



Newsletter

3rd July 2026

THIS week in school...

What a fantastic Sports Day we had yesterday! The weather was kind to us, the children showed wonderful enthusiasm and sportsmanship, and it was a joy to see everyone giving their best in each event.

It was wonderful to see so many families joining us to celebrate together. Thank you to everyone who came along and helped create such a warm, supportive atmosphere.

A huge thank you to our staff, volunteers, and families for making the day such a success.

Also, thank you to the PTA who provided ice pops for all the children. If you are at the Carnival this weekend please visit the PTA stalls and give them your support.

Most importantly, well done to all of our amazing children—you made us incredibly proud!

Attendance

This week's attendance is

Whole School: 95.6 %

Robins: 96.1 %

Skylarks: 97.1 %

Owls: 96.8 %

Starlings: 94.8 %

Kites: 93.3 %

Weekly Attendance Prize Draw



This week the children awarded are:

**Ava &
Elijah**



Upcoming Events

Monday & Tuesday 6th - 7th

CCBC Yr 6 Transition Day

New pupils induction sessions

Wednesday 8th

Owls trip to Shrewsbury Museum

Thursday 9th

Skylarks trip to Park Hall Farm

Friday 10th

Bog-eyed Jog

Friday 17th

Yr6 Leavers Performance

Last day of Summer Term

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday & Wednesday 1st-2nd

PD days

Thursday 3rd

Start of Autumn Term

Term Dates 2026 / 27

Summer

Starts 13.04.26

Half Term 25.05.26-29.05.26

Ends 17.07.26

Autumn

Starts 03.09.26

Half Term 26.10.26-30.10.26

Ends 18.12.26

Spring

Starts 06.01.27

Half Term 15.02.27-19.02.27

Ends 25.03.27



Dont forget its the

Bog Eyed Jog

on Friday 10th July.

**All monies raised will go
towards school trips.**

2026 The Year of Reading



Reflecting on Reading Growth

Children grow as readers in different ways.

At home: Talk about how reading has changed since the start of the year.

Recommended read: Song of the River
— meaningful themes.

Parent Voice Survey: July 2026

We'd love to hear your views! Your feedback helps us understand what's working well and where we can continue to improve for all of our children:

<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/9ADQxZw3tR>



We believe that working in partnership with parents and carers is one of the most important ways we can help every child thrive. Your feedback helps us celebrate what we are doing well, understand your family's experiences and identify where we can continue to improve.

Please answer each question based on your child's experience at school. All responses will be treated confidentially and will be used to help inform our ongoing school improvement and future planning. We really value your opinions and appreciate your support in helping us provide the very best education and care for every child.

Mrs Manning



Free School Meals: Important Changes from September 2026

From September 2026, eligibility is changing, moving to two new distinct tiers.
Existing transitional protections will end, requiring all families to have their eligibility re-checked.

UNDERSTANDING THE TWO NEW CATEGORIES

Targeted FSM: Full Support Package



For households earning £7,400 or less on Universal Credit or other qualifying benefits.

Expanded FSM: Meal-Only Support



A new category for children in Universal Credit households who don't qualify for Targeted FSM.

Targeted FSM

Expanded FSM



Eligibility

Earnings £7,400 or specific benefits

All other Universal Credit households



Free School Meals



HAF & Extra Funding

- ✓ school transport assistance
- ✓ extra Pupil Premium school funding



Not Included

IMPORTANT DATES AND ACTIONS

24 June 2026:
Applications Open



Summer 2026:
Mandatory Re-checks



31 August 2026:
Protections End



24 June 2026:
Applications Open

Apply via the Shropshire online portal or call 0345 678 9008 for assistance.

Summer 2026:
Mandatory Re-checks

Eligibility will be reviewed annually; schools will notify families of 'not eligible' results by letter.

31 August 2026:
Protections End

Current 'Transitional Protections' expire; all families must meet new criteria to continue receiving meals.

We would like to inform you about some upcoming changes to Free School Meals and encourage all eligible families to apply.

While Free School Meals provide eligible pupils with a nutritious meal each school day, applying also brings significant additional funding to our school through the Pupil Premium. This funding is vital as it helps us provide extra resources, targeted support, enrichment opportunities, and interventions that benefit our pupils and enhance their educational experience.

