

SOMERVALE SCHOOL



Newsletter: Term 1



Headteacher

Dear Parents/Carers

It has been a really long term and I think we are all looking forward to some time off. The students are continuing to be fantastic and although tired, they have still worked hard and demonstrated on a daily basis those key learning skills essential for success.

The start of term seems like a long time ago. We welcomed a large number of new members of staff as the school has continued to grow in size;

Miss Zimmerman Teacher of English

Miss Stephens Teacher of Humanities

Mrs James Teacher of Humanities

Miss Halan Teacher of Maths
Miss Chalmers Teacher of MFL
Miss Pavanel Teacher of MFL
Mrs Piddock Teacher of DT
Miss Hoyle Teacher of DT

Ms Burchill Teacher of Art/Photography
Mrs Cook Exams and Cover Officer

Mrs Quinn Assistant Head of Key Stage Three

Mrs Smith DT Technician

I would like to thank our all year round staff who worked hard during the holidays to run a number of projects to enhance the school environment.

We have new displays on the Math corridor, Humanities Area and Reception. In addition to this, with the support of the Trust we have refreshed the gym flooring and flooring to the girls changing rooms, along with large displays to brighten the area. We have plans for the refurbishment of the boys changing rooms during the Easter break.

We have also moved around the Post 16 space and have converted the old one into our 'Studio' with new flooring for dance and drama lessons. The students are loving using this new teaching space.

Our incoming Year 7 students have settled well into the school and enjoyed a fun packed activities day at The Mendip Centre where the highlight seemed to be throwing axes!

Headteacher

Open Evening and Open Mornings were packed as usual and there continues to be a big buzz around the school. As always our students were fantastic ambassadors for the school that evening

We are extremely proud of everything that makes Somervale unique and a large part of that is that fact that we know our students well and are able to offer a really personalised experience. I promise that is not going to change as the school continues to grow.

As you are aware there has been a strong focus on attendance across the school.

We were delighted that our student's exceptional attendance has been acknowledged and we have been appointed as a Lead School by the Dfe for Attendance and Behaviour. This means that we will be working with other schools across the South West sharing our good practice.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your ongoing support. We really could not do it without the strong partnership we have between school and home. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any help in anyway. *Your child's tutor is your first point on contact for any issues or concerns.*

Whilst the majority of contact we have from parents is extremely positive, please can I ask that you consider your tone when you contact staff.

Sadly we have had a marked increase, this term, in members of staff being sworn at or shouted at on the phone or receiving emails in capital letters or threatening tones.

As you can imagine these sorts of contacts are extremely upsetting and whilst we fully appreciate that where our children are concerned we can become quite emotional, it is not acceptable to behave in a threatening or abusive manner towards a member of staff. We all want what is best for our students and it is only by working in partnership in a mutually respectful manner that we will get the best outcome in all situations.

I hope that you have a lovely and restful half term and looking forward to welcoming the students back for another jam packed Term 2.

Best wishes

Ms Joanna Postlethwaite

Headteacher

Joanna Bothethwaite



Attendance

Dear Parent/Carers

It has been wonderful to welcome our new and returning students to Somervale school this academic year. Now we approach the end of term 1 I would like to take a moment to highlight the importance of great attendance and punctuality. At Somervale School we strongly believe that great attendance to school is crucial for a student's academic success and wellbeing. It ensures all students can fully benefit from the learning environment we provide, build strong relationships with their peers and teachers, feel a sense of belonging, and develop valuable life skills.

We regularly monitor students' attendance in order to be proactive and supportive if periods of absence occur. Our attendance and Pastoral teams work in partnership with Parents/Carers to reduce any barriers impacting attendance, alongside celebrating and recognising great attendance

on an individual basis.

All students should know their own individual attendance as this is discussed with them on a weekly basis, please do ask your child if they know theirs?

Yours faithfully

Mr B Pearce **Deputy Headteacher**



SOMERVALE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE



At Somervale, we hope that every student would strive for 100% attendance and achieve at least 97% attendance in a school year. As a Parent/Carer you have responsibility to support your child's attendance and punctuality and we value your support. There are things you can do to support your child's attendance and to avoid falling into the persistent absence category (below 90%).

