



## A message from the

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we move further into March, it has been wonderful to see the children at Star make such a positive and purposeful start to the second half-term. Classrooms are calm, focused and full of curiosity, and pupils are demonstrating our STAR values every single day through their effort, kindness and determination to succeed.

Before half-term, we marked Safer Internet Day, where children took part in thoughtful and practical activities to help them understand how to stay safe online.

We were also proud to link Children's Mental Health Week with our ATT2030 focus on *Belonging and Becoming*. Each class created opportunities for discussion, reflection and self-expression, ensuring that every child feels known, valued and supported. Thank you to all families who continue to work in partnership with us to support wellbeing at home and school.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Stepping Stones for inviting us to visit this week. This enriching and interactive experience helped children to learn about the significance of Ramadan and explore aspects of South Asian and Middle Eastern cultures. Experiences like this broaden horizons and help our pupils grow in understanding, tolerance and respect.

As we look ahead, we are now just weeks away from SATs. Our Year 6 pupils are working incredibly hard, and we are very proud of their resilience and commitment. Please continue to encourage your child to attend booster sessions and be in school every day — attendance and punctuality make a significant difference. There is so much planned for this half-term, and every day truly counts.

Across school, children are also showing great determination as they practise for the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check and the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. Their focus and perseverance are fantastic to see.

We are delighted to share that our Trust is offering free family learning courses for parents and carers. These sessions provide valuable opportunities to develop skills and confidence while supporting your child's learning. Please read on to find out more.

Finally, Mrs Wedgwood and Mrs Keogh are on a mission to further develop our outdoor area. They are particularly keen to enhance opportunities for growing and planting. If you, or someone you know, could support with resources, expertise or donations to help bring this vision to life, we would be thrilled to hear from you.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. Together, we are ensuring that every child at Star feels a strong sense of belonging and is becoming the very best version of themselves.

Warmest regards,

Attendance Year to Date for the Academy: **96.7%**

Attendance for this week:

Y1 – 93.5%

Y2 – 100%

Y3 – 98%

Y4 – 98.3%

Y5 – 95.2%

Y6 – 95.3%

Whole school weekly attendance – **96.7%**

Well done  
Year 2!



As an Academy, we are aiming for 97% attendance every week. Please see below for the attendance for each class this week [w/e 27.02.26]



## Diary Dates



Event	Date
Y2 Leicester Space Centre	03.03.26
Y3 Ancient Egypt Workshop	04.03.26
World Book Day	05.03.26
Coffee Morning 8:30-9:30	05.03.26
Y1 Field Trip Tunstall Park	06.03.26
Y2 Road Safety Education	09.03.26
Y6 Multicultural Exhibition	09.03.26
Y2 Staffs Fire & Rescue	10.03.26
Y4 Lower Drayton Farm	10.03.26
Y5 Anglo Saxons Workshop	10.03.26
Y4 Multicultural Exhibition	11.03.26
Ladies Assembly 2:30-3:10	12.03.26
Y4,5,6 Play with Clay	16.03.26
Y2 Lower Drayton Farm	17.03.26
Y1/2 Easter Bonnet 9:00am	18.03.26
Coffee Morning 8:30-9:30	19.03.26
Eid competition entries	19.03.26
<b>Inset Day (School Closed)</b>	<b>20.03.26</b>
Easter competition entries	23.03.26
Walk with Easter Bunny	23.03.26
Chocolate Bingo 2:40-3:10	24.03.26
Canal & River Safety Talks	24.03.26
Y3 Multicultural Exhibition	25.03.26
Behaviour Treat 2:00-3:10	25.03.26
Easter Assembly 8:50-9:15	26.03.26
Care Home Visit (invite only)	27.03.26
Last day of Spring Term	27.03.26

**EASTER HALF TERM HOLIDAY**  
**30th March - 10th April**

After half-term, we will begin on week 1 of the lunch menu.

Lunch menus can be found further into the newsletter.