Even if your child already receives universal free school meals (Reception to Year 2), or you are unsure whether you qualify, we strongly recommend that you check your eligibility and apply if you are entitled. Every successful application helps secure valuable funding that directly supports learning and wellbeing across our school.

The application process is quick and confidential. Please find attached the information which has been provided by Shropshire Council.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us provide the very best opportunities for all of our pupils.

Free School Meals are changing in September 2026

From September 2026 the eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) is changing, which means that more families will become eligible.

What's new?

Credit will be able to get a free school meal.

whose household receives Universal

All children registered with state-funded schools

Targeted

FSM or **Expanded FSM**:

Targeted FSM covers categories of benefits-based free school meals, known as:

- which continues to be based on the existing threshold, covering children who are in households in receipt of Universal Credit with annual household earnings of £7,400 or less
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

Households may also be entitled to a meal if they:

- are in receipt of Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- receive the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- meet criteria set out in separate guidance for families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) [families with no recourse to public funds](#).

Children eligible under Targeted FSM will be eligible for the [Holiday Activities and Food \(HAF\) programme](#), possible assistance with Home to School Transport (HTST) and extra funding for their school such as pupil premium.

Expanded FSM

- a new category covering meals only, for children who do not qualify for Targeted FSM, but who are in households receiving Universal Credit.

Transitional Protections are ending

Since April 2018, children who qualified for benefits-based free school meals kept them even if their household circumstances changed.

- This protection will end on 31 August 2026.
- From September 2026, all households must meet the eligibility criteria to continue receiving benefits-based free school meals.

Annual eligibility re-checks

Eligibility for free meals will be kept under regular review through annual re-checks, ahead of the start of each academic year. All children currently in receipt of benefits-based free school meals need to be re-checked before September.

We will re-check eligibility using the information that was provided to us at the time an application was made for a child. The re-check process will be done during the summer term and where the re-check from the government checking system provides a 'not eligible' result, families will be notified by a letter through their school before the end of the summer term.



Schools will pass this letter onto who they hold as the main contact for the pupil. The letter will include information on what to do next and if a re-application is needed.

New Applications

Applications under the new criteria can start from 24 June 2026. Children that are approved for Targeted FSM will be eligible from the date the application is processed and children approved for Expanded FSM will be eligible from 1 September 2026.

Free School Meals applications can be made using the Shropshire online portal. Please scan the code below, or use the following link [Apply for free school meals | Shropshire Council](#).



If you have previously applied online for a school admission place, 24 funding or FSM, please use the same login details. If you have an email address, the online application is the quickest and easiest way to apply. The Council's [Shropshire Local Team](#) are available to help with access to the online application. Alternatively, you can call our Customer Services on [03456789008](tel:03456789008) who will be able to take the details for an application over the phone. If these options aren't suitable, please contact your child's school who will be able to assist you.

For current Year 11 pupils who are leaving school and moving to a post-16 college in September, you will need to apply directly to the college for free meals.

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)

Children in reception, year 1 and year 2 will continue to be entitled to free meals, regardless of the earnings or benefit status of their households, under the UIFSM programme. Families are still encouraged to apply for benefits-based free school meals because if you are eligible for Targeted FSM, you could attract additional funding for your child's school and you will also be able to access the other support linked to Targeted FSM, such as the HAF programme.

Applications under No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

If you would like to submit an application under NRPF criteria, please email FSM@shropshire.gov.uk for more information. The online application form cannot be used.

We hope this update helps to clarify the upcoming changes. Please visit our webpage for further information [Free school meals | Shropshire Council](#). If you have any queries, please email FSM@shropshire.gov.uk, or speak to your child's school.

Issued: June 2026



www.shropshire.gov.uk
General Enquiries: 0345 678 9000

Solihull Approach

Stronger
connections
happier
families

Understanding your child's behaviour

Supporting parent/child
relationships



**10 WEEK
COURSE**

Starting on

24.9.26

1 – 3pm

Gain understanding,
build confidence and
develop positive
relationships with
your child. 



This course explores
issues such as:



Feelings



Parenting styles



Communication



Sleep patterns



Behavioural difficulties



Julie Owen

will be facilitating the course.

Speak to her for details
or contact her directly.



01588 638522



j.owen@bishopscastle.dhmat.org.uk



Investing time
in understanding
today for a
brighter tomorrow. 