- If your child is unwell and you are unsure whether to send them to school, contact the school office or pastoral team to seek advice.
- https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/ is a fantastic resource for guidance.
- Avoid taking any holidays during term times.
- Keep up to date with what %
 attendance your child has so that
 you know if they are at risk of
 persistent absence (this can be
 found on the Arbor App).
- Speak to school staff with any concerns.
- Talk to your child about the importance of them being in school and let them know how important you feel it is.
- Please inform the school office before 8:30 am if your child will be absent from school
- You may be asked to supply medical evidence such as medication or appointment letters

Congratulations to the following tutor groups who have a termly average attendance above 97%

7BCH 8HTA
7BDU 8SPI
7BST 9BRO
7JBU 9KLU
7SHY 9SPV

Current year group attendance Year 7 97.73% Year 8 95.06% Year 9 93.94% Year 10 92.78% Year 11 93.43%

Year 7 Team Building Trip

This term our new year 7 students visited Thoulstone Park for a fun day of team building activities such as; archery, climbing wall, axe throwing, low ropes and many more.

The students were divided into groups and all worked really well as a team to complete different challenges. It was wonderful to see our year 7 students strengthen bonds and use this day to get to know one another.

A great day was had by all.

Thankyou to all the staff who made the day such a success.



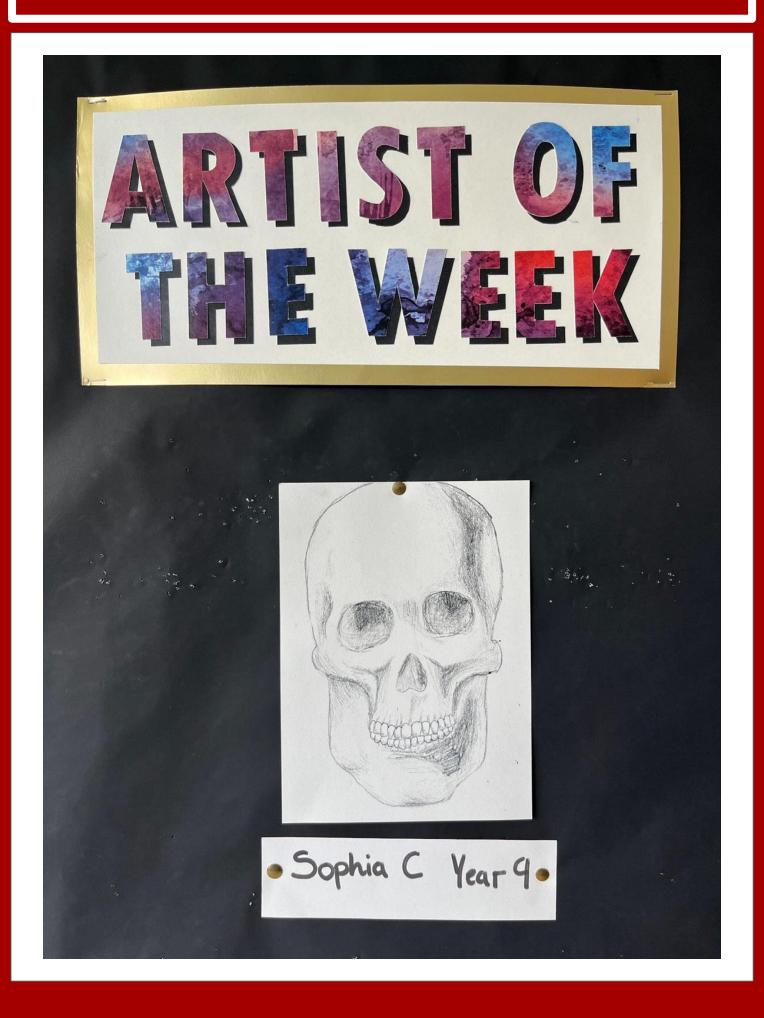
Year 7 Team Building Trip







Art & Design Department

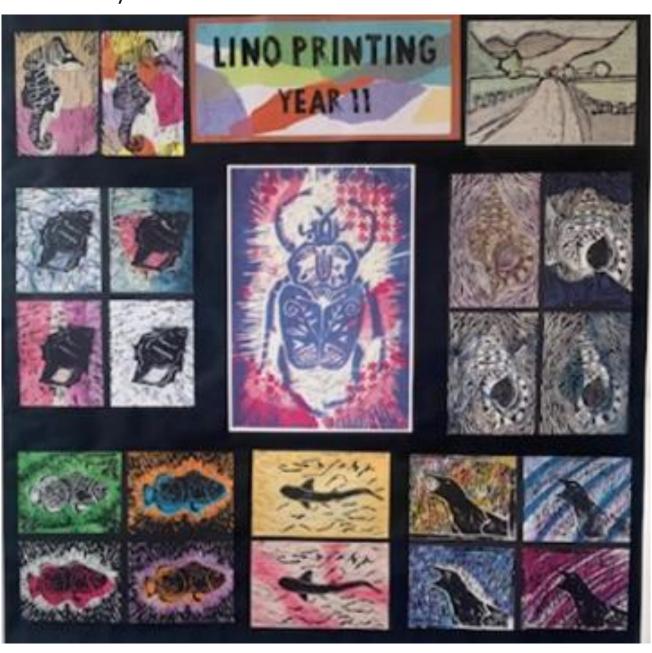


Art & Design Department

Year 11 Art – Lino Printing Coursework

As part of their GCSE coursework, Year 11 students have been learning and refining their lino printing techniques. They designed, carved, and printed their own lino blocks, exploring composition, texture, and colour to produce final pieces.

As a department we were really impressed with the quality and creativity of their work.





Harry Potter Book Day



Thursday, 2nd October, saw us celebrate the annual Harry Potter Book Day in the library. Students were invited during break and lunch to take part in quizzes and challenges relating to all things 'Potter'!





Author Visit



