

Bitterne Church of England Primary School

Weekly Newsletter

Hope

Courage

Creativity

9 January 2026

Issue 15

Message from the Senior Leadership Team

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to school, and a very happy New Year to you all. I hope that you enjoyed a restful Christmas break and were able to spend some special time with loved ones.

It has been lovely to welcome the children back to school this week. They have returned extremely well, and we have seen a very settled and positive start to the term. The children have already been busy engaging in their new learning across a range of subjects, and it has been wonderful to see their enthusiasm and focus.

Curriculum letters will be shared with you shortly, outlining the key areas of learning and the focus for this term. As a school, we have recently reviewed, evaluated, and adapted our curriculum to ensure that there is a strong emphasis on developing depth of knowledge across all statutory areas.

As part of this work, staff have recently taken part in training for our new PSHE scheme, The Story Project. This evidence-based programme teaches the full statutory PSHE curriculum through stories and places a strong focus on wellbeing. It supports children in identifying and naming emotions they may be feeling, using discussion around characters and situations within the stories. Further information about this programme will be shared on the school website in due course.

Finally, I would like to extend a huge thank you to our wonderful PTA. The dedication and hard work of PTA members enables us to enhance and improve the provision we offer for your children in school. At the AGM held this week, Steve Jones and Sian Jopling made the decision to stand down from their roles as Chair and Treasurer respectively. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Steve and Sian for all they have done to support the school and help us move forward in achieving our vision for our children and our school. Their efforts have truly been appreciated.

I am also delighted to share that Emma Winkworth has been elected as the new Chair of the PTA. Thank you to Emma for taking on this role and for ensuring that the PTA continues to go from strength to strength. If you are able to support the PTA and would be interested in getting involved, please do get in touch with Emma—messages can be passed on via the school office. Any support would be greatly appreciated.

I hope everyone has a lovely weekend.
Best wishes, Mrs Johnson

Collective Worship

This week in Collective Worship, the children have been exploring the school value of Courage, linked to the Christian season of Epiphany.



Epiphany is the time when Christians remember the visit of the Wise Men, who followed the star to find the baby Jesus. Their journey was not easy or certain, yet they showed great courage by travelling far into the unknown, trusting the light that guided them. Through this story, the children reflected on how courage is not about being fearless, but about doing the right thing even when it feels challenging.

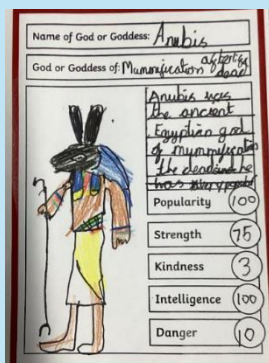
This week's quote from the Bible:

'Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time! **Matthew 2: 9-10**'

Year 3&4 Phase Leader Update

We have had a very exciting start back to the term, particularly in Year 4, where the children have launched into their new English text *Leon and the Place Between*. To bring the story to life, the children explored circus skills as part of their learning. They were fascinated by the incredible talents of real circus performers and enjoyed watching and discussing the skills involved. The children then had the opportunity to try out some basic circus skills themselves, showing great enthusiasm, resilience and teamwork.

It has been wonderful to see such high levels of engagement and excitement for learning so early in the term, and we are looking forward to building on this enthusiasm as the term continues.



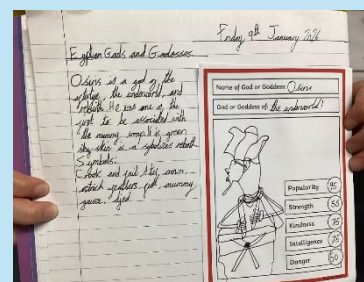
Our new topic has already proved very popular. The children have been able to share and deepen their existing knowledge of Ancient Egypt by designing a Top Trumps-style card for an Egyptian god. This activity encouraged careful research, creativity and thoughtful discussion about the importance and powers of different gods.

In Year 3, the children have begun studying the classic text *The Iron Man*. They have been delving into the story and thinking carefully about the choices the author and illustrators have made. In particular, they explored and compared different front covers of the book, discussing how these designs give clues about the story and influence the reader's expectations.

In science, Year 3 have started their geology topic, learning about different types of rocks. The children have been developing their observation skills and using scientific vocabulary to describe and compare them.

It has been wonderful to see such high levels of engagement and excitement for learning so early in the term, and we are looking forward to building on this enthusiasm as the term continues.

Best Wishes,
Mrs Wood



Message from the SENDCO

We are pleased to let parents know that Southampton's Neurodiversity Team will be visiting school on Tuesday 3rd February at 10:00am. They will be delivering a parent information session focused on understanding and supporting friendships for children with neurodiversity (your child does not need to have a diagnosis of neurodiversity for you to attend). There will also be time for informal one-to-one conversations with members of the Neurodiversity Team. Mrs Gear (SENDCO) and Mrs Davies (Family Support Officer) will also be present during the session. We look forward to welcoming you to this informative and supportive event.

Reminder: SENDCO Drop-In Sessions

A friendly reminder that our SENDCO drop-in sessions are running on alternate Mondays starting next week (Monday 12th January) from 3:15–4:00pm, in a small room just off the library. These sessions offer a relaxed, informal opportunity to chat, share any concerns, or seek guidance about your child — no appointment needed. You're very welcome to come in via the library, and we look forward to seeing you.

Best Wishes

Mrs Gear

Sibling Photographs: Monday 24 February 2026

The school photographer is visiting the school on 24/02/26 to take sibling photos of children within our school. If you would like a sibling photo taken, please visit Yellow's web site below and complete the online Sibling Request Form.

Visit website www.smileYellow.com/sibling or type in browser www.smileYellow.com/sibling

- School password is bitt240226

Closing date for requests is midnight 13/02/26

Reminder: Photo and Multimedia Permission Update 2025

We still do not have all permissions back, if you have yet to do this, please do so as soon as possible. Please note some permission categories have changed, which is reflected in the updated form. Even if you have recently provided us with your preferences, **please complete the form again** to ensure we have the most up-to-date information on file.

Thank you for your continued support.

If you have not already done so, please complete the form here:

<https://forms.gle/RyMLS9MYebJUQPh86>

Facebook

A reminder to follow our new Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/BitterneCEPrimary>



Dates for your Diary

- **12 January:** SENDCO Drop-in Session, 3.45pm-4pm
- **13 January:** Year 1 Phonics Screening Parent Meeting, 9am-10am
- **21 January:** SEND Coffee Meeting, 2pm-3pm
- **30 January:** Year 4 Winchester Science Centre School Trip – further information to follow
- **4 February:** Stubbington Study Residential Parents Meeting, 4.30pm-5.30pm
- **9 February:** SENDCO Drop-in Session, 3.45pm-4pm
- **11 February:** PTA Movie Night, 3.15pm-5pm
- **12 February:** Parent Forum Meeting, 9am-10am – more information to follow
- **16 February-20 February:** Half term

Weekly Celebrations

- Brownlow House has started the term with the most house points!
- Tidy Year Group Award goes to: Year R Bronze and Indigo Class
- This week's most improved attendance goes to Carmine Class with 97%

Well done everyone!