Solihull Approach – building better relationships, supporting brighter futures 



FREE Summer Reading with First News

At Bishop's Castle Primary School, we know how important it is to keep children reading, thinking and engaged over the summer holidays. That's why we're excited to offer all our students **free access to First News** – the UK's award-winning newspaper for young people aged 7–14.

The content is written with KS2 and KS3 in mind, but we're confident that there's something for everyone, regardless of their age or reading level.

First News helps children:

- Build strong reading habits
- Stay informed in an age-appropriate, safe environment
- Develop critical thinking and media literacy skills
- Engage in meaningful conversations at home

What's included in your free summer subscription?

Unlimited access to the First News app from Thursday 9 July until Friday 4 September, which includes:

-  The weekly newspaper and an archive of past issues
-  Weekly news quiz to test knowledge in a fun way
-  Daily news stories to read, listen or watch
-  Polls and interactive content
-  Puzzles and games
-  Discussion points for families

It's fun, educational and completely free – all summer long.

Click here to get started

<https://subscribe.firstnews.co.uk/summer-reading-2026/232668841860/>



Are you a parent carer of a child with additional developmental needs?

This might mean your child has a learning disability, developmental delay or has developmental delays but does not yet have a diagnosis.

- Do you live in England?
- Is your child aged between 2–11 years?

You might like to take part in the Digital Family Support study – DAISY

We are exploring whether a digital parent support program called Stepping Stones Online can help improve behaviour and emotional difficulties in children with a learning disability or developmental delay and support the wellbeing of parent carers.

Stepping Stones Online is an online program for parent carers of a child with a learning disability. It covers:

- Learning strategies to make everyday life easier
- Supporting communication and everyday skills for children
- Positive ways to support behaviours that challenge
- Building your confidence in parenting

Parent carers can receive up to £90 worth of vouchers for completing questionnaires.

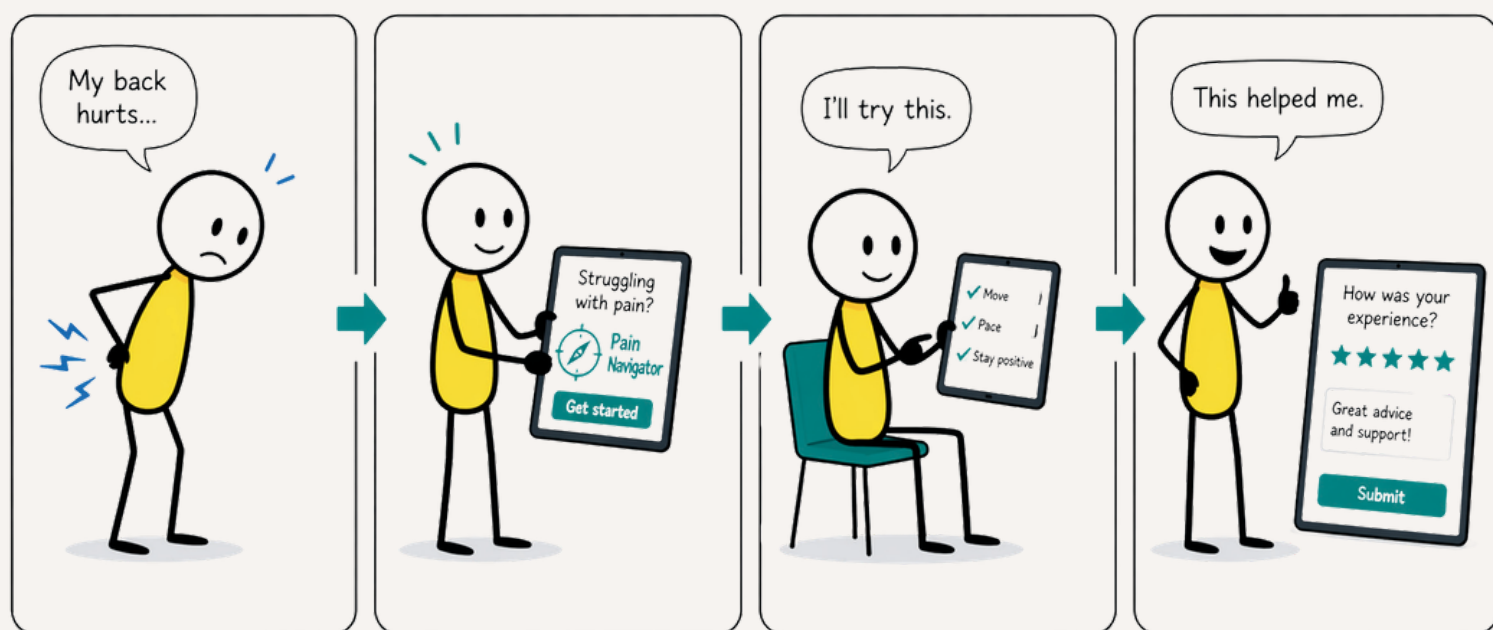
If you would like to find out more about how you can take part, please go to the project webpage:

