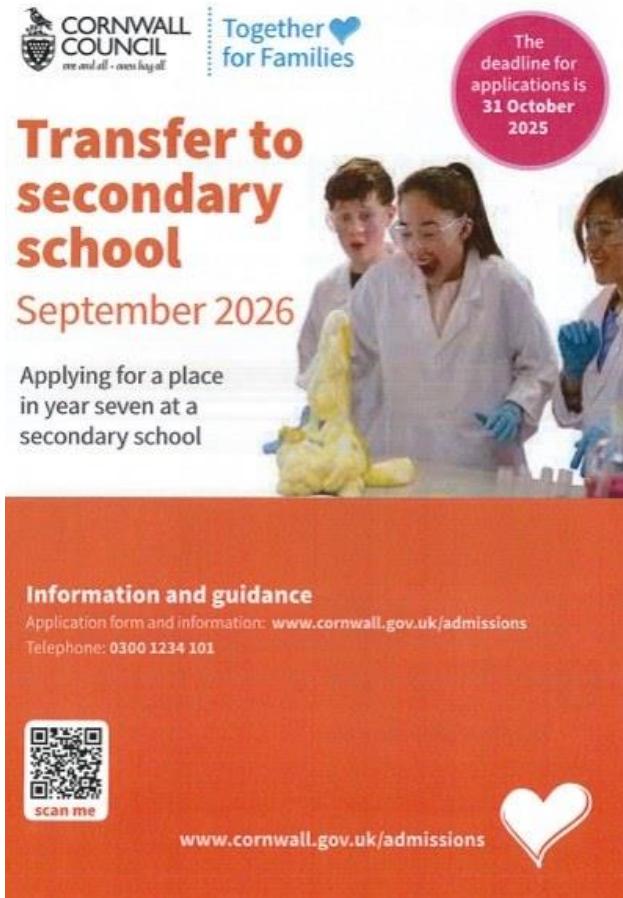
Visit www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions for more information and to access the online application system.



www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions

Photo © iStockphoto.com, Adobe Stock
Photo © iStockphoto.com

Or secondary school in 2026?



The image shows the front cover of a booklet titled 'Transfer to secondary school September 2026'. The cover features the Cornwall Council logo and the text 'Together for Families'. A circular badge in the top right corner states 'The deadline for applications is 31 October 2025'. The background of the cover shows three children in lab coats and safety goggles conducting an experiment with a yellow substance. The bottom half of the cover is orange, containing the text 'Information and guidance', the website 'www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions', a QR code labeled 'scan me', and a large white heart icon.

If you have any **Safeguarding Concerns**, here are some important contacts for you to use.

The Multi Agency Referral Unit² (MARU) is a service in Cornwall that provides support and advice to families and professionals regarding the welfare and safety of children. MARU acts as a central point of contact for concerns about children and young people, helping to connect them with the most appropriate services. Key functions of MARU:

- **Referral and Assessment:** MARU receives referrals about children who may be at risk and can initiate assessments to determine the appropriate level of support.

²https://www.google.com/search?safe=active&cs=0&sca_esv=f76fe1cd3d1e0b31&q=Multi+Agency+Referral+Unit&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjW0ZyO8bGOAxUOQEEAHT-yJZUQxccNegQIAhAB&mstk=AUtExfDRQ7TOos5Nmc4xbQacZg2J4P0VR6BM3tX8Oq9Dlrz0YnVcpfvhQRPnGFhng4e-Mfus2prDxiDA74A4FcpG9XAOZXFb9ZA8YSHKIX3KZpT9am5Tdkmdo5LguL73mM0WpPc&csui=3

- **Multi-Agency Collaboration:** MARU works with various agencies, including social services, health professionals, and educational institutions, to ensure a coordinated response.
- **Signposting and Advice:** MARU provides information and guidance to families and professionals on how to access relevant support services, including Early Help services.
- **Early Help:** MARU may refer families to the Early Help Hub³, which offers a range of support services to address identified needs and prevent escalation to more serious interventions.

