



Critchill School Newsletter

Autumn Term 1



Head Teacher News

Welcome

A welcome to our new families and welcome back for our returning Critchill families.

September is always a joy at Critchill with new students, class groups and staff building relationships and getting to know each other. Senior leaders have been into lessons and observed, first-hand, students accessing high quality teaching through a range of personalised learning activities. I observed learners testing kitchen roll for absorbency, making Carbonara, recreating a black hole, independently washing and ironing uniforms; all of these activities whilst being taught their Personal Learning Intentions as outlined on their PLIM Maps.

An exciting update this term is that our new build was completed over the summer holidays and allows our Working Futures provision to have their dedicated Class Room and Common Room to encourage independence, socialisation and prepare them further for life beyond Critchill. Our Post 16 class are very pleased and it is great to hear from parents about the positive impact of this social space too.

Next term, we would like to begin sharing about external achievements of students within our Friday Celebration assemblies. If your child attends an external club/activity and gets a certificate please do send these in to share with us. Also if they make progress in a particular skill please share these in link books and Senior Leaders will share some of these in assembly each week. It's uplifting to see how proud our students are of each other and their individual achievements.

I hope everyone has a great half-term holiday and we look forward to seeing all students back in school on Monday 3rd November.

Upcoming Dates

Autumn Term 2 - Starts Monday 3rd November

Children In Need - Friday 14th November

Christmas Fair - Wednesday 10th December

Christmas Dinner Day - Wednesday 17th December

Autumn Term 2 - Ends Friday 19th December

MONDAY 5TH JANUARY - INSET DAY

Spring Term 3 - Starts Tuesday 6th January

Spring Term 3 - Ends Friday 13th February

Attendance

Pupil attendance at Critchill School continues to surpass national bench-marking figures for Special Schools; we are proud of this and grateful for the huge role that our parents and carers play in relation to this. At Critchill School we continue to provide our pupils with access to a profoundly personalised curriculum and there is a correlation between pupils with higher attendance and sustainable progress made in their personalised curriculums.

This term, we have seen a rise in Unauthorised Absences. We have a duty to contact parents and put action plans in place to improve attendance where there is a fall in attendance or where there is not appropriate supporting documentation. We want to support pupils and families to be able to attend school in order that the curriculum can be accessed and progress can be made and sustained over time.

Please be reminded of the importance of arriving at school on time, missing just 10 minutes a day will equate to over 31 hours of lost learning time throughout an academic year.

School News

Climate Action Plan

At Critchill School, we believe in the power of action, especially when it comes to protecting our planet. That's why we're proud to announce the launch of our **Climate Action Plan** — a collective effort to make our school more sustainable and eco-friendly.

This plan goes beyond simple recycling; it is about creating real, lasting change that empowers every student, teacher and staff member to contribute to a greener future. From reducing energy use to promoting sustainability in everyday activities, we will be taking steps to lower our environmental impact while also learning about the importance of climate action.

Over the year we'll be rolling out energy-saving challenges, eco-friendly projects and educational campaigns. There will be plenty of opportunities for pupils to get involved, whether it's by reducing waste, conserving resources, or spreading the word about green practices.

Together, we can help Critchill School lead the way in building a more sustainable future for our community and the world.

Act on Idling

One simple step every driver can take to help our climate action efforts is to reduce car idling. It will create a healthier environment and save you money! Thank you.

Bag Books

Pupils across the school were given the opportunity to experience an engaging multi-sensory storytelling session funded by Bag Books. The storyteller used his expressive voice and a range of sensory objects designed to engage the senses.









EYFS & KS1

Wrens

This term we have been exploring the theme 'Under the Sea'. We have engaged in a range of activities including sensory stories, making salt dough starfish and using our new floor projector!

Bramblings

This term we have been learning about Pirates! Through Attention Autism we have explored what a pirate is, how they travel, maps and where you can find them. Through English, we have been exploring props from sensory stories, matching these to symbols and sentences. In maths, we have been looking at numbers and have done some excellent counting!

Nuthatches

This term we had the most brilliant time being little pirates. The children have made their own treasure, maps and pirate ships. We have listened to sea shanty songs to help us focus on our

work in class. In Maths we have been learning numbers and placing value using different objects from the pirates treasure. We have practised addition with jewels and coins, and subtracted by having some pirates walk the plank. We have explored different shapes to help us to build our own pirate ship as well. In English we have been discovering new words and composing sentences using the funbooks: "Pirate Pete and His Smelly Feet" – to keep those snappy sharks away; and "Pirates Love Underpants" with a rhyming story to feed our imagination. Well done everyone for this fabulous half-term exploring the world of pirates – you all worked so hard and made progress in your learning to become more independent.













KS2 & KS3

Finches

This term we have been doing lots of wonderful art work linked to our theme. We have been collaging rainbows out of different materials and decorated and made our own 'pencils' to go on the front of our art books as well as exploring colours and which colours make us feel happy.

