



National Handwriting Day

Today we have celebrated National Handwriting Day! While there is now much talk about movement to a digital age meaning there is less of a need for children to be able to write by hand, we are aware that there are many cognitive benefits of writing by hand for learning and memory. More about this [here](#). Across the school, we continue to follow a scheme of work for handwriting but today we have been practising in some unique and fun ways!



Smartphones, social media and screens

Please do join us for the Parent Information Session being run online by Papaya on Monday 26th January from 7:00pm-8.30pm. Further information can be found [here](#). Nicola from Papaya delivered workshops to both our Key Stage 2 classes on Wednesday. The children came up with pledges for three things they will try to reduce their screen time so please do ask them about that and anything else they learnt from the session.

Reverend Pitt

We would like to say a huge thank you to Rev Pitt who is stepping down as a school Governor after many years in the role. We will of course continue to see him for assemblies and up at the church. He has been a really valuable member of the Governors and contributed much over the last few years.

Mrs Geeson and Mr Turull



We have been continuing our Space Topic and creating lots of Space themed Art this week. We have used a variety of mediums to create the planets in Space and used our mark making shapes to help us show movements in our pictures.



We have continued our learning of the two times tables, and developing understanding of factors and products. We also had fun acting out Humpty Dumpty facing his fears to climb back up that wall!



This week, Seal Class began their ukulele lessons. The children were really engaged and managed to perform a song after just one lesson! Well done Seal Class.



In Dolphin Class this week we have worked hard to complete Maths and Reading assessments. In Geography, we have embedded our atlas and map skills by locating the tallest mountains within the UK and in Religion and Worldviews, we explored the Jewish ceremony of Rosh Hashanah.



ARBOR - IMPORTANT

It is important that both parents and emergency contact details are up to date to ensure we can reach you if necessary.

Similarly, dietary & medical information should be checked and amended if required by parents.

If you have any problems please email the office with the changes which are required.

Notices

- **Clubs** - have now all started and there are spaces available in most - please contact the office.
- **Papaya Talk** - A reminder that the Parent Information Session will be run by Papaya online on Monday 26th January from 7-8.30. Further information can be found [here](#).
- **Seal Swimming** - please contribute via Arbor for next week's transport to MSN pool if you have not already. Thank you to those who have.
- **St. John's Church** - Please see [here](#) the link to the weekly church events.
- **Year 6, Lifeskills Trip, Bristol** - This trip is on Wednesday 25th February and has been added to Arbor for you to consent/pay.

Diary Dates

January

Mon 26th Parent Papaya Workshop On-line (7-8pm see link in notices above)
Thu 29th Y5/6 Badminton Event (3:45-5:45pm)
Fri 30th Celebration Assembly (9am in the Memorial Hall)

February

Mon 2nd MNSP Speak Out Competition
Wed 4th Reception Year Height & Weight Programme with the School Nurse Team
Wed 11th Family Service at St. Johns Church (2:45pm)
Fri 13th Y5/6 Gymnastics Event at Writhlington (12:30-3pm)
Celebration Assembly (9am in the Memorial Hall)
End of Term 3



Thought of the Week

‘All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, to equip the man of God for every good work.’ (2 Timothy 3:16)

Some research carried out by Christian publisher SPCK found that Bible sales were up 134% since 2019. It was found that these sales were the highest since records began in 1998. In 2025, the total sales of Bibles in the UK reached £6.3 million, which is £3.61 million up on 2019 sales.

Most of these Bibles seem to have been purchased by younger people with no Christian background whatsoever. Previously people bought Bibles because they came from a church upbringing or went to a church school, but it seems that many younger people with no affiliation are seeking spirituality. “They want to understand the world and themselves better,” says Aude Pasquier, the retail sales director at Church House bookshop near Westminster Abbey.

Many believe this is due to young people following specific online personalities, like Jordan Peterson. Although not a Christian, Peterson influences people by promoting individual responsibility, self-improvement and meaning-making. He has reintroduced biblical stories and frames Jesus as the archetypal hero who overcomes chaos. (*adapted from [‘It’s younger people seeking some sort of spirituality’](#), The Guardian, 10th January 2026*)

Some people see this search for meaning as a rejection of the new atheism that many of these people’s parents “signed up for” about 20 years ago. Many of us are also finding it harder to believe in our leaders, governments, and democratic systems, so are we searching for something else to believe in instead?

It does surprise me that when it comes to religion and belief, our society seems to swing one way or the other. About half of the UK population attended church during the Victorian age. Attendance declined during the 20s and 30s, dropping significantly during the war, but there was a rise again to about 20% during the 50s and 60s. By this time, people were looking elsewhere for spiritual enlightenment, which included pagan movements like wicca and neo-druidry. There was also a rise in “unconventional” Christian movements, like the Children of God, now known as The Family International, which went on into the 70s.

There was a drop during the 1980s, but then by the 90s, people were open to exploring their spirituality again with the post-New Age movement. The sharp rise in atheist beliefs may have been as a reaction to this, with about 30% answering no religion (or spiritual belief) in the 2021 census.

It now looks like the pendulum is swinging back the other way. But church attendance and answers on the census, don’t necessarily give us the real truth about where people are in terms of their spirituality. More people seem to be searching and are turning to God and the Bible for answers.

Today’s verse states that “all scripture is God breathed”, that although it is a collection of different books written by many different authors, that it has been designed, influenced and directed by God himself. Many people today would still view this with suspicion and doubt, but this book and what it has to say has never gone away. The man who claimed he was God and said he died to save the world is still influencing our world today. And looking at the most recent sales of Bibles, people are still taking notice of his example and what he said. Maybe it’s worth a look?

