

THE OTTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF OTTERBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL.



Dear Families

As we quickly approach the merry month of May, we start to think about two major events in the school calendar. Firstly, the Year 6 children will sit their statutory tests during the week of 11th May and I have to say that I'm really impressed with how they seem to be approaching these!

Secondly, it is our May Fayre – the biggest event in our “Fun and Fundraising” calendar. The FOS are working extremely hard to bring you a great day, and the year 6 children are ready to provide some entertaining side stalls. In the ring, there will be different groups of children throughout the event putting on live performances, and food and refreshments will be available from the BBQ and bar. Should they be at all interested, which they usually do appear to be, the event will close with the children giving me a severe soaking (again)!!

So, to help everyone plan for a great day, and to maybe encourage a few more volunteers, here is all you need to know (for now) about the May Fayre on May 16th.



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COMING SOON – WE WILL BE CELEBRATING DAVID ATTENBOROUGH'S 100th BIRTHDAY ON MAY 8th. PLEASE LOOK OUT FOR A LETTER FROM SCHOOL EARLY NEXT WEEK!

Trip Focus: Year 1 Windsor Castle

I was delighted to be able to join Squirrel Class on their trip to Windsor Castle this week. Despite having to walk quite a distance, they were brilliant throughout the day, showing good listening skills, responding to questions from the tour guide we had and getting excited about many of the displays in the state rooms. Highlights of the trip were visiting the battlements where they learned about defences and seeing the guards.



Developing playtimes games and lunchtimes on the field

The weather has been perfect for launching lunchtimes on the field this week. The children have been really enjoying the full range of activities on offer which include our playground game of the week. This week's game of the week was 'Stuck in the Mud'. The games are run by teachers initially, who then gradually step away as the week goes on to encourage the children to begin to set up the game themselves. Below are some photos of the other activities on offer at lunchtimes.



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In the corner of the field, we have established a designated digging area for the children. There has been lots of café role play and 'cooking' of delicious concoctions.

There is plenty of space for sports and games. R&R Sports are running a different activity every day including dodgeball, football, cricket and athletics events. These are open to Years 4-6 (from 12:00 to 12:30) and then Years 1-3 (from 12:30-1:00pm). In addition to this, Mrs Armstrong and the playleaders are offering a range of sports equipment and games in the middle of the field such as tennis, rounders, ribbons, hoops and pom poms. We also have a drawing and colouring box and reading mats that the children can sit on in the orchard to enjoy a book if they would like to.

Reverend Webb is now kindly joining us every Tuesday to help us develop our reflection area. This week the children had the opportunity to decorate and write inspirational messages on pebbles and hide them in the trees to enhance this calm and spiritual space.

Spoon/ Spade Appeal

Do you have any unwanted spoons or small spades of any kind that our children can use in our new digging area? Please bring any donations to the office. Thank you.

Freeing the Froglets

Otter Class have really enjoyed watching Mrs Holland's four rescued tadpoles transform into froglets over the last couple of months. This week became very exciting as, having grown all four legs, they began to climb onto their log and up the side of the bucket. We knew it was time to release them so together Otter Class set off to the pond with Mrs Bertichinni, Mrs Holland and the froglets, which were gradually moved to a shallow tray so the children could observe them climbing up the sides ready to start their big adventures. They are now waiting with anticipation for their chicken eggs to hatch.



Otterbourne's Got Talent

This week has been very busy with the rehearsals and finals of Otterbourne's Got Talent. There have been all sorts of acts from different year groups ranging from raps to Rubix cubes. At the time of writing, I don't have any photos so I look forward to updating you with some next week.