Starlings

This term we have been learning about Materials Around Us. Students have enjoyed getting creative with lots of different types of materials including making tin robots, paper mache bowls, nature wreaths and stained-glass cookies!

Owls

This term we have been learning about 'Materials Around Us' focussing on a different material each week. We have conducted science experiments and created a range of art projects using varying materials. A firm favourite was our pumpkins made of yarn, and stained glass windows!

Ravens

This term we have been exploring the life cycle of a star and black holes. We made our own black holes and it got very messy! The children used task lists to undertake their PLIM work, great job Ravens!

Kestrels

On 7th October Kestrels Class had two people from Frome Town Council to talk to them about the Young People's Grant Project. Students were asked to share their opinions on how money is spent on Young People's Project within Frome. Students all shared their ideas and participated in a vote, deciding on which project they thought deserved the funding.

On the 14th October some of Kestrels Class represented Critchill School at Frome Town Hall. The students participated in a discussion with students from other schools about how the money should best be spent. The students came up with their own idea for how the money should be spent and presented their idea to the other groups, the students showed great confidence when talking in front of the other students. Students were then asked to vote their preferred

idea. Kestrels Class had a lovely time and enjoyed having a say in how their community will be improved.

























Working Futures - KS4 & P16

Hawks

This half term Hawks class have been learning about Romeo and Juliet and finding out about the country of Italy. Pupils have engaged in making a range of Italian dishes and showed great persistence with tasting these foods. Pupils have enjoyed learning about William Shakespeare and facts about the Globe theatre. Throughout this half term pupils have looked at the changing of the seasons from summer to autumn throughout our Forest School visits.

P16

Post 16 visit Frome Town Rangers every other week. This week we planted 1000 bluebell bulbs and 100 allium bulbs.

Post 16 have had a very exciting start to term with the opening of our new classroom. It has the latest technology, lots of light and plenty of room for our students. The old classroom has been converted into a common room with table tennis, a pool table and comfy bean bags. It has been an absolute pleasure watching the pupils using this area to create new friendships, learn leisure activities and develop teamwork skills. Work placements and other off-site activities have started including yoga, Withywood, Rangers, Catering Van and Fit for Work.









Critchill School Council



Critchill School Council held their first meeting of the term last week. The six new Council members introduced themselves and told everyone what they most liked about school. They will be representing pupil voice until the Spring term and will be checking the Suggestion Box regularly.

The Council is looking forward to being part of the Climate Action Plan for Critchill School and will be working together to create a poster to advertise our Eco Warriors.

Watch this space: The Council have put forward the idea of a Critchill pet...

Friends of Critchill

Hello from Friends of Critchill. What a busy first term back at school!! Friends of Critchill have provided lots of new equipment for the children this term including a water tray, a body sock, a

beanbag, a spinning seat, reindeer making kits and new iPads!! Thank you to everyone who supports our events and to those to donate money to us, this allows us to get these invaluable items for the children.

We have some exciting news!! We are hosting a free Christmas Grotto this year on the 12th December with a special guest, elves and lots of Christmassy magic. It will be during school time and it will be a little test run for us to see how well it works. If the children enjoy it as much as we hope they will, we will be running it as a ticketed weekend event from next year. Like I said, we are super excited about this. Christmas is such a magical time of year and we want to give it some extra sparkle for our children. Any donations towards the grotto will be greatly appreciated. We will be setting up a FOCS just giving page in due course.

A cheeky little side note, if anyone has any Christmas decorations/ faux tree/lights etc they would like to donate we would be extremely grateful. Please label it 'For the attention of FOCS' and pop it into school. Thank you.

We also have a new Friends of Critchill event page on Facebook. This is for parents, carers and close family of current pupils of Critchill School. With the trustees and staff as members it will be a safe space for us to share our upcoming events and fundraising with you. <https://www.facebook.com/share/g/1DJXhn6FYm/?mibextid=wwXlfr>

We are always on the lookout for new committee members who are able to help as little or as much as they can. If you would like to join the FOCS family please email us your interest at friendsofcritchill@gmail.com

Have a lovely half term Sunny, Emily and Kirsty.

Important Parent Information

Car Park

As it's the new school year, we want to remind families of the car park usage that follows our Risk Assessment for student safety.

- Where possible, please park off site and walk to collect students.
- If you use the car park, you must be entitled to and have a blue badge displayed
- Entry to the car park for parents/carers will not be until 8.40am/ 3.10pm and you may be asked to leave if you enter before these times.
- Please ensure parking is within allocated spaces and if there are no spaces you exit the car park and do not circle around the car park.

- Parking is not permitted on yellow hatched areas/on zig-zag lines.
- Please do not use the transport bays at pick up and drop off.
- Once your child is dropped off/collected please move off site to allow other parents access to designated spaces

We thank you in advance for your co-operation, to ensure the car park is able to remain open to parents, where needed.