<https://nativveresearch.com/participate/daisy> or scan the QR code. Or you can call Dr Emma Scripps on 07483123993 or Rován Bahnassy on 07483656342, or email us at daisy-online@contacts.bham.ac.uk

SCAN ME



For young people with aches and pains in their muscles and joints



Are you age 8–18 with aches or pains in your muscles and joints?

Do you have children who have aches or pains in their muscles and joints?

Keele University have worked with children and young people to develop resources to help you or your children manage with muscle and joint pain and get better use out of healthcare.

Pain Navigator aims to take some of the mystery away from pains like foot, ankle or knee pain or back ache, and can help you plan visits to the doctor. We want you feel a bit more in control.

These resources are linked to a research study. You may be asked to help the researchers, but that is completely voluntary and you can use the resources however you choose.



Web: painnavigator.co.uk

Email: comms.painnavigator@keele.ac.uk

Funded by

NIHR

National Institute for
Health and Care Research

THE
READING
AGENCY

UNIVERSAL
UNIVERSAL MUSIC GROUP
UNITED KINGDOM

READ to the BEAT

Summer Reading
Challenge 2026

Join FREE at your
local library!



GO
ALL
IN.

National
Year of
Reading
2026

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

Delivered in partnership with libraries
summerreadingchallenge.org.uk

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Online Safety Newsletter

July 2026

Social media to be banned for under-16s

The government has announced that social media platforms will be blocked from offering services to under-16s from next Spring. The ban will include platforms like Snapchat, TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and X.

Furthermore, there will also be blocks on live streaming and communication with strangers (these restrictions will also apply to 16 and 17-year-olds) and the government will also be looking at overnight curfews and breaks in infinite scrolling.

You can read the Government's press release here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/social-media-to-be-banned-for-under-16s-in-landmark-government-move-to-give-kids-their-childhood-back>

In addition, you can find some FAQs here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fact-sheet-new-rules-to-protect-children-online/fact-sheet-new-rules-to-protect-children-online>

Would you like to read this newsletter in a different language? You can use the translate tool on our web version: <https://www.knowsleycitycs.org.uk/july-2026-primary/>

WhatsApp

We frequently receive reports of children using WhatsApp inappropriately, such as sharing images to embarrass others, sending hurtful messages, spreading rumours, or excluding people from group chats to make them feel left out. It is important to think about whether WhatsApp is the right platform for your child. For example, you should consider if your child has the critical thinking skills to recognise bullying and can they manage peer pressure and refrain from joining in on hurtful behaviour?

Users should be at least 13 years old to use WhatsApp. WhatsApp have announced that they are rolling out the option of Parent-Managed accounts for those under the age of 13. The settings will include allowing you to choose who can contact your child and ensuring only you can add them to groups. Find out more here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/894871699629864>

What should I be aware of if my child is using WhatsApp?

Group chats: Everyone within a group, even if they are not one of your child's contacts, can see all messages within that group.

Inappropriate content: Users can be exposed to content that is not suitable for their age.

Location sharing: Talk to your child about the potential danger of sharing their location.

Chat lock/secret code: Users can lock chats as well as apply a secret code setting, so a chat does not appear in the main chat.

Screen time due to addictive nature

AI: WhatsApp includes Meta AI including Incognito Chat with Meta AI so nobody (including Meta) can read your conversations.

What can I do?

- ☐ Check privacy settings e.g. who can add them to groups.
- ☐ Ensure your child understands that they can leave a chat at any time. Find out more here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/424124173736394>
- ☐ Show your child how to block and report other users. Find out how here: <https://faq.whatsapp.com/1142481766359885/>
- ☐ Set up appropriate parental controls.
- ☐ Talk about who they are chatting with, encourage them to think carefully about the messages they send and how they might be received.
- ☐ Chat to your child about the groups that they belong to.