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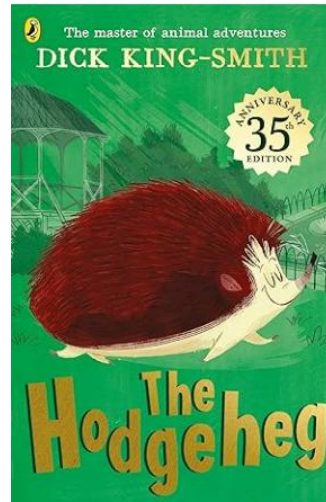
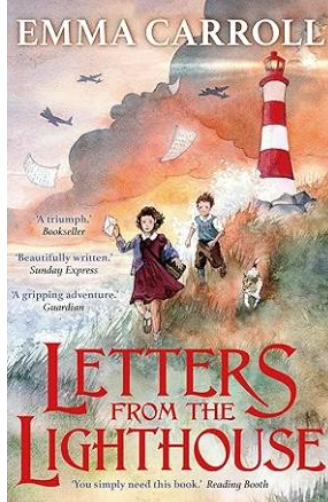
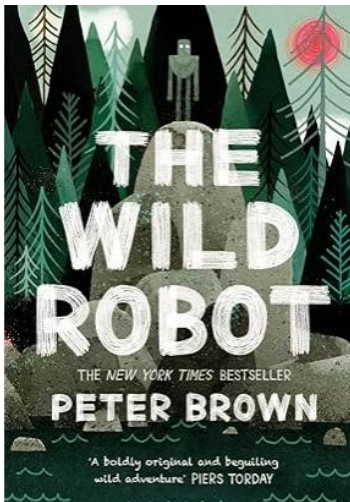
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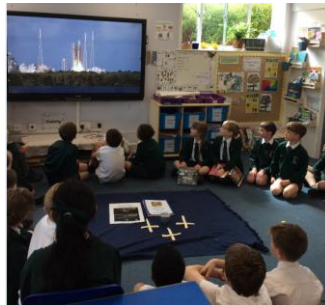
Summer Term Class Texts

This term Year 2 are reading *The Hodgeheg* by Dick-King Smith. Year 3/4 are reading *Wild Robot* by Peter Brown and Year 5/6 are reading *Letters from the Lighthouse* by Emma Carroll.

If you are looking for age appropriate texts to share with your children, lots of ideas can be found on this website: [Year Group Recommended Reads – Top Children's Books by Age](#)



LEARNING IN ACTION PHOTOS



Wren Class explored our Christian Value of Trust in their class worship where they learned about the Artemis II mission.



Hedgehog class have been sorting shapes according to their properties.

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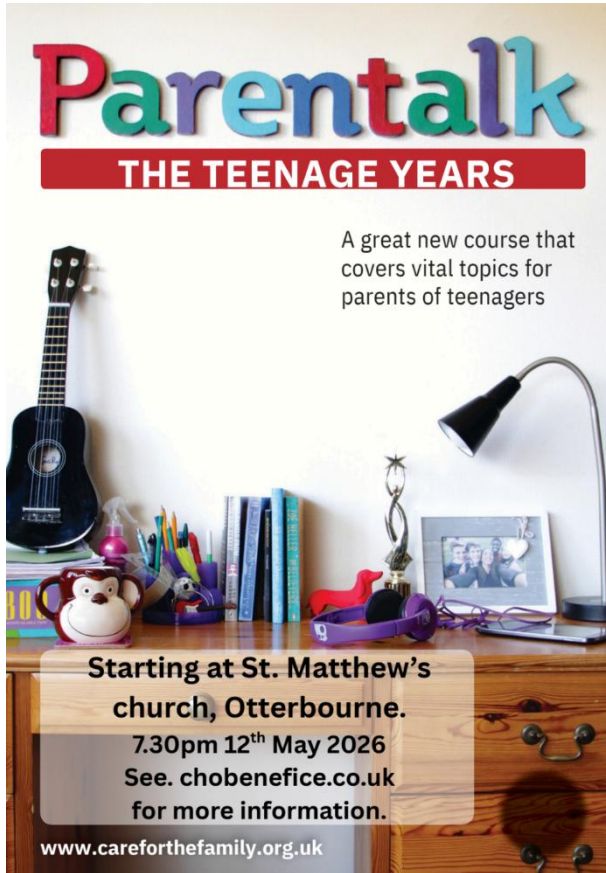
This week Otter Class have been immersed in retelling the story of the Gruffalo both through puppet shows, play and exploring the deep, dark wood.



Sparrow Class have been designing their moving pictures using levers based on the character Varjak Paw from their class text.

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Parentalk
THE TEENAGE YEARS

A great new course that covers vital topics for parents of teenagers

Starting at St. Matthew's church, Otterbourne.
7.30pm 12th May 2026
See. chobenefice.co.uk for more information.

www.careforthefamily.org.uk

A message from Reverend Patrick Webb:

Hello, we are hosting the Parentalk by Care for the Family at St. Matthew's on the 12th of May at 7.30pm.