When to contact MARU:

- **Concerns about a child's safety or well-being:** If you are worried about a child's safety or have concerns about their welfare, you can contact MARU.
- **Seeking advice about child protection:** Professionals can contact MARU for advice on how to respond to specific situations or to discuss whether a referral to children's social care is necessary.

Contact information:

- **Telephone:** 0300 123 1116
- **Email:** multiagencyreferralunit@cornwall.gov.uk according to Cornwall Council⁴
- **Location:** Cornwall Council

Important Note: If a child is in immediate danger, contact the police on 999.

³https://www.google.com/search?safe=active&cs=0&sca_esv=f76fe1cd3d1e0b31&q=Early+Help+Hub&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjW0ZyO8bGOAxUOQEEAHT-yJZUQxccNegQIGB&mst=AUtExfDRQ7TOos5Nmc4xbQacZg2J4P0VR6BM3tX8Oq9Dlrz0YnVcpfvhQRPnGFhng4e-Mfus2prDxiDA74A4FcpG9XAOZXFb9ZA8YSHKIX3KZpT9am5Tdkmdo5LguL73mM0WpPc&csui=3

⁴<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/childrens-services/child-protection-and-safeguarding/>

Community Events...



Parents Plus Adolescents Programme

A 9-week workshop delivered weekly. Each session is 2-hours in length.
This hybrid programme gives you the option to attend in-person or
virtually on Microsoft Teams.

This is an evidence-based workshop that covers topics such as:

- Understanding teenagers
- Pressing the pause button
- Getting to know your teenager
- Establishing rules with teenagers
- Connecting with your teenager
- Communicating rule positively
- The power of encouragement
- Using consequences
- Dealing with conflict and aggression
- Problem solving with teenagers
- Creating a discipline plan
- Family problem solving
- Empowering teenagers
- Establishing routines
- Parent self-care
- Active listening

When?

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30am
starting 24th February 2026

Where?

Wadebridge Family Hub
or on Microsoft Teams



To book visit

[parentbooking.cornwall.gov.uk/
book/add/p/4](http://parentbooking.cornwall.gov.uk/book/add/p/4)

Contact us

Website: www.cornwall.gov.uk/parenting
Email: parenting@cornwall.gov.uk



Together  for Families

 [www.cornwall.gov.uk/
parenting](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/parenting)

7 - A fantastic opportunity to join and gather advice from Parents Plus over a 9 week workshop for those adults parenting a 12 - 19 year old.

Flu Vaccination Drop in Clinic Information.

Flu continues to be an issue in our communities, compounded by this recent cold weather. Before Christmas you very kindly circulated our poster about catch-up clinics for the nasal flu vaccine for those who missed at our school visits.

We will be running some Saturday drop-in clinics on 10th and 24th January and in early February, to give parents every opportunity to ensure their children are vaccinated as the flu season continues.





MONTHLY DROP-INS

AT

St Austell Library

Third Friday of every month 10am to 12pm.

Refreshments provided.

Open to families looking for support or anyone wishing to find out more about our services.

For families with children when a parent/carer has a terminal illness

gunnerskids.org



gunners kids

SilverCloud

NHS
Cornwall Partnership
NHS Foundation Trust

Interactive cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) programmes to help support and make you feel better

SilverCloud offers a number of programmes including:

- Supporting an Anxious Child
- Supporting an Anxious Teen
- Supporting a Child with ADHD

For more information and to sign up please use the link below:
<https://cornwallcyp.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>



Dates for the Diary



Save the Date:

January

Wk beg: Mon 26th – Year 3&4 Swimming Week

Mon 26th - Gifted & Talented Sports Academy

Fri 30th - FOSMS Krispy Kreme Tuck Shop

February

Mon 2nd - FOSMS Meeting (6:30pm The Farmers Arms)

