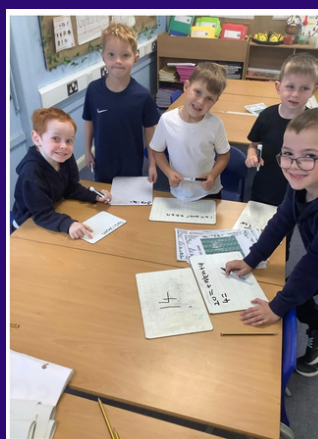




Newsletter

18th September 2026

THIS week in school...



SKYLARKS CLASS

We have had a wonderful week getting hands-on with maths. We have been taking part in practical activities and fun classroom games, giving the children the opportunity to develop their mathematical skills in an engaging way. It has been fantastic to see such enthusiasm and teamwork throughout the week, and the activities have been both successful and enjoyed by all.

Miss Brown



Attendance

This week's attendance is

Whole School: 93.1 %

Robins: 91.4 %

Skylarks: 93.9 %

Owls: 93.5 %

Starlings: 96.3 %

Kites: 89.4 %

Weekly Attendance Prize Draw



This week the children awarded are:

Layla &

Oscar



Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER

Monday 21st

Recommended Reads launch 10:00 – 10:45am

Tuesday 22nd

Yr 1 & 2 Cross Country at Carding Mill Valley

Wednesday 23rd

Influenza Vaccination – Whole school

Thursday 24th

The Solihull Approach (Week 1) 1-3pm

Tuesday 29th

Yr 3 & 4 Cross Country at Carding Mill Valley

OCTOBER

Thursday 1st

The Solihull Approach (Week 2) 1-3pm

Wednesday 7th

Yr 5 & 6 Cross Country at Carding Mill Valley

Thursday 8th

The Solihull Approach (Week 3) 1-3pm

Tuesday 13th

School Photographs

Thursday 15th

The Solihull Approach (Week 4) 1-3pm

Friday 16th

Dr Bike

Term Dates 2026 / 27

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

Summer

Starts 12.04.27

Half Term 31.05.27–04.06.27

Ends 20.07.27

2026 The Year of Reading



Winter Is Reading Season

Cooler weather invites cosy reading opportunities.

At home: Create a warm, comfortable reading space.

Recommended read: Skellig – atmospheric and reflective.



**BISHOP'S CASTLE
PRIMARY SCHOOL** ★

You're invited to our

READING CAFÉ



COME FOR A READ, STAY FOR A CHAT

Join us for our Reading Café – a relaxed morning for parents and carers to share a love of reading, enjoy a drink and discover brilliant books for every year group.



DATE:
Monday
21st September



TIME:
10:00am –
10:45am



We'll be launching this year's
50 RECOMMENDED READS
for each year group!



*All parents and carers welcome –
we can't wait to see you there!*



Dear Parents and Carers

Celebrating and Supporting Attendance

At Bishop's Castle Primary School, we value regular attendance and want every child to benefit fully from the learning, friendships and wider opportunities that school provides.

Being in school every day helps children to develop confidence, build secure relationships and establish positive routines. It also ensures that they do not miss important steps in their learning. Even occasional days of absence can add up over time and make it more difficult for children to keep up with their classmates.

We understand that children will sometimes be too unwell to attend and that some absences are unavoidable. Our approach is therefore to work positively and supportively with families, while celebrating good attendance and addressing any concerns as early as possible.

Celebrating attendance

We want children to understand that attending school regularly is important and something of which they can be proud. We will celebrate attendance in the following ways:

- Each week, one KS1 pupil and one KS2 pupil who have achieved 100% attendance that week will be selected to receive a certificate during our celebration assembly. The pupils' first names will be shared in the school newsletter.
- Each class's weekly attendance percentage will be included in the newsletter and celebrated during Friday's assembly.
- The class with the highest attendance each fortnight will receive a class reward. Children will vote for their preferred reward from a selection provided by their teacher.
- Children who achieve 100% attendance for each half term will receive a sticker and small certificate.
- Children who achieve 100% attendance across the full academic year will receive a certificate.

Supporting attendance

We recognise that difficulties with attendance can arise for many different reasons. Please speak to your child's class teacher or Julie Owen (Pastoral Lead) if there is anything we can do to help. Early conversations allow us to work together and put appropriate support in place.

The Department for Education and the government continue to place a strong national focus on improving school attendance and the procedures in place at school.