Weather

As the weather begins to change please can you ensure your child has an appropriate coat and waterproofs in school to enable them to access their learning. Much of the time our curriculum takes us outside and it's important that the students have clothing so they can stay warm and dry.

Headlice

We have seen an increase in cases of head lice in school. It is important to check your child's hair for head lice.

The best technique is to use a head lice comb when the hair is wet, leaving in conditioner and combing the hair in sections. When the hair is wet, head lice cannot move so they are easier to comb out. Please note that they do not jump or fly, you can only catch head lice from head to head contact. If you find head lice, you should: Treat appropriately: the wet combing technique eradicates the lice and eggs. This should be done every 3 to 4 days over a 2-week period to break the life cycle. If you require further information please have a look at the following website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/head-lice-and-nits/> Children who become clear of head lice can be re-infected at school. You can help to tackle this by following good prevention, by being vigilant to spot any new infections or re-infections and by seeking prompt treatment if you find any head lice. Head lice are best prevented and controlled by regular wet combing, and keeping long hair tied up.

ParentPay

Please make sure that all parentpay accounts are all paid and up to date. School meals are **NOW** available to book up until Christmas. If you would like your child to have these the first week back after half term, then please book them by **Thursday 30th October**.

Parent Governor Vacancy

We currently have an opening for the role of Parent Governor. If this is something you would be interested in, we encourage you to get in touch with Claire Gordon, Clerk to Governors, either by visiting the school office or by emailing:

cgordon@critchill.mnsp.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you!

Somerset Parent Carer Forum

The Somerset Parent Carer Forum are running a series of workshops for parents and carers of children with additional needs on a wide variety of subjects such as Managing Meltdowns, Understanding Sensory Processing and Restricted Eating. For more information, go to somerseparentcarerforum.org.uk/home/wise-up-workshops

Uniform Supplier

Uniform can be brought from: [Cosmic Monkey](#) and [Schooltrends](#)

Please ensure students are wearing school uniform - details can be found on our website <https://www.critchillschool.co.uk/parentscarers/uniform.htm> Please ensure all uniform is clearly labelled.

Snack time

Parents can send their child to school with a piece of fruit, a vegetable or a suitable healthy snack for morning snack.

EYFS and Key stage 1 children (Wrens, Bramblings and Nuthatches) will continue to receive government funded 'Free fruit for schools.'

Please be reminded that we are a **NUT FREE SCHOOL**. Thank you.

Things to do this Half Term



PICK YOUR OWN PUMPKINS

Grab a wheelbarrow and roam through our authentic home grown pumpkin patch to pick your perfect pumpkin. With 36 years experience of PYO we have a bumper crop waiting for you!

Pumpkins are not included in the event entry ticket. Pumpkins are priced depending on size and variety.

1 - Avon Valley Country Park - Pumpkin Picking events and lots more.

Half-Term Holiday Activities: Art Adventures



Monday 27th October - Wednesday 29th October
10.30 - 15.30

Don't miss our creative drop-in workshops for families this half term, taking inspiration from the WAC installations in the Cathedral.

Branching Out
Monday 27 October
Explore relationships between humans and trees with 2D and 3D art.

Willow and Windows
Tuesday 28 October
Create a willow-framed suncatcher.

Decorate a Deck
Wednesday 29 October
Design a deck and create your own mini skateboard model.

These activities are FREE with adult entry and there's no need to book – simply drop in on the day.

Find out more at www.wells-cathedral.org.uk/holidays

2 - Wells Cathedral things to do.



3 - Wookey Hole Caves

https://www.wookey.co.uk/events/view/halloween?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=22453303817&gbraid=0AAAAAox4oj2pNAY4I1I8n7P0sDGclXnd&gclid=EAIaIQobChMI3vbNzveykAMVsZnQBh0dEh2iEAAAYASAAEgJ2e_D_BwE

Upcoming Events



Energy Café!

Pop in for free information,
~~no~~ appointment is necessary.

Frome Town Council Healthy Homes team will be here to provide a range of advice and guidance including tips on ventilation and avoiding condensation, damp and mould, help with energy debt, reducing energy bills, switching to better value/ green tariffs, upgrading your houses energy efficiency and accessing grants.

FROME MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL

FREE
ENTRY

12PM
3PM

MUSIC AND
DANCE

ARTS AND CRAFTS

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

BRING CASH

FOOD TO TRY AND BUY

LOCAL PEOPLE SHARING AND CELEBRATING THEIR DIVERSITY

16TH NOVEMBER 2025
AT THE CHEESE AND GRAIN

FOR MORE INFO PLEASE EMAIL LENKAGRIMES@GMAIL.COM OR AZEEMACAFF@GMAIL.COM



Frome
made differently

thrive
making somerset stronger