Mon 9th - Netball Festival

Wk beg: Mon 2nd – Year 1&2 Swimming Week

Fri 13th - FOSMS Family Big Breakfast

HALF TERM – Mon 16th – Friday 20th

Mon 23rd – Inset Day (School closed to children)

Tues 24th – Children return to school

March

Mon 2nd – Parent Consultations

Tuesday 3rd – Parent Consultations

Wed 4th – Parent Consultations

School Terms and Holidays 2025/26

St Merryn School

September 2025							October 2025							November 2025							
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon	6	13	20	27		Mon	3	10	17	24				
Tue	2	9	16	23	30		Tue	7	14	21	28		Tue	4	11	18	25				
Wed	3	10	17	24			Wed	1	8	15	22	29		Wed	5	12	19	26			
Thu	4	11	18	25			Thu	2	9	16	23	30		Thu	6	13	20	27			
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	3	10	17	24	31		Fri	7	14	21	28			
Sat	6	13	20	27			Sat	4	11	18	25			Sat	1	8	15	22	29		
Sun	7	14	21	28			Sun	5	12	19	26			Sun	2	9	16	23	30		
December 2025							January 2026							February 2026							
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon	5	12	19	26		Mon	2	9	16	23				
Tue	2	9	16	23	30		Tue	6	13	20	27		Tue	3	10	17	24				
Wed	3	10	17	24	31		Wed	7	14	21	28		Wed	4	11	18	25				
Thu	4	11	18	25			Thu	8	15	22	29		Thu	5	12	19	26				
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	9	16	23	30		Fri	6	13	20	27				
Sat	6	13	20	27			Sat	10	17	24	31		Sat	7	14	21	28				
Sun	7	14	21	28			Sun	4	11	18	25		Sun	1	8	15	22				
March 2026							April 2026							May 2026							
Mon	2	9	16	23	30		Mon	6	13	20	27		Mon	4	11	18	25				
Tue	3	10	17	24	31		Tue	7	14	21	28		Tue	5	12	19	26				
Wed	4	11	18	25			Wed	8	15	22	29		Wed	6	13	20	27				
Thu	5	12	19	26			Thu	9	16	23	30		Thu	7	14	21	28				
Fri	6	13	20	27			Fri	10	17	24			Fri	1	8	15	22	29			
Sat	7	14	21	28			Sat	11	18	25			Sat	2	9	16	23	30			
Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun	12	19	26			Sun	3	10	17	24	31			
June 2026							July 2026							August 2026							
Mon	1	8	15	22	29		Mon	6	13	20	27		Mon	3	10	17	24	31			
Tue	2	9	16	23	30		Tue	7	14	21	28		Tue	4	11	18	25				
Wed	3	10	17	24			Wed	8	15	22	29		Wed	5	12	19	26				
Thu	4	11	18	25			Thu	9	16	23	30		Thu	6	13	20	27				
Fri	5	12	19	26			Fri	10	17	24	31		Fri	7	14	21	28				
Sat	6	13	20	27			Sat	11	18	25			Sat	1	8	15	22	29			
Sun	7	14	21	28			Sun	12	19	26			Sun	2	9	16	23	30			

Key:

- School Holiday
- Bank Holiday
- INSET Day
- School open

Term dates summary:

- Autumn Term (74 days)**
2nd September 2025 - 19th December 2025 (Half term: 27th-31st October 2025)
- Spring Term (59 days)**
5th January 2026 - 2nd April 2026 (Half term: 16th - 20th February 2026)
- Summer Term (62 days)**
20th April 2026 - 22nd July 2026 (Half term: 25th-29th May 2026)

Bank and Public Holidays 2025/26

Christmas Day	25th December 2025	Easter Monday	6th April 2026
Boxing Day	26th December 2025	May Bank Holiday	4th May 2025
New Years Day	1st January 2026	Spring Bank Holiday	25th May 2026
Good Friday	3rd April 2026	Summer Bank Holiday	31st August 2026

8 - Term Dates 2025-2026