On Friday, 3rd October, year 9 students were lucky enough to meet Carnegie Award nominated author, Nate Lessore. Nate speak with students about his latest book 'What Happens Online', as part of a mini-tour of schools in the local area.

Students listened as Nate spoke about the worries teenagers face when having an online persona and the effects it can have on their real lives. He also spoke about his life growing up in South London and his struggles at secondary school.









Bath Festivals - Author Writing Masterclass



We were delighted to host a fantastic visit and writing masterclass with author Clare Furniss, during this term.

Students from years 8 & 9 listened to extracts from Clare's latest dystopian novel, "The Things We Leave Behind". Clare then shared her advice and tips for writing and planning a dystopian novel; and the students were challenged to write their own short piece of creative writing.

Thanks to Bath Children's Literature Festival for providing the free event and for the free copies of Clare's book for the students!











National Poetry Day 2025

On Thursday, 2nd October we celebrated National Poetry Day. Students were invited to create their own 'play' poems with our winners receiving certificates and prizes. Well done to everyone who participated.



Why I Play...

Get home from school, and pick up my guitar; Use my bear to end the day; I pick the strings of my acoustic; The notes I play; Are making music; Right then and there, I'm chilled

JR - Year 8

To Play in the Sand...

To play in the sand,
A bucket in my hand,
A spade in the other,
A day to make a village of sand.

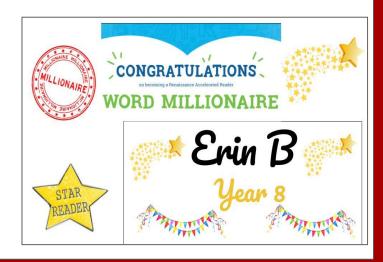
Dig, dig; I change my plan from a Castle made of sand; To a hole to sit all day, What can I do? I only have a day...

RW - Year 8

Accelerated Reader



We had our first Accelerated Reader 'Word Millionaire' this term! Huge congratulations to Erin for some fantastic reading and quizzing over the summer holidays and into this term!



Parent/Carer Notice:

We are aware of a recent issue affecting some popular children's books by Andrew Cope, including the Spy Dogs, Spy Cats, and Spy Pups series.

Some editions of these books include a printed web address at the back. This link used to go to the author's website, but the domain is no longer under his control. It has since been taken over by another party and now leads to inappropriate adult content.