# Attendance



**Be In It  
To WIN IT!**

## Fabulous February

**Attendance Challenge**

**All you need to do, to be entered into  
our February prize draw is....  
Arrive on time and attend school  
every day during February**

**100%**

This week is the last week of our Fabulous February challenge.

So far we have the following number of children in each class still in with the chance of winning,

Year 1—11 pupils

Year 2—13 pupils

Year 3— 17 pupils

Year 4— 19 pupils

Year 5—14 pupils

Year 6—22 pupils

## Attendance Matters

# Safeguarding This week's focus:



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](https://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about TECHNOLOGY ATTACHMENT

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

In today's digital age, children are increasingly forming emotional and habitual attachments to their devices. With 96% regularly accessing the internet and nearly half engaging in live streaming or content sharing, their online presence is greater than ever. This guide explores the phenomenon of technology attachment in young people and offers expert advice on fostering healthier digital habits.

### WIRED FOR REWARD

Children's brains are particularly sensitive to reward-based stimulation, and some digital platforms, especially those offering quick-hit content like short-form videos, are designed to exploit this. The instant gratification of likes, comments, and rapid scene changes triggers dopamine releases, making these interactions highly addictive. Over time, this may contribute to changes in attention patterns and a reduced inclination towards activities that involve prolonged focus or delayed gratification, such as reading, problem-solving, or creative play.

### NIGHT-TIME TECH HABITS

Screen use late into the evening can disrupt natural sleep patterns by suppressing melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep. Children engaging with stimulating content may experience delayed bedtimes, lower sleep quality, and increased fatigue during the day. Additionally, fear of missing out (FOMO) on online interactions can cause anxiety and resistance to logging off, creating a cycle of late-night engagement and tired mornings.

### SHAPED BY SCREENS

For many children, digital spaces have become a key arena for identity exploration and expression. Social media encourages them to curate their image carefully, with likes, comments, and shares serving as social validation. This environment can tie self-esteem to online feedback, making children vulnerable to comparison, self-doubt, and pressure to present a perfect version of themselves, even when it doesn't reflect reality.

### DIGITAL WORLD DANGERS

The internet can expose children to unfiltered content, some of which may be inappropriate, misleading, or harmful. Cyberbullying, exposure to idealised lifestyles, and online predators are all risks children face, often without fully understanding the consequences. Misinformation can shape distorted worldviews, while constant comparison to others can erode self-confidence. Without guidance, children may internalise these digital dangers, impacting their emotional and mental health.

### DIGITAL DEPENDENCY BUILDS

Devices often become digital comfort blankets. In moments of boredom, anxiety, or loneliness, children may instinctively reach for screens to self-soothe. This reliance on digital distraction limits their ability to develop healthy coping mechanisms, such as mindfulness, conversation or physical activity. As the habit builds, their dependency may displace real-world experiences and emotional resilience.

### FRIENDSHIPS & FILTERS

Technology transforms how young people socialise, often replacing face-to-face interaction with text-based or image-based communication. While messaging apps and social media enable connection, they may also limit emotional expression and the development of essential interpersonal skills, such as tone recognition, empathy, and reading body language. As a result, some children may become less confident with exchanges in person and more reliant on digital personas to navigate friendships.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### READ THE ROOM

Pay attention to behavioural changes that may signal unhealthy tech attachment. This includes mood swings, increased secrecy about online activity, withdrawal from family time or hobbies, and visible distress when separated from devices. These cues can indicate deeper emotional reliance or even exposure to distressing content. Early recognition allows for proactive support and meaningful conversation.

### SHAPE DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Create a balanced digital environment with clear guidelines on when and how devices can be used. This includes screen-free zones (e.g. bedrooms, dining tables), app restrictions, and time limits. More importantly, involve children in these decisions and explain the reasoning behind them, even reflecting upon your own digital use so they can see it's something we all have to manage. Turning boundaries into a dialogue, not just directives, helps build trust and encourages self-regulation.

