

7th September 2026

Welcome back to the new academic year 2026-2027!

Firstly, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all the new children and families who have joined our school. Our transition sessions during the summer term went really well, so hopefully everyone will settle into their new classes, routines and surroundings quickly. This week will also allow each class to spend some time getting to know each other better and understanding and practising the routines of their new classrooms.

If you are new to our school, please don't hesitate to ask if there is anything you are unsure about. Whether it is a question about school routines, upcoming events or simply navigating your way around those first few weeks, we are always happy to help. There is a lot to take in when starting or joining a new school, and we want to make sure that all our new children and families feel comfortable, supported and part of our school community as quickly as possible.

I am pleased to share the fantastic news that Mrs Davey welcomed a beautiful baby girl into the world during the summer holidays. We wish her and her family every happiness as they enjoy this special time.

Mrs Hewett has been busy over the holidays preparing to be part of the Year 3/4 teaching team. I know that the children were thrilled to hear she had been appointed as their class teacher and enjoyed their transition session with her before the holidays. The class have enjoyed a great first day together.

I would like to say a huge thank you to our current Friends of School group who were able to support us by purchasing 15 new Chromebooks for the children to use during lesson times. This means that each class has some devices available in their own room to allow pupils to access information, complete reading quizzes and type up their work, as well as there being a full class set to be used during whole class teaching sessions such as computing, music technology, lesson research or accessing materials prepared by teachers for their lessons. This is a great asset for our school and we are so grateful to all of the fundraising work involved in providing these for the children.

As you are aware, the funding changes to Sports Premium has meant we have needed to do things a bit differently for the time being. We are awaiting further information about how the new funding for sports hubs will look for us going forward.

I am thrilled to say that we have been awarded the Platinum Games Mark for 2025-2026! This is no mean feat and is due to five years of the highest-level sports provision; meeting the needs of all pupils, encouraging and developing sporting confidence and creating opportunities for all pupils. This work has been due to the skill, hard work and dedication of Miss Grabham who has used previous sports funding to provide such a fantastic range of physical activity, competition and leadership opportunities for all children across all ages and stages in our school. We will continue to build on this great achievement and will look at all opportunities to ensure that such a fantastic curriculum continues to be part of our sports offer.

Thank you for your understanding as we switch over to using Arbor as our parent communication and payment collection service. We have used Arbor as our management system in school for the last year and now we have transferred other services to them as well. We hope that it runs smoothly from a parent point of view but please raise any questions you have about it with us and we shall aim to resolve any problems as quickly as possible.

Our school clubs will start from Monday 14th September (except for Martial Arts which starts on Wednesday 9th September). Please use the Arbor club items to sign up. The club forms have already been sent out so please make sure you sign up as soon as possible.

These will be:

Monday – Singing Club Years 1-6 (Mrs Butler)

Wednesday – Martial Arts Years 2-6 (Darch Martial Arts)

Thursday – Art Club Years 2-6 (Mrs Morgan)

Thursday – Football Skills Club Years 2-6 (Mr Evans)

Our Breakfast and After School Childcare Clubs will start again on Monday 7th September. Breakfast Club starts at 8am (every day) and After School Club runs until 5.30pm (Monday to Thursday). You can sign your child(ren) in for either one hour or two hours and they will still be able to attend an after-school club until 4.30pm each day should they wish to. During after school childcare club, the children will have a drink and snack before having some playtime, with a variety of activities on offer. Please see the office for further information if you are interested in requesting a place or booking through Arbor.

Each half term, you will receive an email with information about the learning which will take place in your child's class this half term. This is the class Curriculum Map and it will also be available on our school website. We will be inviting parents into school next week for our annual 'Meet the Teacher' sessions. Mrs Gilfillan and Mrs Whitehead will be holding their session on Monday 14th September and Mr Evans and Mrs Hewett on Tuesday 15th September. All of the sessions will be held at 3.45pm and again at 5pm. These give you a great opportunity to learn more about the class routines, plans for the year ahead and anything specific to the year group your child is in. Even if you have been a part of the school for several years, please come along to hear about things which will be happening during the year for your child's class. During the last year we have been using new systems such as Magma maths, Join It handwriting and there will be class specific items such as phonics teaching and Year 1 assessments, Year 2 SATs, Year 4 Timetables check and Year 6 SATs which will be part of the session so please come along if you can.

This term we will be holding our Harvest Festival on Wednesday 7th October at 2pm in school. All friends and family members are welcome to join us and this will be followed by refreshments for adults attending the service. Please can any donations of dried food, tinned food and toiletries be sent into school from Monday 5th October. Please give items to class teachers so that they can be added to our harvest table prior to the service. Donations will be given to the Axminster Food Bank, where we know they are always so gratefully received.

Friends of School meetings are an opportunity to meet other parents who want to share ideas about planning fun things for the children and to raise money for the school. We are very grateful for all of their support in offering the children extra opportunities and equipment. Please try and help out if you can. The first meeting will be the AGM, which will be held during this half term with the date and time to be confirmed.

On Friday 9th October, we will be supporting the charity Young Minds as it is the national day for World Mental Health. We will be holding a range of activities for our 'Hello Yellow' day and we will all be invited to wear non-uniform with yellow items, if we can. We will also have a cake sale at 3.30pm (in the hall, after worship) on that day. Yellow themed cakes if possible but other flavours/varieties will also be well received!

We have individual and family group photos booked for Tuesday 6th October. At 8.30am, we invite siblings (not in school or pre-school that day) to come in for family group photos. All children in school and pre-school on that day will have an individual photo and a sibling group photo also taken.

Children in Need is on Friday 13th November this year and we are keen to support this great cause once again. Our School Council representatives and Play Leaders will update everyone in due course as they will be leading this event but I am sure it will involve some kind of dressing up or non-uniform!

The Reception and KS1 Nativity Plays which will be at 2pm on Tuesday 8th December and 5.30pm on Wednesday 9th December.

Another dressing up day will be held on Thursday 10th December, as we support both our own FoS fundraising efforts and the national charity Save the Children by contributing for wearing a Christmas Jumper (and other non-uniform clothes) for the day. Any money raised from this event will be shared between FoS and Save The Children.

We will be holding our Christmas Praise service in the church on Wednesday 16th December, and we would love very much for you to join us. The service will start at 2pm and we will be asking for volunteers to help us walk through the village and back again nearer the time.

The school will be closed for an INSET day on Friday 23rd October and then for the half term holiday on the week beginning Monday 26th October. Children return to school on Monday 2nd November. We break up for the Christmas holiday on Friday 18th December.

There will be other dates to add as the weeks go on, but I thought I would share those that we already know about so far to help you to make any arrangements you may need to make.

Here's to another great year and thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,

Mrs Donna Butler

Head of School