The publisher, Puffin, has paused sales and distribution of the books and is working with schools, libraries, and retailers to remove copies from circulation. They have stressed that the website has no connection to the author or publisher. We do not have these books in our library

What this means for you:

If your child has any Spy Dog, Spy Cat or Spy Pups books at home, please check the back for website links and make sure they do not try to visit the site.

It is safe for children to continue reading the stories themselves — the concern is only with the outdated link.

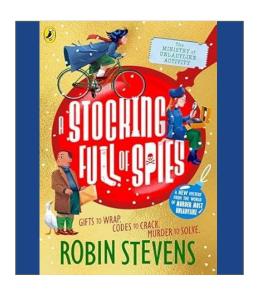
We recommend talking with your child about the importance of not following web addresses in books without checking with an adult first.

Bath Childrens Literature Festival

This term a group of year 7 students had a fantastic trip to the Guildhall as part of Bath Children's Literature Festival to see the wonderful children's author, www.robin-stevens.co.uk

Robin spoke about the inspiration behind her novels; how she creates her mystery crime stories, and why she loves history so much.

Students then received the lovely gift of a free signed book - Robin's latest novel; 'A Stocking Full of Spies







English Department

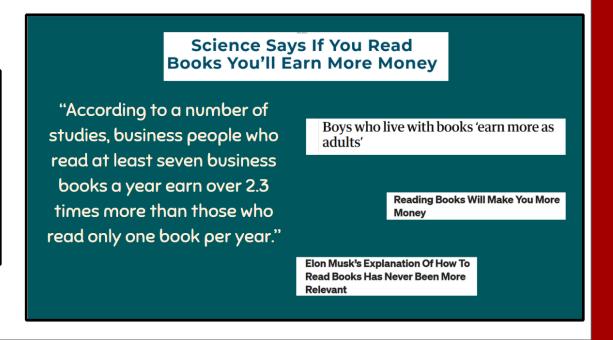
Reading at Somervale

In KS3, we have been working very hard to improve our reading skills: we know that being better readers at school might help us earn at least £65,000 more in our lives so We understand the importance of reading.

To get more support for those who might not enjoy reading, we have started a new format for our Library lessons and now every KS3 student is on a different reading pathway. Because not everyone has the same reading level, but we all want to be good readers, we need to adapt our library lessons to help everyone get better - and the pathways are doing just that. As a result, over 63% of KS3 students have rated their library lessons as very good or excellent; and some of the comments are very positive too, with the majority of the students stating that they have enjoyed their lessons and made progress.

Since starting on pathways students have a wider range of options when they come to the library including listening to audiobooks, reading speeches, or poems. This new approach to our library lessons will have a positive effect on everyone's ability to read a variety of genres more confidently.

Would you like £65,000?



English Department

Are you in Year 9 or Year 10? Join the Public Speaking Club in Term 2!

At Somervale, we know how important it is to be a confident speaker, so the English Department is inviting all students in Y9 and Y10 to join our Public Speaking Club

from Term 2.

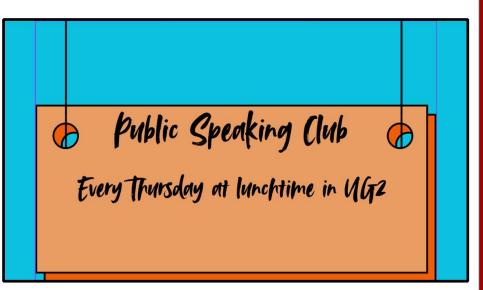
At the club, you will learn speaking and listening skills and prepare for public speaking competitions as well as develop your communication skills.



The club will be run by members of our 2024-2025 public speaking teams who have gained experience taking part in events and competitions last year. They will guide you through the process and give you tips on how to

become more confident, charismatic and persuasive.

It will run every
Thursday from 1pm
in UG2.



