



Courthill Newsletter

March 2026

Headteacher's Message

Mrs Carter, Headteacher

As we draw to the close of what has been a very short but exceptionally busy spring term, I want to take a moment to reflect on the last few weeks. It's been busy for the children too! Highlights have included:

- **Reception** thoroughly enjoyed their trip to Pizza Express—although I am still a little put out that no-one made a pizza for Mrs Carter!
- **Year 1** celebrated their wonderful medieval banquet, during which the crown was proudly handed to Mrs Goddard, who served as Queen for the day!
- **Year 2** had an extremely eventful trip to Marwell, which they couldn't wait to tell me about on their return!

Honestly, this job really is an absolute pleasure when surrounded by so many daily examples of pure joy.

I hope you enjoyed reading your children's written reports. I certainly did! I am always reminded of how remarkable our children are—so young, yet so resilient, hardworking and enthusiastic. Please do take a moment to [complete the online form](#) to tell us what you think. The teachers spend many hours crafting the reports and any feedback is truly appreciated.

This is also an opportunity to update on staff at school. Firstly, a huge thank you and a very fond farewell to **Miss O'Brien**, who leaves us to begin an exciting new venture opening a nursery in Wallisdown. She has been with us for ten years, and we really will miss her. We also extend our thanks to **Miss Lane** for her dedicated work as Inclusion Lead over the past three years. She now passes the reins over to **Mrs Gilbey**, who we know will continue this important work with great care and commitment.

We have recently welcomed new members to our team: **Mrs Brown** and **Mrs Roberts** have joined us as Teaching Assistants, helping to support our children.

We know that the Summer term is always incredibly busy, for children and staff. So I wish you all a restful and joyful break – and we look forward to welcoming the children back into school on Tuesday 14th April.

Governors' Letter

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

Last week I was delighted to be able to attend the Y2 trip to Marwell Zoo. The organisation of the day was weeks in the making and the logistics of transporting, herding and shepherding nearly 120 excitable children was a lesson in exceptional crowd control.

Whilst the mystery of the Tropical House closure remained largely unquestioned by the children, I was struck by how resilient our children are – and creative! Had an animal been sick on another animal? Had all of the tropical animals gone to visit the red panda while she was with the vet? Did the crocodile have a toothache? As it turned out, an escaped capybara was the cause!

As we head towards slightly more tropical weather ourselves. huge thanks to the all the teachers who consistently plan fun experiences for the children (in and out) the classroom; wishing all a safe and happy Easter break.

Year Updates

Year Reception

We began our *Roots, Shoots and Muddy Boots* topic with great excitement linked to the story *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The children were thrilled when a special delivery of magic beans from the Giant arrived in our classroom! Linking to the story, the children eagerly planted their beans and were fascinated to watch their plants grow throughout the half term. Alongside this activity, the children explored the signs of spring. They loved visiting the woodland area to spot seasonal changes and comparing them with what they remembered from winter.

We also enjoyed reading *The Hungry Caterpillar* and, building on our *Jack and the Beanstalk* learning, we talked about characters, settings and how stories connect to real life. There was even more excitement when five new 'hairy' caterpillar class-mates joined us! The children have shown great care and responsibility looking after our caterpillars and have been captivated by watching their life cycle unfold.

Thank you to all the parents and carers who joined us for our spring-themed Fab Finish. We had a lovely time sharing stories, creating imaginative flowers and decorating our own plant pots. It was wonderful to see how confident and enthusiastic the children were as they shared their creations. Well done Reception! We hope you have a lovely Easter.

Year One

We have had another fun-filled half term! As part of our Science learning, the children explored different plants around the Magical Woodland and named other common plants in our local environment. This led to the children planting their own flowers and observing how they changed over time as they grew. It has been lovely to see the awe and wonder on the children's faces as they have cared for their seedlings and watched the roots and shoots begin to emerge.

A real highlight of this half term has been our topic, *Castles and Knights*. It started with the children being transported back to medieval times during our drama workshop with OpenBox Theatre Company. The children loved this experience so much that we surprised them with our Courthill medieval banquet as the Fab Finish. They were entertained by the juggling skills of our castle jester (Mr Clarke) and were joined by our very own Queen Goddard! The children also focused on Corfe Castle and the way Mary Bankes bravely tried to defend it.

Huge thanks for the fantastic effort that has gone into the home learning tasks this half term. We celebrated so many amazing castle creations and it was a joy to see how proud the children were of their work. We have also noticed the children's growing confidence with their phonics and reading fluency – proof that practising sounds and reading at home really does make a huge difference.

We hope you enjoy the Easter break and we look forward to welcoming the children back for our *Wild and Wonderful* topic.

Year Two

We packed an incredible amount of learning and fun into five short weeks, and the children have impressed us every step of the way.

Our *Brilliant Brazil* topic has been a real highlight. The term began with a burst of colour as the children arrived dressed in vibrant yellows and greens. They loved the balloon volleyball and learning about famous

Brazilian sports stars. The children also threw themselves into weekly samba lessons with Soundstorm, working together as a whole class band to create some fantastic rhythms.

Our trip to Marwell Zoo was another standout moment. The children were absolute stars throughout the day, showing impeccable behaviour and a fantastic attitude - even when our plans changed due to some cheeky capybaras making an unexpected escape! They took it all in their stride and thoroughly enjoyed seeing the animals.

The children also continued to work incredibly hard across the curriculum. For example, our Brazil theme continued in Geography, as the children compared Brazil and Rio de Janeiro with the UK and Dorset, developing an understanding of the similarities and differences between these places.

We are now excited to begin our next topic about '*The Great Fire of London*'. This is always a favourite with the children, and we have a special workshop planned for Monday 20th April to help bring the learning to life (more details will follow). Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We wish you all a wonderful and restful Easter break.

