



Critchill School Newsletter

February 2024



Head Teacher News

Spring Term

Students are enjoying the opportunity to be out and about more in the community, now that the weather is getting better. Recently we have had groups of students visiting Nunney Castle, local shops, The Shed and Frome Hospital to name a few.

We have also had a big focus this term on developing our play skills and developing our knowledge of the 'Be Safe' strand of the Critchill Code. We have introduced some new playground equipment to support these sessions and staff and students are looking forward to this equipment making a daily appearance after half term.

I am pleased to share that we have had some very positive feedback from other Headteachers from our Somerset SEN Partnership Schools (SEN.SE.) They came and did a visit to see how Mathematics is taught and fed back to staff.

Some highlights of their report include; "Clear progression of learning within the books. Lots of photographs to illustrate learning" "Stand out teaching we saw was on Algorithms with a Narnia curriculum link, IT, Maths and Literacy." "You can see student and staff pride." "Teachers know their children well".

It is with pride that I can share such positive feedback that encompasses the commitment and hard work that Students access and all staff at Critchill deliver on a daily basis.

To add to this the Governors of Critchill School, carried out a learning walk on Tuesday 30th January and also shared very positive feedback which you will see included later in this newsletter.

As many of you know Dolly the Dog, retired from her position as school dog earlier this year and is enjoying retirement, gentle walks and lots of rest! The school will now be joined by Buddy, who is also, like Dolly, owned by our Executive Head Teacher, Sophie Addison. Buddy is a Dachshund and a much loved family pet. He has been undertaking weekly training sessions with a fully trained and qualified

animal behaviour therapist. Buddy will be spending time in school and is looking forward to meeting all the students.



Attendance

At Critchill we strive to ensure students have access to a profoundly personalised curriculum.

Students with a higher attendance figure, are able to access their profoundly personalised curriculum and can make sustained progress towards meeting their EHCP outcomes. We have seen a rise in requests for Term Time absences for holidays and to visit events. Although we recognise that these experiences can be beneficial to students, please can we ask that these are booked outside of school term dates.

Safeguarding

The NSPCC has a wealth of information on their website that can support families. <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/> The NSPCC are currently celebrating 10 years of Talk PANTS. There are guides (including symbol based) and information for families and students on their website. The Pantosaurus' rules are:



School Dates

9th February - End of Term 3

19th February - Start of Term 4

7th March - World Book Day

17th March - Red Nose Day

28th March - End of Term 4

15th April - Start of Term 5

25th April - Critchill Code Day

20th May - PLIM Evening

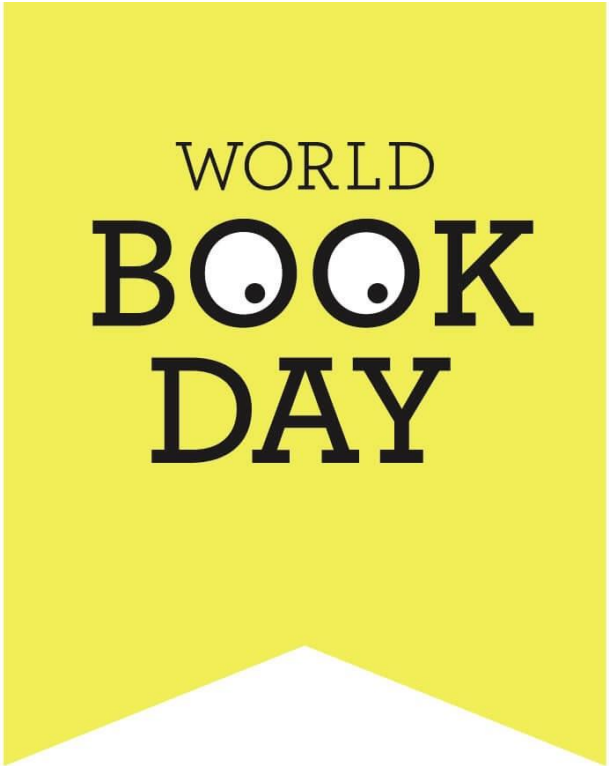
24th May - End of Term 5

3rd June - Start of Term 6

28th June - Sports Day

12th July - Reserved Sports Day

19th July - End of Term 6

A yellow banner with a pointed bottom, featuring the text 'WORLD BOOK DAY' in a stylized font. The word 'BOOK' is particularly large and has two dots for eyes inside the 'O's.

WORLD
BOOK
DAY

PLEASE NOTE:

This year World Book Day will take place on **Thursday 7th March** . As this is during careers week we have decided to focus our dressing up theme on "Jobs" linked to a book.

Be as creative as you can, you do not need to go out and buy new outfits.

Ideas:

- An astronaut from Man on the moon
- Miss Trunchbull from Matilda
- A farmer from Fantastic Mr Fox
- Mr Willy Wonka the owner of a chocolate factory.

GOVERNORS

Our School Governors took part in a learning walk on Tuesday 30th January. Here are some of the key things they fed back to staff.



Andy" Lots of happy and engaged young people learning new skills. Interesting to see things like using playdough to get the fine motor skills warmed up.""impressed with the engagement and quiet concentration of the pupils"



Kathryn"Throughout the school, the environment was well presented and with a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Lots of visual prompts both within the individual classrooms and the communal areas, which offered stimulation without being overwhelming. In terms of resources, classes were well equipped, and designed to meet a variety of both class and individual needs.""The holistic approach

towards their well being, nurturing and education was particularly noticeable, with all being engaged at their individual point of learning yet, still within the school curriculum."