English Department

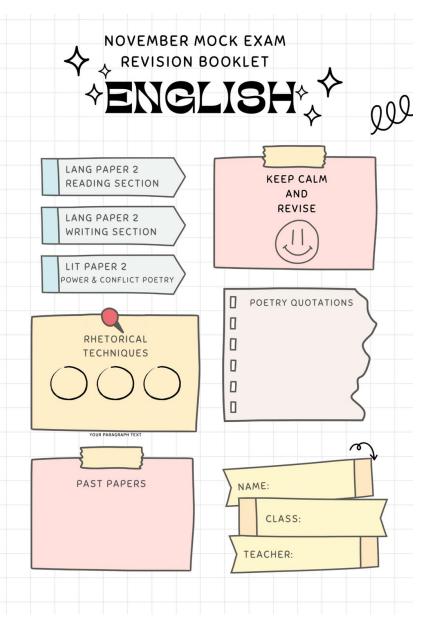
Year 11 November Mock Exams: Keep Calm and Revise!

With the mock exams starting soon after the beginning of term 2, it is vital that your child in Year 11 completes revision at home.

They say practice makes perfect, so what better way to secure your child's grade than getting them to practise some of the English skills that they will need to succeed in their mock exams? Purposeful revision will help your child achieve a higher grade.

To support them with this, every Year 11 student has received an English revision booklet with everything they need to revise before their English mock exams.

The booklets contain step by step guides, tips to do well in their exams, and past practice papers with sample answers.



Careers

Careers at Somervale

Following an incredibly successful Work Experience week and Careers Week for last year's Year 10 students, they have now returned as Year 11, ready to use these experiences to influence their own career choices after their GCSEs. In preparation for this, this year group have had assemblies with MSN Sixth Form and also with Apprenticeships West. There will also be a further assembly with Bath College. Open Days and Evenings are also being advertised on the year group Google Classroom, and can also be found on the following websites:

Bath College MSN Sixth Apprenticeship Information

Year 11 students will continue to be provided with Independent Guidance from our Careers Advisor, Ros Windsor (rwindsor@nortonhillschool.com). These will be on a Wednesday.

Other year groups have also had Careers events this term; Year 8 have had introduction sessions with Bath Spa University, exploring courses that are available. A selection of Year 10 students will also have a Future of Work trip on the 23rd October, focusing on career sectors linked to Technology.

Next term, we will be celebrating Green Careers Week (3rd-7th November) as well as there being further Careers Events.

Finally, Year 10 have had their Work Experience launch assembly and parents/carers should also have received information on dates, how to get a placement, as well as how the process works. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either myself (sdavis@somervaleschool.com) or Miss Pattison, our Work Experience coordinator.

PSHE

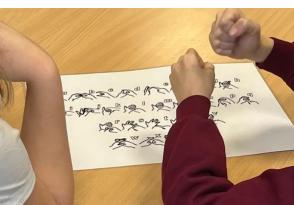
Celebrating Differences Day

Our Year 8 students took part in an inspiring *Celebrating Differences Day*, where they explored and embraced diversity through a range of engaging workshops. Throughout the day, students experienced **African Drumming, Cultural Dance from around the World, Carnival Mask Making, Sign Language**, and **Disability in PE**.

The atmosphere was energetic and inclusive, with students enthusiastically participating and learning about different cultures, abilities, and forms of expression. It was a fantastic day filled with creativity, teamwork, and respect for others—our students truly embraced the spirit of celebration and difference!









Netball

Our Year 7 Netball team played some great netball on Monday the 13th against St Greg's, Writhlington and Norton Hill. Well done to Taiya, Lacie and Willow for gaining Player of the Match and Willow for also gaining Miss Dury's player of the match!





Our Year 8 team have been the most consistent team regarding training and competitions! They have played some excellent netball against Writhlington and Norton Hill recently and have competed in the B&NES Netball tournament where they played extremely well! Shout to Calley and Flo for gaining player of the match and Roxy for gaining Miss Dury's player of the match! The team have also played in friendly matches against Wellsway and other schools where they showed great attacking and defending skills; well done all!



Our YR9 team have had a brilliant term for fixtures. They have played against Writhlington, Norton Hill, St Greg's, Wellsway, Frome College and more! In a recent tournament, we were the only school who managed to get 2 teams together too which was really impressive!./ The team have been progressing really well with lots of students improving at training! A big team success was their win against Wellsway with an epic score of 7-3! Well done all!



Our YR9 and KS4 Netball team also played Frome College away on Wednesday the 15th October. Both teams played extremely well and shout out to Jeannie for gaining player of the match! Well done to Summer G and Faith C for getting Miss Dury's Player of the Match!