To support attendance:

- As a school we monitor attendance carefully so that we can offer support and address any difficulties before they become more significant.
- Class teachers will usually be the first point of contact if there are emerging concerns about a child's attendance.
- Parents and carers will receive an attendance letter to highlight their child's attendance falls below 96%. A letter may be sent sooner if we believe earlier contact would be helpful.
- An attendance letter may include an invitation to attend a meeting at school. This gives us an opportunity to discuss the situation, listen to any concerns and agree appropriate support.
- Julie Owen, our Pastoral Lead, is available to offer support and have a confidential conversation with parents and carers about their child's attendance or any difficulties affecting their ability to attend school.

Reporting Procedures for parents and carers:

- When reporting an absence, please tell the school office the specific reason why your child is unable to attend.
- If your child is feeling slightly under the weather but improves during the morning, they are welcome to come into school later in the day or at lunchtime. However, children who are genuinely unwell or have an infectious illness should remain at home in accordance with the relevant health guidance.
- Where possible, for routine appointments please try to arrange them outside of school hours. Where an appointment is during the school day, please provide an appointment/medical letter, text confirmation or other appropriate confirmation.
- If your child arrives late, you will be asked to provide a reason through the school's late-arrival procedure (signing in your child at reception via the Sign-In App).

Thank you for working in partnership with us to support your child's education, wellbeing and attendance.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Manning
Executive Headteacher
Bishop's Castle Primary School & St George's CE Academy

Should I keep my child off school?

Yes

Until...

Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek

 **SCAN ME**

Advice and guidance

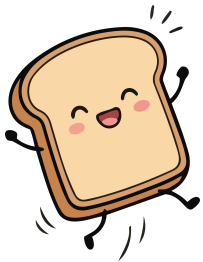
To find out more, search for health protection in schools or scan the QR code or visit <https://qrco.de/minfec>.

Home School Agreement

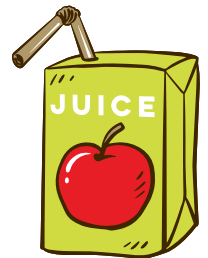
A quick reminder to any parents and carers who haven't yet completed the Home School Agreement for their child/children.

We would be grateful if you could please complete this as soon as possible using the link in today's email.

Thank you to everyone who has already completed the form.



Breakfast Club



We are now inviting families to join our waiting list. If you would like your child to attend our Free Breakfast Club, which opens from 8.15am each morning, please let us know by emailing admin@bishopscastle.dhmat.org.uk

Breakfast Club is a great way for children to start the day, giving them time to enjoy breakfast and settle into school before the school day begins.





OUR TEAM WILL:

- ✓ CHECK YOUR BIKE
- ✓ MAKE MINI FIXES
- ✓ GIVE SAFETY TIPS



CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND THE COMMUNITY

are all welcome to bring their bikes to be checked and serviced.

This on-site maintenance session helps ensure pupils' bikes are safe, roadworthy and Bikeability-ready ahead of cycle training.



WHAT HAPPENS ON THE DAY?

- Learn Cycling will set up at school with an EazyUp shelter and work stand.
- Pupils, parents and staff can drop bikes off before school and collect them at the end of the day.
- Minor repairs and safety adjustments are carried out on site, alongside practical cycling advice.
- Bikes are checked for:
Tyres • Brakes • Steering • Gears



WHY IT'S GREAT

- Removes barriers to cycling and Bikeability
- Builds confidence and independence
- Promotes healthy, active travel
- Runs just before Bikeability training



DR BIKE IS COMING TO YOUR SCHOOL!



St George's School

FRIDAY

25th SEPTEMBER



**Bishop's Castle
Primary School**

FRIDAY

16th OCTOBER



This event has been organised by the school using the Active Travel Grant the school applied for.

More families eligible for Free School Meals



From September 2026

there will be significant changes to the Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility in England.



All children in households on Universal Credit will be **eligible** regardless of income.



Apply now
by visiting



<https://next.shropshire.gov.uk/free-school-meals/apply-for-free-school-meals/>



Shropshire
Council

Online Safety Newsletter

Sept 2026

Childline under 12s site

Childline have a separate area on their website for under 12s. The pages are written for primary school children. The area includes a section full of games and a Buddy Zone with tips, such as how to speak to a trusted adult and information on where to get extra support from.

You can access this area here:
<https://www.childline.org.uk/get-support/u12-landing/>

How to manage parental controls for different ages?