Further information

- ☐ <https://parentzone.org.uk/article/whatsapp>
- ☐ <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/social-media/chat-apps/>

Livestreaming

What is livestreaming?

Livestreaming is when an individual broadcasts video live over the internet. People can watch livestreams from any device that is connected to the internet.

What are the risks?

There are risks associated with watching livestreams that you should be aware of. The main risk being that your child may see or hear something inappropriate as your child may come across themes or content that is not suitable for them. It is difficult to moderate live content as it is happening in real time.



How can I help my child?

- ☐ All online platforms have an age rating, ensure your child only accesses platforms that are appropriate to their age. For example, TikTok has an age rating of 13.
- ☐ For any platforms that your child uses, ensure appropriate parental controls and privacy settings are applied.
- ☐ Take an interest in what your child is doing online and on a regular basis, ask your child to show you what they are accessing.
- ☐ Ensure your child knows how to use any reporting/blocking tools on the app that they are using and as always please ensure that your child knows to talk to a trusted adult if they see anything that concerns them online.

Further information

- ☐ <https://www.childnet.com/help-and-advice/livestreaming-parents/>
- ☐ <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/what-is-live-streaming/>

Netflix Playground

Netflix Playground hosts a number of games aimed at kids aged 8 and younger. The games include Sesame Street and Peppa Pig.

It is available as an app to all Netflix subscribers and has no additional in-app purchases and no adverts. Find out more here:

<https://www.netflix.com/tudum/articles/playground-kids-game-hub-news>

Moving to secondary school

Is your child moving to Secondary school this year? If so, Internet Matters have published a variety of resources on their website to support this transition: <https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/moving-to-secondary-school-online-safety-guide/>

Screentime balance over the summer holidays

With Summer holidays approaching, we know children may be spending more time alone. Vodafone and SWGfL have published some advice on how to navigate common digital risks and tips on how to balance screen time. We hope you have a lovely, safe summer!

<https://www.vodafone.co.uk/newscentre/features/digital-awareness-uk-30-digital-risks-young-people/>
<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/balancing-screen-time-over-the-holidays-advice-for-parents-and-carers>

Instagram: New supervision tool

You must be over 13 years of age to set up an account. Instagram is used to post photos and videos as well as send direct messages, make voice/video calls, and send disappearing messages.

Instagram have introduced a new supervision tool allowing parents/carers to view the general topics their child is engaging in. Find out more here: <https://about.fb.com/news/2026/05/new-supervision-tools-parents-insights-teens-algorithm/>

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Do you have any concerns about your child's well-being?

Would you like support with your child's attendance?

If you, your child or family would benefit from extra support with your well-being, or if you are worried about a difficult situation in your family you can contact us for support.

Julie Owen – Pastoral Lead

J.Owen@bishopscastle.dhmat.org.uk

Or via

admin@bishopscastle.dhmat.org.uk

You might also benefit from Early Help.

What is Early Help?

Families might access Early Help for a variety of reasons, including concerns about a child's behaviour, difficulties at school, family relationship challenges, mental health worries, or changes in family circumstances such as bereavement or separation.

Early Help is not just for when things go wrong - it's there to provide guidance and support before small issues become bigger problems. Seeking Early Help is a positive step, showing a family's commitment to working together with professionals to find practical solutions and support their child's wellbeing and development.

The type of things Early Help can support with include:

- Concerns about child's health, development or behaviour
- How a child is doing at school
- Housing or financial concerns
- Children who may be affected by domestic abuse, drugs, alcohol, ill health or crime





EARLY HELP DROP IN

Bishops Castle Food Bank

Apr Tuesday 7th 09:30 am - 10:30 am
May Tuesday 5th 9:30 am - 10:30 am
June Tuesday 2nd 9:30 am - 10:30 am
July Tuesday 7th 09:30 pm - 10:30 am
August Tuesday 4th 09:30 - 10:30 am

Church Lane, Bishops Castle, SY9 5AF
All families within the local area welcome

Free information, support
& advice around:

Family Life
Housing & Finance
Special Education Needs and/or
Disabilities (SEND)
Parenting Support
Training & Employment
Domestic Abuse Support
And much more...

Refreshments will be provided
by the food bank



shropshire.gov.uk/early-help



Shropshire
Council