Boys Rugby

Year 7 & Year 8 boys have put on a number of strong performances this term against strong local schools. Their energy and enthusiasm towards rugby - a new sport for most of them - is admirable! Well done boys!





Boys Rugby

Y9 boys have had a strong start to the season having won every match so far. Keep up the good work boys!



Miss Low continues to bring on our girls' rugby team every Wednesday after school. We are really lucky to have links with Bristol Bears Women's team meaning some players will be coming into school next term to help coach the girls team.

Sports Leaders

On Oct 23rd, a group of our sports leaders coached, umpired and score 7 primary school Netball teams at Somervale School. The students showed great maturity, knowledge and confidence and the younger students definitely seen them as role models. Well done all!

Girls Football

Term 1 has been an extremely positive start for our girls football, seeing the biggest numbers attending girls football club afterschool we've seen in several years!

Our U16 Girls football team had a very close Somerset Cup match against Frome College. After going 1-0 down early in the game, they persevered and worked hard as a team to get a goal back through Lily S. Unfortunately Frome got a late goal, resulting in a final score of 2-1. Well done to all the girls on their great performance, and a shout-out to captain Isla H for getting Players Player of the match and Cerys P for getting Coaches Player of the Match.



Our Year 7 team made their debut in the B&NES Football Tournament, which saw 9 schools across the area come together to play football. The girls showed great determination and positivity throughout all their games and should be very proud of their performance. Shout out to captain Poppy W for motivating the team and Daisy B for getting Coaches Player of the Tournament.

Cross Country

This term we took 40 students across to Kingswood playing fields in Bath to compete in the district Cross Country event. All of our students represented Somervale amazingly well, with some great results against very hard competition. Special shout outs go to Alice B for coming 13th in the minor girls competition and Minnie T for coming 14th and Isla H for coming 15th in the inter girls competition.



Silver D of E

On the 9th-11th October, our YR11 Silver D of E team went on their final expedition with Mr Farrell, Mr Kelly and Miss Dury. The expedition took place on the Black Mountains (Brecon Beacons) in Wales. The students walked extremely well showing great resilience and teamwork. They also showed some great navigational skills and photography skills. Photography was also their teams expedition goal. They presented their photos and their powerpoint to Miss Dury and Mr Farrell on Thursday 16th October showing great confidence and oracy skills! Well done all!







PSHE

Year 8 Finance Workshop

This term our year 8 students took part in an engaging finance workshop, learning the essentials of budgeting and how to make smart choices with money.

Through interactive activities and real life scenarios, they explored how to balance income and expenses, save for the future, and understand the value of money management.

A fantastic opportunity for our students to build important life skills that will support them both now and in the future.



House News

Harridge House Charity Week

Harridge charity week had great support from the whole school, with students taking part in basketball free-throws and emoji film quizzes, as well as a lunch time cinema. We also joined forces with **Greyfield** for the non-uniform day and penalty competition on Friday, with special thanks to Ben R for being in goal, as well as Mr Gentle for playing his part. All of this has helped us raise money for **JustOneTree**, our house charity this year. Thank you to all my amazing helpers, from house captains Megan and Darcey to Ava B, Ronnie A, Flo A, Rokque L and Ethan HP.



Greyfield House Charity Week

Greyfield Charity Week was a huge success, with students helping to raise money for **Action for Children**.

Throughout the week students helped to organise a lucky dip, cake sales, teacher sponging and taking some penalties to try and win some chocolates against Mr Gentle and Harridge legend Y11 Ben Rogers.

Special thanks go to A
Pritchard, A Button and N
Elridge for your lovely cakes,
and E Denning for your help
with sponging the teachers!

SEN Department

The Preparing For Adulthood Fair

Fosse Way School will be holding the Preparation for Adulthood Fair for BANES this year. It is on the 4th November at Fosse Way School from 4.15pm - 6pm. This is an absolutely essential event for all young people with EHCPs from Year 7 up to come and learn more about their potential next steps in education, day services, support services, employment, volunteering, hobbies and so much more. Younger students are welcome also.