Internet Matters asked online experts, Karl Hopwood and Richard Waite to share their advice on how to manage parental controls for different ages. Find out more here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/question/managing-parental-controls-for-different-ages/>

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

New guidance issued due to concern of AI-manipulated images

Photos of children that seem completely innocent can be manipulated using artificial intelligence (AI) to create sexualised or abusive images. There is a growing threat that children's images shared online are being manipulated by criminals into AI generated sexual abuse material. As concerns grow, the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) and the National Crime Agency (NCA) have issued new guidance to help you understand the risks around AI image manipulation and advice on how to speak to your child about AI and image consent.



The IWF states that child sexual abuse images or videos created or altered using AI may include:

Everyday images of a child or young person that are manipulated into child sexual abuse imagery, including images taken from social media, websites or messaging apps, that are manipulated into sexualised or abusive imagery. These are sometimes known as 'deepfakes'.

Images or videos that look like a real child but are completely artificial.

AI technology that digitally removes clothing from existing images to create nude or semi-nude images, sometimes known as 'nudifying'.

[source: IWF <https://www.iwf.org.uk/resources/ai-child-abuse-imagery-parent-guide/> accessed 25.08.26]

What can I do?

The guidance provides practical advice about sharing photographs of your child online. Some useful things to consider are:

Think before you share photographs online. The IWF suggest creating a 'close friends' group to share images.

Check and adjust your privacy settings on all social media accounts.

Understand the steps to take if you or your child has any concerns and the organisations you can contact.

Where can I find the new guidance?

The full guidance can be accessed at the link below. It also includes a video highlighting how everyday photos can be misused using AI tools.

<https://www.iwf.org.uk/resources/ai-child-abuse-imagery-parent-guide/>

You can find the full press release/announcement here:

<https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/new-guidance-for-parents-and-carers-as-ai-manipulated-images-of-children-become-a-growing-concern>

YouTube

YouTube is one of the most popular platforms, available across many different devices - phones, tablets and Smart TVs etc. **YouTube is intended for users over the age of 13**, however, younger children can still access YouTube with consent from a parent/guardian. There are different options available to access YouTube, depending on your child's age:



1. YouTube Kids – a separate app that includes a smaller selection of videos based on the age category you select: Preschool (ages 4 and under), Younger (ages 5–8) or Older (ages 9–12).

2. Supervised accounts – a parent-managed version of YouTube that allows you to control the content your child can access. You can select one of the following options:

Explore—Generally for viewers aged 9+.

Explore more—Generally for viewers aged 13+.

Most of YouTube—This setting includes almost everything except for videos marked as 18+.

Find out more: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/10315420>

What do I need to be aware of?

Whilst YouTube can be educational and fun, it is important to be aware of the potential risks, such as:

Inappropriate content

Excessive screen time—particularly due to the autoplay feature.

Unwanted contact/cyberbullying—particularly via comments if your child is sharing videos.

Algorithms—algorithms influence what we see to keep us engaged. This can lead to a user being exposed to large amounts of content about one topic/theme, which may not be helpful if it is negative.

Adverts that may not be aimed at or suitable for your child's age.

What can I do?

- ☐ Set up appropriate parental controls.
- ☐ Show your child the reporting and blocking tools available.
- ☐ Watch YouTube together or supervise use.

Further information

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/entertainment-search-engines/youtube-app/>

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date released 01.09.26. The inclusion of any links does not imply any affiliation with or endorsement of the linked websites, documents, or videos, nor are we claiming any ownership or copyright in the content of the linked materials.

A guide for parents and carers on managing children's digital lives

The Children's Commissioner has published this guide to help you support your child and make starting conversations about their online world easier. It's a useful read:

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2025/12/cc-what-i-wish-parent-guide.pdf>

Nex Playground

Nex Playground is a new video game console, which features games to get kids active. The games have no ads, no violence and no chat features, however it does rely on purchasing either a yearly or quarterly game subscription. You can find out more here:

<https://www.nexplayground.com/en-gb>

Online Safety Quiz

The NSPCC have created this quiz to test your child's knowledge on how to stay safe online. It's a great way to start a conversation with your child about their online life. You can access the quiz here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/quiz/>

WhatsApp Usernames

WhatsApp is introducing the use of usernames, so people no longer have to share their phone number. Wayne Denner provides an overview of the new features, what you need to consider and steps you can take here: <https://www.waynedenner.com/whatsapp-usernames-what-parents-need-to-know/>



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