### DON'T WAIT, REACH OUT EARLY

If a child's relationship with technology starts affecting their emotional wellbeing, school performance, or social connections, don't hesitate to seek help. Open up discussions with teachers, pastoral staff, or digital wellbeing professionals. Early intervention is key, and a supportive network can provide tools, resources, and reassurance for both children and adults navigating this evolving digital landscape.

### SET THE STANDARD

Children often model the behaviour they see. When adults demonstrate healthy digital habits, such as prioritising face-to-face conversation, balancing screen time with other activities, and using devices with purpose, children are more likely to follow suit. Share your own positive uses of technology and invite children to do the same. This collaborative approach helps demystify tech use and encourages responsible engagement.

### Meet Our Expert

Philippa Wraithmell is an award-winning educator, author of *The Digital Ecosystem*, and founder of EdRuption and Digital Bridge. Digital Bridge supports the relationship between families and technology, empowering everyone to be balanced and digitally well. With over 15 years in digital education and wellbeing, she supports families, schools, and governments to build balanced and safe digital cultures.



#WakeUpWednesday

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# Wake Up Wednesday



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](https://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about GROUP CHATS

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

On messaging apps, social media and online games, group chats are one of the most popular ways that children connect. Group chats allow messages, images and videos to be shared in one place and help friendships flourish; however, they also come with a number of risks.

#### TEASING AND BULLYING

Children of all ages are keen to fit in socially, and group chats can sometimes complicate that process. While group chats can foster connection, they can also give way to mean comments or jokes at someone's expense, especially when others join in for laughs. When bullying happens publicly, in front of friends and classmates, it can intensify the emotional impact – adding to embarrassment, anxiety and feelings of isolation for the child being targeted.

#### UNKNOWN MEMBERS

Children often can't control who is added to a group, which can lead to privacy concerns. Sharing personal details in group chats can be dangerous, and children have no control over what others do with the material they send. Some members of the chat might even decide to use such information maliciously.

#### PEER PRESSURE

Children may feel they have to constantly stay engaged just to be included and keep up with the conversation. In some cases, they might partake in inappropriate behaviours – like sharing explicit photos, jokes or teasing – just to fit in. Group settings can also encourage children to act in ways they normally wouldn't, or stay silent when they know something is wrong, out of fear of being excluded. Some children may find it difficult to leave toxic group chats.

#### INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Some group chats may include inappropriate language or imagery. Even if a child isn't actively participating in the conversation, they may still be exposed to this content simply by being part of the group. Some apps have disappearing messaging features, where content is only available once or for a few seconds, which makes it harder for children to report something they've seen.

#### EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION

Exclusion in group chats is common and can take several forms. Sometimes a new group is created specifically to leave one child out on purpose. In other cases, the chat may happen on an app that a child doesn't have access to, making it impossible for them to join in. This can cause feelings of being left out – even unintentionally.

#### VIDEO AND LIVE CHATS

Many popular apps allow children to engage in live streaming with interactive chats or have group video chats. Anyone can be added to these streams, and often children tag peers in the comments and have conversations which are unmoderated. There's a risk of being exposed to inappropriate or violent content and offensive language, either in the group videos or via the group chats.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

#### CONSIDER OTHERS' FEELINGS

Group chats can become an arena for children to compete for social status. Help children consider how people might feel if they behave unkindly. If a child does upset someone, encourage them to reach out, show empathy and apologise for their mistake.

#### SET SOME GROUP CHAT RULES

Discuss safe group chat practices, such as asking a peer for consent before adding them to a group chat, or leaving a group chat if a stranger is added. Tell children that if they're added to a group they didn't agree to beforehand, it's OK for them to leave immediately.

#### BLOCK, REPORT AND LEAVE

If a child encounters inappropriate content or feels uncomfortable in a group chat, encourage them to block and report the sender and leave the group. Make sure children know it's OK to leave a group chat if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

#### SUPPORT, NOT JUDGEMENT

Group chats are an excellent way for children to connect and feel like they belong. However, remind them that they can confide in you if they feel bullied or excluded, instead of responding to the person who's upset them. Validate their feelings and empower them by discussing how they'd like to handle the situation. You can also encourage children to speak up if they witness others being bullied.

