



# Courthill Newsletter

February 2026

## Headteacher's Message

**Mrs Carter, Headteacher**

As we come to the end of the half term, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone for their amazing commitment, hard work and enthusiasm for all that we do here in school. Each half term brings its own challenges and triumphs, and once again our whole community has shown what makes our school so special.

I want to give a particular mention to our wonderful children. Over the last few weeks, we have welcomed many visitors into school, and our pupils have consistently upheld our school values with pride, kindness and maturity. They have been fantastic role models and an absolute credit to you as parents. We could not be more proud of them!

It has certainly been a very busy — and very *wet* — half term, which has meant a record-breaking number of wet playtimes! Despite that, our teachers have used their creativity and resourcefulness to keep learning engaging, active and joyful. Whatever the weather, our pupils continue to thrive!

It has been an eventful few weeks, as always, with highlights that include:

- Year Reception being visited by magical fairy-tale characters.
- Year 1 walking around our local area, showing great curiosity and appreciation for the world around them.
- Year 2 educating me about Antarctica in one breath and what makes a perfect sentence in another!

The Owls class bid a fond farewell to Mrs Burt today, as she starts her maternity leave. The baby is due imminently, and we wish her and her husband all the very best. We are pleased to welcome Mrs Vanessa Green to our school; she will be the new teacher in Owls.

As we head into the half-term break, I want to thank you all once again for your continued support – it makes such a difference, and we really do appreciate it. I hope you have a happy, restful half-term holiday, and I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Monday 23rd February.

## Governors' Letter

**Astra Monahan, Co-opted Governor, on behalf of the Governing Body**

It's good to be here. In school. With the season's anticipated bugs and bogies affecting so many children this term, I hope this newsletter finds you in better health as the half term break begins.

You would by now have received Mrs Carter's letter regarding attendance. As always, children's well-being and futures are at the heart of everything that happens at Courthill – and we know that children do better in school (and in life) when they have good attendance.

Last week at our first full governing body meeting of 2026, we learnt that there is a significant concern about 'persistent absence' at Courthill (that is, attendance of 90% or below). In the coming weeks and months, there will be extra focus to help improve this. The preferred approach will be working collaboratively: teachers, parents and carers working together to support children, helping them achieve their full potential. Please do speak to your child's teacher about any challenges or difficulties you may be experiencing.

This is a timely reminder that teachers really do get to know our children very well, and have an empathetic and professional ear to offer. As well as planning and delivering aspirational and engaging lessons, teachers and support staff also make referrals to ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant), arrange pupil progress meetings, provide relevant intervention in maths, reading and/or writing, provide physical regulation breaks for SEND children, offer extra-curricular and enrichment activities, and so the list goes on.

Look after yourselves and we look forward to some sunnier days as we continue the Spring term.

## **Year Updates**

### **Year Reception**

Our *Once Upon a Time* topic has come to an end, but what a magical adventure it has been! Each week, the children stepped into a new fairy-tale world, often arriving at school to discover that a character had visited the classroom overnight leaving clues for them to investigate. We found straw, flour and porridge scattered around the room, chased escaping gingerbread men with the help of CCTV footage, discovered a missing chair with Goldilocks caught on camera, and even used our problem-solving skills to build a strong bridge for the Three Billy Goats Gruff to cross.

The children also enjoyed making and tasting different foods linked to our stories, including jam sandwiches (for Little Red Riding Hood), porridge (for Goldilocks) and gingerbread men. These exciting moments really captured the children's imagination and supported their learning across all areas, inspiring wonderful role-play, teamwork and creative thinking.

In the final week of this half term, we explored Chinese New Year traditions and even had our very own dancing Chinese dragons!

We are incredibly proud of the children's growing independence, expanding vocabulary and high-quality work. Their learning journey this term has been remarkable: from representing numbers to 10 in different ways, to writing simple sentences using correct sounds, pencil grip and letter formation.

Next term, our topic will be *Roots, Shoots and Muddy Boots*, where the children will learn about springtime and growth. We hope you have a restful half-term break, and we look forward to welcoming you back soon. Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

### **Year One**

This half term, Year One thoroughly enjoyed our *Under the Sea* topic. The children became fully immersed in the much-loved story *The Snail and the Whale* by Julia Donaldson. The children loved our sparkly starter for the topic, where we took our little snails on an adventure around the school. This wonderful introduction captured their curiosity straight away and helped them to make meaningful links to the story. Our Creation Station was transformed into the school from the story, and we were treated to the children acting out their ideas. This imaginative play helped to deepen their understanding of the story and boosted their confidence when reading aloud.