It is completely free. The focus is on parenting styles and strategy, not faith.

For more information you can see the course information here:

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/courses/courses-for-parents/parentalk-courses/>

Any questions please do ask but we would welcome any Otterbourne parents to join us.

Village Question Time-ish – a message from the Friends of St Matthew's Church

We will be hosting a Question Time event at St Matthew's Church on Saturday May 9th at 7.30pm. This is based on the BBC's "Question Time" format but will be much more light-hearted and relaxed, with wine and cheese being served during the evening.

Included on the panel are Reverend Patrick Webb (our new Rector), the MP for Winchester, Danny Chambers, the Lady Gardener, Ruth Evans, Lucy Morris and Martin Geraghty, Headteacher at the village school.

There is no charge, although there will be plate for donations if you would like to show your appreciation.

You are cordially invited to attend and if you would like to submit a non-contentious question, please send it to gill.macdonald@btinternet.com

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May 2026 Timetable

All regular sessions delivered live online via zoom. 90 minutes long

£24 each or FREE with School Membership

Book online at facefamilyadvice.co.uk

Recordings available for 48 hours

School Anxiety	4 May 10am
Understanding Anger	4 May 7pm
Facing Defiance	5 May 10am
Supporting Healthy Screen Use	5 May 7pm
Cannabis and Ketamine Awareness	11 May 10am
Anxiety Explained	11 May 7pm
Introduction to OCD	12 May 10am
What is ACT?	12 May 7pm
Decreasing Depression	18 May 10am
Raising Self-Esteem	18 May 7pm
Supporting Healthy Sleep	19 May 10am
Understanding the Teenage Brain	19 May 7pm
Autism: Improving Communication	25 May 10am
Improving Family Communication	25 May 7pm
Supporting a Child with ADHD	26 May 10am
Understanding Addictive Behaviour	26 May 7pm
FREE Getting a Good Nights Sleep	28 May 7-8pm

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At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

YOUTUBE

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows about YouTube. The Google-owned platform allows users to upload and share videos globally, making it a readily accessible resource with free content on almost any topic. However, with over 20 million videos uploaded each day, not all material is suitable for younger audiences.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed across multiple device types, even without an account. While some videos are marked as 'age restricted', this relies on uploader honesty and automated moderation, meaning children and young people may still encounter unsuitable content if these measures aren't taken.



TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Popular trends and challenges can be entertaining and widely shared. While many are harmless, some can be risky or harmful if copied. For example, the 'salt and ice challenge' has caused injuries when imitated.



EXPOSURE TO EXTREME CONTENT

The platform's algorithm often promotes content that attracts high engagement, which can sometimes include videos containing extreme viewpoints, misinformation, or risky behaviour. As children and young people watch more of this content, similar videos are likely to be recommended by YouTube's algorithm, therefore reinforcing the exposure.



CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube includes social features such as comments and direct messaging. This means young users can interact with people they don't know, potentially exposing them to inappropriate language, cyberbullying, or unwanted contact. Young content creators may be especially vulnerable.



SUGGESTED CONTENT

YouTube recommends videos based on what a user has previously watched. While this can enhance the experience, it may also encourage binge-watching and excessive screen time, particularly when Autoplay is enabled. Without an account, users are shown trending videos, which are not always age appropriate.



SHORT-FORM CONTENT IMPACT

YouTube Shorts – short, fast-paced videos – are designed for continuous viewing. This style of content can be highly engaging but may also contribute to increased screen time and difficulties with maintaining focus over longer periods.



Advice for Parents & Educators

CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

YouTube Kids can help reduce young users' exposure to unsuitable content by filtering videos into age groups, such as preschool, younger, and older children. However, as moderation is automated, it should be used alongside active supervision.



CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

If a child in your care uploads content, consider setting videos to Private or Unlisted so they are only shared with trusted viewers. Disabling comments can also help reduce unwanted interaction from strangers.



USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Google Family Link allows adults to filter content, monitor usage, and manage younger users' screen time. Supervised Accounts offer a gradual step up from YouTube Kids, enabling children to explore the platform with appropriate safeguards.



WATCH TOGETHER

Spending time watching YouTube with the children and young people in your care can help you understand what they enjoy and guide your conversations about content. Tools like Downtime in Family Link can also help limit unsupervised viewing.



Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.



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See full reference list on our website

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