#### PRACTISE SAFE SHARING

It's vital for children to be aware of what they're sharing and who might potentially see it. Ensure they understand the importance of not revealing personal details – like their address, their school, or photos they wouldn't like to be seen widely. Remind them that once something is shared in a group, they can't be certain where it might end up or how it might be used.

#### SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Being bombarded with notifications from a group chat can be an irritating distraction – especially if it's happening late in the evening. Explain to children that they can still be part of a group chat while disabling notifications. In fact, it would be healthier for them to do so, helping them avoid the pressure to respond immediately.

### Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant at BCyberAware, who has developed anti-bullying and cyber-safety workshops and policies for schools in Australia and the UK. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government, comparing the internet use and online behaviours of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.



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# Belonging & Becoming

Well done Year 4! Tidiest Classroom!



PE Awards



# Belonging & Becoming

This week's Superstars!



A HUGE WELL DONE!

# Belonging & Becoming

Individual Behaviour Point Winners!



# Belonging & Becoming



## Staff Star of the Week

Congratulations



**Mx Hollis**

Our fabulous Year Three Teacher, Mx Hollis, has passed their first ECT year. We are very proud of you!

# Academy Life This Week



Thank you so very much to all of the children who entered the Valentines poem competition.

As always, it was very tough to pick our favourites as so much effort had gone into all of the entries. Well done everyone for taking part and congratulations to our winners :

- Y1 Matty
- Y2 Laynie
- Y3 Ayda
- Y4 Favour
- Y5 Fareedah
- Y6 Alisha

Our Year 5 children have taken part in a Ramadan workshop hosted by Stepping Stones Community Organisation.

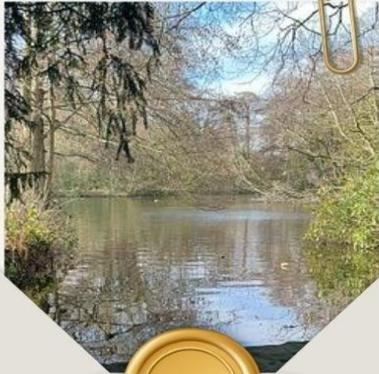
This visit gave children an enriching and interactive experience to help them learn about the significance of Ramadan and explore aspects of South Asian and Middle Eastern cultures. As Stepping Stones explains, the workshop is designed to "give students an enriching and interactive experience that teaches students about Ramadan

The children also took part in a drumming workshop using the traditional daff drum.



# Academy Life This Week

Year 5 had a fabulous day at The Wolseley Centre Nature Reserve. They identified trees and plants, measured trees, discussed seed dispersal and searched for minibeasts



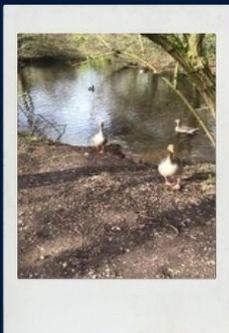
Year 5 Trip to The Wolseley Centre Nature Reserve

## Postcard

Correspondence:

We had a great time

Address:

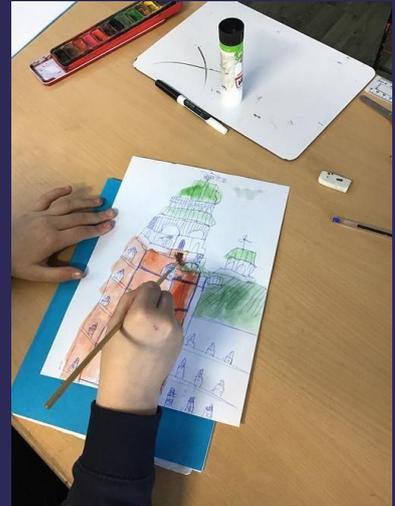
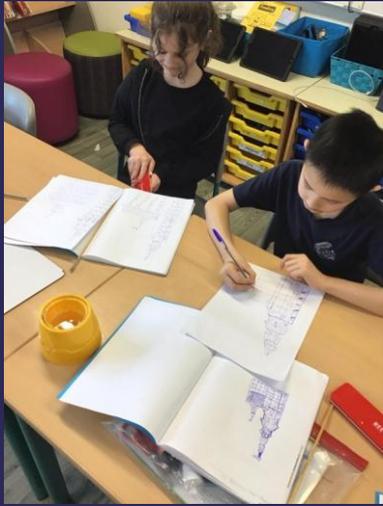