Another area of learning that the children were particularly passionate about was pollution. Through the story *Someone Swallowed Stanley*, they learned about the harmful effects that rubbish in the ocean can have on marine life. This led to thoughtful discussions and inspired the children to write posters.

In Geography, we took full advantage of our local area with our walk around Parkstone. The children identified a range of human and physical features, helping them to understand the world around them.

The children's writing has gone from strength to strength; and they are continuing to broaden the range of sounds they know to support their reading. They are also becoming more confident with number facts within 20. And there have been many other enjoyable learning experiences this half term, including expressing creativity through dance, and designing and making 'under the sea' moving pictures in DT.

We are extremely proud of the children's positive attitudes and their determination to always try their best. We wish you all a safe and relaxing half term and look forward to our next exciting topic, *Castles and Knights!*

## **Year Two**

This half term, the children absolutely loved our topic *Poles Apart*. They were fascinated to learn how countries closer to the equator tend to have warmer climates, while those further away are colder. They used this understanding to deepen their learning about Antarctica, and this week they were especially excited to discover facts about penguins!

The children also enjoyed getting creative in Art, where they designed and made their own clay tiles. They took great care shaping their designs and painting them with pride. We hope you enjoy the finished pieces they have brought home to you.

We have been blown away by the children's writing progress. With a strong focus on handwriting, spelling, and sentence structure, the children are now beginning to use these foundations to add more complex skills such as conjunctions and expanded noun phrases (using adjectives with nouns). We were delighted to welcome some external visitors into school who looked at our handwriting and writing provision – they were incredibly impressed with the progress the children are making. We are so proud of them!

In Maths, the children have been working on multiplication and division. They are using their number knowledge to solve calculations involving 2s, 5s, and 10s. We will continue practising this next half term, as this will support their mathematical journeys as they move into junior school.

We are very excited about our next topic, *Brilliant Brazil*, where the children will have try samba and explore how life in Brazil compares to life here. A particularly highlight will be our upcoming visit to Marwell Zoo. Please make sure you have given consent for this trip, and do let us know if you are able to help on the day. Wishing you all a wonderful half-term break!

## **PTA update**

### **Thea Downey, on behalf of the PTA**

It's been a quieter start to the year for the PTA, but we have already enjoyed some fantastic events and made great progress behind-the-scenes. Our Quiz Night was a huge success, bringing together parents, staff, and friends of the school for a very competitive and fun evening. Congratulations to the teachers, who claimed victory after a nail-biting tie-breaker for second and third place! We are extremely grateful to Quartz Estate Agents for kindly supporting the event. Thanks to everyone's enthusiasm and generosity, we raised an impressive £880.

This week also saw the return of our much-loved Love and Kindness Disco, which was once again filled with smiles, music, and positive energy. We are delighted with how well it was received and we are already planning to extend the event to include Reception children next year.

Alongside our events, we continue to work closely with the school to support important projects. Current discussions include helping to fund improvements to the Year Reception internal environment, the Year 1 Den and Sunshine Room, as well as items on the School Council’s wish list (including a friendship bench, buddy vests and more waffle bricks for the playground).

### **Upcoming Events**

Movie Nights: Y2 on 18th March; Y1 on 12th March; YR on 11th March.

Cakey Fridays: YR on 27th March; Y2 on 13th March.

Easter Egg Design Competition: details to follow.

### **Other Updates**

#### **Well-being message, from Mrs Churchill**

This term we took part in Children's Mental Health Week. We focused on helping the children understand how important it is to feel happy, safe and included. We talked about what it means to belong and how being part of a kind and caring school community helps everyone’s mental health. Through stories, discussions and play, the children learned that being themselves, feeling listened to and knowing they are valued helps them grow in confidence and well-being. We encourage families to continue these conversations at home by celebrating kindness, friendship and togetherness.

#### **Online Safety message, from Mrs Churchill**

As technology continues to develop, children may come across Artificial Intelligence (AI) in games, apps and online tools. AI can be helpful, supporting learning, creativity and problem-solving in age-appropriate ways. However, it is important to be aware that not everything created by AI is accurate or suitable for children, and some content may be confusing or misleading. We encourage families to supervise online activities, talk with children about what they see, and remind them that they should always ask a trusted adult if they are unsure about something online. Working together helps children stay safe while enjoying the positive benefits of technology.