School Office



HELP SUPPORT

SOMERVALE SCHOOL

HELP US TO SECURE FUNDING FOR OUR NEW LEGO STEM CLUB WITH THE TESCO BLUE TOKEN SCHEME.

The lego Stem Club will introduce students to engineering concepts through Lego-based activities, also creating an inclusive space for students to develop teamwork and innovation.







Voting to commence from October 2025 - Mid January 2026 In the following stores

PEASEDOWN ST JOHN EXPRESS BA2 8DN MIDSOMER NORTON SUPERSTORE BS39 7SW COMBE DOWN EXPRESS BA2 5RU BATH WESTGATE BUILDING BAI 1EB

If you have any Lego you would like to donate towards our new STEM club please drop it into reception. Thank you in advance.

School Office

Student Voice Feedback: July 2025 (323 responses)



85% of students say they are happy at SVS

94% have been here since the start of Yr7

90% feel safe at SVS

92% feel they are making good progress at SVS

88% feel they are well looked after at SVS

81% felt the school responds well to any concerns they raise

91% feel they are challenged in their learning

87% feel they have a trusted adult to go to 82% feel that the school teaches them about their place in the wider world

91% said that they felt the school was well led and managed

89% felt that their parents received valuable information about their progress

55% of students have
never
experienced any form of
bullying and
40% said they had
experienced a
form of bullying once and
9% more
than once. Only 30% said
they had reported it

93% would recommend this school to another student

80% feel that the school makes sure it students are well behaved

91% feel they are well taught at SVS

School Office

Parent Voice Feedback: July 2025 (125 responses)



90% strongly agree/ agree that their child is happy at this school (3% don't know)

92% strongly agree/ agree their child feels safe at this school (2% don't know)

70% said their child has not been bullied. 25% said their child had experienced bullying of some sort but that the school had dealt with it quickly and effectively

87% strongly agree/agree the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved (6% don't know)

78% strongly
agreed/agree that the
school makes them
aware of what their child
will learn during the year
(15% didn't know)

80% of parents that had raised an issued or concern with the school reported that they felt it had been dealt with properly (20% of the responders have not raised a concern

90% strongly agree/agreed that the school lets them know how their child is doing (4% didn't know)

94% strongly agree/agreed that there is a good range of subjects available to their child at the school

86% of parents strongly agreed/agree that their child does well at the school (4% didn't know)

92% of parents would recommend the school to another parent

73% of parents of children with SEND strongly agreed/agreed that the school gives them the support they need to succeed.

(10% didn't know)

95% of parents strongly agreed/agree that the school has high expectations for their child (3% didn't know)

School News



ENGLISH AND MATHS 'UTORING

The team at Kip McGrath have been wonderful in building my son's lost confidence. The lessons were engaging, fun and the proof of learning really showed in school exams.

Amy, Year 7 parent

Kip McGrath Midsomer Norton



Build your child's confidence with our qualified tutors



Primary - Secondary • Proven Methods • Personalised Learning

Book a **free assessment** today

8A High Street, Midsomer Norton, BA3 2LE

kipmcgrath.co.uk/midsomer-norton



01761 569005

Important Dates



Term Dates 2025-26

<u>Term Dates</u> <u>Academic Year 2025/2026</u>

M N S P Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

Term 1

Monday 1st September 2025 Friday 24th October 2025

Term 2

Monday 3rd November 2025 Friday 19th December 2025

Term 3

Monday 5th January 2026 Friday 13th February 2026 Term 4

Monday 23rd February 2026 Thursday 2nd April 2026

Term 5

Monday 20th April 2026 Friday 22nd May 2026

Term 6

Monday 1st June 2026 Tuesday 21st July 2026 (Friday 18th July last day for students)

INSET DAYS

Inset day 1

Monday 1st September 2025

Inset day 2

Tuesday 2nd September 2025

Inset day 3

Friday 24th October 2025

Inset day 4

Monday 5th January 2026

Inset day 5

Monday 20th July 2026

Inset day 6

Tuesday 21st July 2026

National Bank Holidays:

Thursday 25th December 2025
Friday 26th December 2025
Thursday 1st January 2026
Friday 3rd April 2026
Monday 6th April 2026
Monday 4th May 2026
Monday 25th May 2026
Monday 31st August 2026