Throughout the day, the trip linked beautifully to the Year 5 curriculum:

Science: life cycles, habitats, food chains, adaptation  
Geography: rivers, land use, human impact on the environment  
Art: sketching natural forms, textures, and landscapes  
Wellbeing: mindfulness, outdoor learning, teamwork

Pupils often leave with a stronger sense of curiosity about the natural world.

# Academy Life This Week



In Art Year 4 have been learning about sketching and painting with watercolours. Today they sketched and painted a design created by the artist and architect Kathryn Larsen.



## Y6 SATs Practice

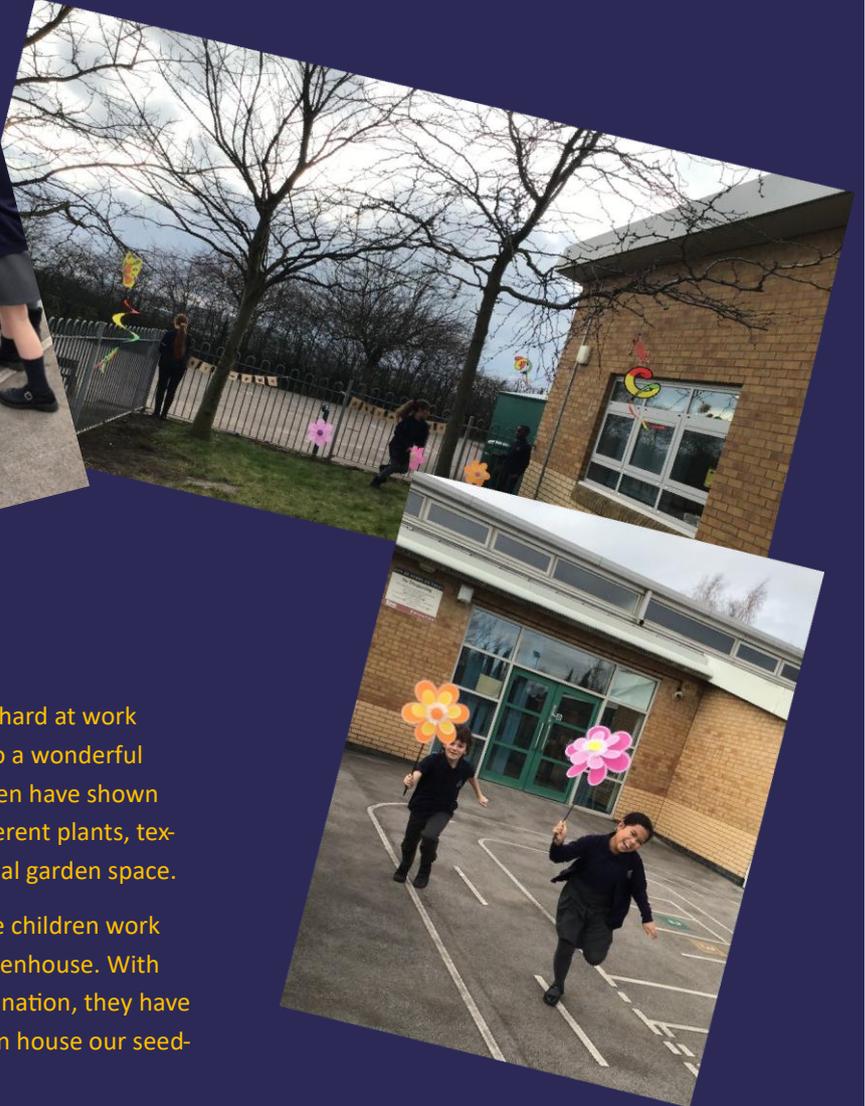
Y6 have worked tremendously hard this week, starting their SATs practice papers. We will continue to work on practice papers until their SATs tests in the summer.