PTA update

Thea Downey, on behalf of the PTA

Easter has arrived, bringing some beautiful weather with it – fingers crossed it stays that way throughout the holidays. This term, the PTA has carried on with its much-loved fundraising events, including:

- Movie nights: £950.
- Year 2 Cakey Friday: £282.20.
- Year R Cakey Friday: £272.29.
- Preloved uniform sale: £38.

This year, we have been proud to support a range of projects that enhance both learning and play across the school – including **improvements to the Reception indoor environment**, a **refresh of the Year 1 Den and Sunshine Room**, and fulfilling **School Council requests** such as new **buddy vests**, additional **waffle bricks for the playground**, and a **friendship bench** to encourage inclusivity and connection among pupils.

As we reached the end of term, we held our annual Easter egg design competition. Once again, the children amazed us with their creativity – the standard was incredibly high. Choosing just one winner from each class proved impossible, so we ended up selecting two! Thank you to Tesco Express on Bournemouth Road for donating the Easter egg prizes. And a big thank you to every child who took part; your fantastic designs have brightened up the school windows wonderfully.

Looking ahead to the summer term, we already have several key dates to share:

- Open PTA meeting (including Summer Fair planning and AGM) – all welcome: Monday 27th April, 8pm (location TBC).
- Summer Fair: Friday 12th June.
- Cakey Fridays: Year 1 on Friday 8th May; Year R on Friday 3rd July.
- Year 2 Leavers Disco: Monday 20th July.

We would be delighted to see anyone interested in joining the PTA at our open meeting in April. It is a great chance to share your ideas, have a say in how funds are used, meet other members and become more involved in the school community. If you feel unsure about attending, please feel free to contact us beforehand – we are happy to answer any questions and help put you at ease. Being part of the PTA really is a rewarding experience, especially getting to see first-hand how special the school is for our children.

Other Updates

Celebrating the Impact of Our School Council

Our School Council has had a fantastic start to the Spring term, making a real difference to daily life across the school. One of their biggest achievements has been the launch of our new *Playground Buddies* initiative. Our councillors stepped confidently into their roles—helping pupils find friends to play with, encouraging fair games and making sure everyone feels included at playtimes. They have spoken to their respective classes about the qualities a Playground Buddy needs, acting as role models to their peers.

They will now pass the baton on to others, giving more children the chance to take on this important role. Their enthusiasm has already helped create a friendlier, more supportive atmosphere at break-times. A big thank you to the PTA for funding 16 brightly coloured hi-vis jackets with our school logo on—the children were so excited to wear them! We are also excited to share that a brand-new *Buddy Bench* will soon be making an appearance in the playground, ready to offer a welcoming spot for anyone looking for a friend once it has been fully weather-proofed.

The School Council has also taken on the important responsibility of being ambassadors for keeping our school environment tidy. From organising litter-free zones and creating posters to reminding classmates about recycling and keeping our toilets and lunch spaces clean, they have shown real pride in our shared spaces. Their leadership is helping everyone understand that a clean, cared-for school is something we all benefit from.

We are so proud of the positive impact our School Council is making and look forward to seeing what they achieve next.

Online Safety message, from Mrs Churchill

One way to help children to stay safe online, is to teach them the phrase *Zip It, Block It, Flag It*.

- *Zip It* encourages children to keep personal information private, such as their full name, school, address, or passwords.
- *Block It* reminds them to block anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable, sends unkind messages, or behaves inappropriately online.
- *Flag It* means telling a trusted adult straight away if something doesn't feel right, whether that is a message, a website or an online conversation.

By using this simple three-step approach, children learn to protect themselves and feel confident in knowing what to do if they encounter something worrying online. We encourage families to reinforce these steps at home so children feel supported both in and out of school.

Well-being focus

We know that supporting a child's emotional well-being can sometimes feel overwhelming. [Place2Be](#) – a respected children's mental health charity staffed by trained mental health professionals – offers a free parenting app called 'Parenting Smart'. This app provides practical, evidence-based advice for parents and carers who may have concerns about their child's well-being. It includes short, accessible modules on topics such as building children's resilience, managing anxiety, supporting friendships, handling big emotions and encouraging positive behaviour. There are also videos, tips and real-life examples to help you feel more confident in responding to your child's needs. To download the app, search for 'Place2Be Parenting support' and it will guide you from there.

Community Updates

Support for families

- **Early Help & Targeted Intervention Service.** Early Help Access Point Public 01202 126 668 EHAcessPoint@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](#).

Important dates

Mon 30 th March – Fri 10 th April	Easter holidays (school closed)
Mon 13 th April	INSET DAY – school closed to pupils.
Tue 14 th April	School returns after Easter holidays
Wed 15 th April	YR Pizza Express (Ladybirds)
Thu 16 th April	BCP offer day for 2026 (YR and Y3)
Mon 20 th April	Y2 Great Fire of London Workshop (see letter)
Wed 22 nd April	Singing Assembly (Geckos and Turtles parents invited to attend)
Wed 22 nd April	YR Pizza Express (Butterflies)
Thu 23 rd April	Sponsored Bounce (details to follow)
Wed 29 th April	Singing Assembly (Dragonflies and Ladybirds parents invited to attend)
Mon 4 th May	BANK HOLIDAY (school closed)
Wed 6 th May	Singing Assembly (Bees and Butterflies parents invited to attend)
Fri 8 th May	Y1 Cakey Friday
Fri 22 nd May	Courthill Sports Day (at Baden-Powell & St Peter's Junior School) – see letter
25 th – 29 th May	HALF TERM (school closed)
Mon 1 st June	School returns after half term