### **Important dates**

Fri 13 <sup>th</sup> February	INSET DAY – school closed to pupils.
Mon 16 <sup>th</sup> – Fri 20 <sup>th</sup> February	Half Term (school closed).
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	School returns after half term.
Mon 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Y2 Brilliant Brazil – wear green or yellow into school
Tue 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Y1 Medieval Workshop
Tue 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Y1 Celebration of Learning (3.05pm)
Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> February	Y2 Celebration of Learning (3.05pm)
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> February	YR Cakey Friday
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> February	World Book Day – costumes on rail to view / choose
Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> March	Singing Assembly (Badgers & Foxes)
Thu 5 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day
Fri 6 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day – Pre-loved Book Fair
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Singing Assembly (Owls & Hedgehogs)
Wed 11 <sup>th</sup> March	YR Movie Night
Thu 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Y1 Movie Night
Fri 13 <sup>th</sup> March	Y2 Cakey Friday
Tue 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Y2 Trip to Marwell Zoo
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> March	Singing Assembly (Crocodiles & Frogs)
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> March	YR Trip to Pizza Express (Dragonflies)
Wed 18 <sup>th</sup> March	Y2 Movie Night

Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> March	YR Trip to Pizza Express (Bees)
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup> March	School closes for Easter at 3.05pm
Mon 30 <sup>th</sup> March – Fri 10 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter holidays (school closed)
Mon 13 <sup>th</sup> April	INSET DAY – school closed to pupils.

## **Community Updates**

### **Support for families**

- **Early Help & Targeted Intervention Service.** Early Help Access Point Public 01202 126 668 [EHAccessPoint@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:EHAccessPoint@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)
- **BCP Food Map:** [Food Map](#) The Access to Food map shows all the different types of community food support available in our area, and how you can access them.
- Our website lists other organisations that support families: [click here to find out more.](#)

### **Half Term activity in Libraries**

See flyers below.

# BCP Council Libraries Schools' Newsletter



## activities for children and families during Half Term.

Check opening times for each library before visiting - [bcpcouncil.gov.uk/libraries](http://bcpcouncil.gov.uk/libraries)

Bournemouth Library	Chinese New Year crafts - make a hobby horse and colouring activities	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February - Drop in
Broadstone Library	Chinese New Year horse craft and picture trail	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> February - Drop in
Broadstone Library	The Great Storytelling Challenge competition and dressing up costume swap	Drop in all week. Competition closes on Saturday 28 <sup>th</sup> February
Canford Heath Library	Chinese New Year craft	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February 2:30 -4:00 - Drop in
Canford Heath Library	Valentines cards and story	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> February 10:00 - 12:00 (Story at 11am)
Canford Heath Library	BookTrust Storytime and craft	Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February 10:00 - 12:00 (Story at 11 am)
Castlepoint Library	Valentine cards and colouring	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> February - Drop in
Castlepoint Library	Lunar New Year treasure hunt, crafts and colouring	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February - Drop in
Christchurch Library	100 years of Winnie the Pooh crafts and activities	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February. Drop in
Creekmoor Library	Chinese New Year horse craft	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February Drop in during opening hours
Ensbury Park Library	'The Weather' craft activity	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> February 10:30 -11:30
Kinson Library	Create your own parachute and button figure	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February - Drop in
Oakdale Library	Children's crafts - including Chinese New Year	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> , Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February - Drop in

Poole Library	Paper kite making	Wednesday 18 <sup>th</sup> February 10:30 - 11:30 Booking essential - limited places
Rossmore Library	Fairy tale story creator and lollipop stick puppets	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February - Drop in
Rossmore Library	Individuality Swimming - water safety talk for families	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> February 11am - Drop in
Rossmore Library	Library legends crafts and character hunt	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February 15:30 - 16:30 - Drop in
Springbourne Library	Children's crafts - puppets, masks and a collage for Chinese New Year	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February 14:00 - 16:30 - Drop in
Springbourne Library	Creative kids' crafts, and public health and community outreach	Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> February 14:00- 16:00 - Drop in
Southbourne and Pokesdown Library	Create your own clouds	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February - Drop in
Tuckton Library	Chinese New Year horse craft	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February 10:30 - 11:30 Please book with Tuckton Library
Westbourne Library	Chinese New Year horse and dragon crafts	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February - Drop in
West Howe Library	Chinese New Year - make a horse mobile Children's Mental Health Week - decorate a hand Library Legends - design a book cover	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> - Saturday 21 <sup>st</sup> February - Drop in during opening hours
Winton Library	Creative pebble painting (Winton Library Garden Volunteers)	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> February 10:30 -12:30



# LIBRARY LEGENDS

There's still plenty of time to join our Library Legends challenge.

Have a go at some quests to earn stickers, collector cards and perhaps even a medal.

It's free to join. Just ask for a booklet at any BCP library.