This week we completed 2x Maths practice along with Spag and Reading.

Well done Y6!



# Academy Life This Week



Update from Mrs Keogh

The **Busy Fingers Gardening Club** has been hard at work getting our brand-new sensory garden off to a wonderful start! Over the past few sessions, the children have shown incredible enthusiasm as they explored different plants, textures, and scents that will soon fill our special garden space.

A particular highlight has been watching the children work together to begin building our very own greenhouse. With teamwork, cooperation, and lots of determination, they have helped assemble the structure that will soon house our seedlings and protect them as they grow.

## *Busy Fingers Gardening Club* **Donations Welcome**



**If you have any small tools, small gloves or compost suitable for the children's club - any donations would be gratefully received. Thank you**



## Our Mission: ATT2030

Belonging and Becoming

Capable Competent Confident

*One small thing that I will do differently tomorrow*

Should you feel curious about ATT2030, please follow the link [Our Mission: ATT2030 - Academy Transformation Trust](#)

## Oikos Book Visit



### OIKOS COMPETITION WINNERS

The winners for the Oikos writing competition visited Waterstones to spend their vouchers they won. They all had a lovely time looking around at all the books and then choose which they wanted to buy.





# SPRING / SUMMER LUNCH MENU



## The Star Primary Academy Menu {Week 1}



Menu for Week Commencing: 2nd Mar, 23rd Mar, 27th Apr, 18th May, 15th Jun, 6th July

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
 <b>Main Option One</b>	<b>Pepperoni Pizza</b> <i>Jacket Wedges, Sweetcorn &amp; Coleslaw</i>	<b>Sweet &amp; Sour Chicken</b> <i>With Fluffy Rice, Peas &amp; Broccoli</i>	<b>Herby Roasted Chicken</b> <i>Served with Cabbage, Carrots, Roast Potatoes &amp; Gravy</i>	<b>Beef Meatballs</b> <i>Served with Pasta, Garlic Bread, Green Beans and Broccoli</i>	<b>'Fish &amp; Chips'</b> <i>Peas, Beans or Curry Sauce</i>
<b>Main Option Two</b>	<b>Cheese &amp; Tomato Pizza</b> <i>Jacket Wedges, Sweetcorn &amp; Coleslaw</i>	<b>Vegetable Sweet &amp; Sour</b> <i>With Fluffy Rice, Peas &amp; Broccoli</i>	<b>Vegetarian Quorn Roast</b> <i>Served with Cabbage, Carrots, Roast Potatoes &amp; Gravy</i>	<b>Quorn Meatball</b> <i>Served with Garlic Bread, Green Beans and Broccoli.</i>	<b>Cheese &amp; Onion Slice</b> <i>Served with Oven Baked Chips, Baked Beans &amp; Mushy Peas</i>
<b>Daily Available All Week</b>	<p><i>Enjoy our jacket potatoes with a variety of hot and cold toppings. We also offer a freshly made salad selection, along with fresh fruit and yoghurts. Made-to-order sandwiches are available, including options like ham, cheese, and tuna mayonnaise. Additionally, alternative dietary options can be provided upon request.</i></p>				
 <b>Dessert</b>	<b>Frozen Flavoured Yoghurt</b>	<b>Strawberry Jelly</b>	<b>Fruity Flapjack</b>	 <b>Sponge cake</b>	 <b>Vanilla ice cream</b>

Cost: £2.95 per day

Ordering: Lunches must be ordered in advance via the MCAS App and for this to process, they must be placed one day before.