"Also of note is how potentially difficult situations /disputes between pupils were dealt with calmly and promptly by staff with minimal potential for escalation or disruption for others."



Sue "We were able to see examples of some of the pupils' workbooks and I was impressed by the levels of learning being achieved. It is good to see the potential that these young people have and that they are receiving the support, encouragement and guidance to help them realise their full capabilities." "It was explained that the school does not operate with "key workers" for each child as it is considered important that individual pupils do not become too reliant upon one member of staff. It was however noted that 1 to 1 support is given where needed."



Emily "Enlightening to see how happy pupils are engaged in learning." "Consider how we can support parents to share some of the low tech communication aids."

School News











This term Starlings have been learning about Community Spaces and the Story of Iggy Peck, who is a young architect who likes to create buildings out of objects he finds at home. One of the buildings that he makes is a castle made from Chalk. To support our understanding of castles, we then visited Nunney Castle. The pupils enjoyed being able to identify the key features such as the moat, towers and arrow holes. They have then discussed what they saw and used this to support their English work





Fusion Extreme BMX Flatland Show

Matti Hemmings from Extreme Fusion came to visit Critchill School 1.02.24 as part of the Frome Safe Streets for Schools project.

He wowed staff and pupils with some amazing stunts as well as sharing some stay safe on your bike tips.

Well done to Mrs Osborne and to Max Masters for volunteering to give it a go. Children and young people were reminded to wear a cycle helmet.

This term classes across the school have been learning how important this is for staying safe.











This term as part of our Critchill Code lessons Wrens class have been learning that we all feel different emotions. Students have been exploring how different emotions can make us feel and the benefits that physical exercise has on our mental health. They have been going on local community walks, developing road safety awareness and engaging in a variety of exercises on the playground.

Critchill School Council



Critchill Council members are now easily identified around school due to their high visibility arm bands.

They continue to work well as a team representing the children and young people at Critchill School.

Actions so far include initiating a Friday afternoon opportunity. These include a Dance, Console and Well being offer which will be rotated across the 3 nests. This is due to start after the half term holiday.

The School Council have also shared with School Governors their desire for some form of outside shelter so that pupils can enjoy outdoor time in all weathers.

Next term will see 6 new members of Critchill Council being elected to ensure inclusivity with pupil voice.

Working Futures

Post 16 have enjoyed a series of visits this term.

This has included a visit to our current interns at Shaw Trust Palmer Gardens in Trowbridge.

Job Centre Plus welcomed us and explained about visiting a Job Centre and the help they can offer. Tasha and Sharon from Barclays Bank to discuss all things banking. Terri Pitts from Community fridge gave a talk about volunteering and how the community fridge can help local people reduce food waste.

In January we invited Alex McNeil from Open storytellers to meet with parents/carers to discuss the Care Act and how it can support young people as they transition to adult social care.

We continue to build on our relationships with local employers and secure both work placements and employer engagement opportunities. If you are able to help then please contact Sally Smiles, Careers and Working Futures Lead.

Friends of Critchill School

We are always looking at new ways to fundraise. Did you know that we're registered with [easyfundraising](#) and you could help us to raise funds for the school at no extra cost to yourself? This is a great opportunity to raise much needed funds for the school! When you shop online, with over 7,500 of your favourite brands, including John Lewis & Partners, Amazon, eBay, notonthehighstreet, you will raise FREE donations for Friends of Critchill School. If you're not already signed up, it only takes a few minutes, then you can begin using the easyfundraising website or app straightaway. Visit our easyfundraising page to get started: [click here](#)

We are looking forward to holding our Easter Workshop on Sunday 24th March, more details will follow shortly.

We are also always looking for volunteers if you feel you would like more information then please contact us at friendsofcritchill@gmail.com

Family activities during February Half Term



Family Holiday Activities

EXPLORE • CREATE • DISCOVER

Book online at wellscathedral.org.uk/holidays



Saints and Songbirds

February 2024

Kick-off half term with our selection of family trails and creative workshops for children:

Stitch a Story Monday 12 February

Explore some of the incredible Cathedral needlework and embroideries, then create your own design.



Make a Bird Feeder Tuesday 13 February

Help to feed our feathered friends through the hungry gap, play a card game, and go on a Cathedral safari!



Celebrate the Saints Wednesday 14 February

Follow our Saints trail this Valentine's Day! You may not find St Valentine in the Cathedral, but there'll be plenty of lovely crafts on offer!



Scan to book:

Or drop in on the day (subject to availability)

£2.15 per child / £1.10 if eligible for free school meals; accompanying adults FREE

Please note: children must be accompanied by a responsible adult and only assistance dogs are allowed at our Family Holiday Activities



FAMILY HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AT WELLS CATHEDRAL: SAINTS AND SONGBIRDS

Kick-off the half term holiday with our selection of family trails and creative workshops for children:

Monday 12th February: STITCH A STORY

Explore the incredible Cathedral embroideries then design your own.

Tuesday 13th February: MAKE A BIRD FEEDER

Help to feed our feathered friends through the hungry gap, play a card game, and go on a Cathedral safari!

Wednesday 14th February: CELEBRATE THE SAINTS

Follow our Saints trail this Valentine's Day! You may not find St Valentine in the Cathedral, but there'll be plenty of lovely crafts on offer.

Book online at wellscathedral.org.uk/holidays

Or drop in on the day (subject to availability)

Craft sessions 10-11:15, 11:15-12:30 and 2-3:15

£2.15 per child / £1.10 if eligible for free school meals; accompanying adults FREE

Please note: children must be accompanied by a responsible adult; only assistance dogs are allowed at our family activities