Please note: Lunch orders cannot be made on the day in classrooms, at the school office or on arrival at the school office.

 Universal Free School Meals

All children in Years 1 and 2 are entitled to Universal Free School Meals.

# The Star Primary Academy Menu {Week 2}



Menu for Week Commencing: 9th Mar, 13th Apr, 4th May, 1st Jun, 22nd Jun, 13th July

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Main Option One</b>	<b>Chicken Fajita Wrap</b> <i>Served with Jacket Potato Wedges &amp; Vegetables</i>	<b>Beef Bolognese</b> <i>With Pasta, Peas, Carrots &amp; Garlic Bread</i>	<b>Herby Roasted Chicken</b> <i>Served with Spring Cabbage, Carrots, Roast Potatoes &amp; Gravy</i>	<b>Beef Burger</b> <i>Served with Cubed Potatoes, Peas &amp; Sweetcorn</i>	<b>Southern Fried Chicken</b> <i>Served with Oven Baked Chips, Baked Beans &amp; Sweetcorn</i>
<b>Main Option Two</b>	<b>Bean and Cheese Wrap</b> <i>Served with potato wedges and vegetables</i>	<b>Quorn Bolognese</b> <i>With Pasta, Peas, Carrots &amp; Garlic Bread</i>	<b>Vegetarian Quorn Roast</b> <i>Served with Cabbage, Carrots, Roast Potatoes &amp; Gravy</i>	<b>Veggie Burger</b> <i>Served with Cubed Potato, Broccoli &amp; Sweetcorn</i>	<b>Quorn Dippers</b> <i>Served with Oven Baked Chips, Baked Beans &amp; Sweetcorn</i>
<b>Daily Available All Week</b>	<p>Enjoy our jacket potatoes with a variety of hot and cold toppings. We also offer a freshly made salad selection, along with fresh fruit and yoghurts. Made-to-order sandwiches are available, including options like ham, cheese, and tuna mayonnaise. Additionally, alternative dietary options can be provided upon request.</p>				
<b>Dessert</b>	<b>Shortbread Biscuit</b>	<b>Eton Mess with Mixed Berries</b>	<b>Fruit Crumble and Custard</b>	<b>Fruity Milkshake</b>	<b>Vanilla Ice Cream</b>

# The Star Primary Academy Menu {Week 3}



Menu for Week Commencing: 9th Mar, 13th Apr, 4th May, 1st Jun, 22nd Jun, 13th July

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Main Option One</b>	<b>Ham &amp; Cheese Pizza</b> <i>Jacket Wedges, Sweetcorn &amp; Coleslaw</i>	<b>Chicken BBQ Melt</b> <i>Served with Herby Diced Potatoes, Carrots &amp; Peas</i>	<b>Honey Roast Gammon</b> <i>Served with Mash, Green Beans, Carrots &amp; Gravy.</i>	<b>Beef Lasagne</b> <i>Served with Jacket Wedges &amp; Creamy Coleslaw</i>	<b>'Fish &amp; Chips'</b> <i>Peas, Baked Beans Or Curry Sauce</i>
<b>Main Option Two</b>	<b>Cheese &amp; Tomato Pizza</b> <i>Jacket Wedges, Sweetcorn &amp; Coleslaw</i>	<b>Quorn BBQ Melt</b> <i>Served with Herby Diced Potatoes, Carrots &amp; Peas</i>	<b>Vegetarian Quorn Roast</b> <i>Served with Mash, Green Beans, Carrots &amp; Gravy.</i>	<b>Vegetable Lasagne</b> <i>Served with Jacket Wedges &amp; Creamy Coleslaw</i>	<b>Quorn Burger</b> <i>Served with Chips, Peas &amp; Baked Beans</i>
<b>Daily Available All Week</b>	<p>Enjoy our jacket potatoes with a variety of hot and cold toppings. We also offer a freshly made salad selection, along with fresh fruit and yoghurts. Made-to-order sandwiches are available, including options like ham, cheese, and tuna mayonnaise. Additionally, alternative dietary options can be provided upon request.</p>				
<b>Dessert</b>	<b>Chocolate Mousse</b>	<b>Vanilla &amp; Strawberry Jam Cake</b>	<b>Fruit Jelly</b>	<b>Carrot Cake &amp; Icing Glace</b>	<b>Frozen Flavoured Yoghurt</b>



# LIBRARIES 5 LOUD

Family events to celebrate World Book Day  
Contact your local library to book your free place

**Saturday 7 March 2026**

10.30-11.30am: Performances from professional storytellers

11.30am-12.30pm: Stories and crafts from Stoke-on-Trent Family Hubs

- Bentilee Library - Sophia Hatfield - ages 2+
- City Central Library - Pyn Stockman - ages 4+
- Longton Library - Gav Cross - ages 4+
- Meir Library - Julie Moss - ages 4+
- Stoke Library - Dommy B - ages 6+
- Tunstall Library - Alan Barrett - ages 6+

Free book for every child!



# Foster with us

Find out  
more here

If you are interested in a life-changing vocation and can provide a safe, loving home to a child in care, we'd love to hear from you.

**0333 0603 962**  
**five-rivers.org**

Places can be booked by contacting the library.

## World Book Day SPECIAL LUNCH MENU Thursday 5th March

Based on two of our favourite story books



**Pigs in Houses :** Sausage in Yorkshire Pudding served with Mashed Potatoes, Carrots & Peas

**Quorn Pigs in Houses :** Quorn Sausage in Yorkshire Pudding served with Mashed Potatoes, Carrots & Peas

**Jacket Potato :** Served with a selection of toppings & salad

**Smart Cookie :** Home made choc chip cookies



Please place  
your lunch  
order on  
MCAS



# Phonics

## How to say the Phase 5 sounds

At Phase 5, children learn alternative graphemes for sounds introduced in Phases 2 and 3.

### Sounds introduced in Phase 2

Grapheme and mnemonic	Pronunciation phrase	Phase 5 Graphemes
	Show your teeth and let the <b>s</b> hiss out: <b>ssssss ssssss</b>	<b>c se ce st sc</b>
	Open your lips a bit; put your tongue behind your teeth and make the <b>nnnnn</b> sound: <b>nnnnn</b>	<b>kn gn</b>
	Put your lips together and make the <b>mmmmm</b> sound: <b>mmmmm</b>	<b>mb</b>
	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say <b>c c c</b>	<b>ch</b>
	Show me your teeth to make a <b>rrrrr</b> sound: <b>rrrrr</b>	<b>wr</b>
	Open your lips a little; put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound <b>fffff fffff</b>	<b>ph</b>
	Open your mouth a little; put your tongue up to the top of your mouth, behind your teeth, and press <b>llll llll</b>	<b>le al</b>
	Pucker your lips and show your teeth; use your tongue as you say <b>jjj</b>	<b>g dge ge</b>
	Put your teeth against your bottom lip and make a buzzing sound <b>vvvv vvvv</b>	<b>ve</b>

Grapheme and mnemonic	Pronunciation phrase	Phase 5 Graphemes
	Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say <b>w w w</b>	<b>wh</b>
	Show me your teeth and buzz the <b>z</b> sound <b>zzzzz zzzzz</b>	<b>se ze</b>
	Pucker your lips and show your teeth; use your tongue as you say <b>ch ch ch</b>	<b>tch ture*</b>
	Show me your teeth and push the air out <b>shshshshsh</b>	<b>ch ti ssi si ci</b>
	Open your mouth wide and say <b>e e e</b>	<b>ea</b>
	Pull your lips back and make the <b>i</b> sound at the back of your mouth <b>iii</b>	<b>y</b>
	Make your mouth into a round shape and say <b>o o o</b>	<b>a</b>
	Open your mouth wide and say <b>u u u</b>	<b>o-e o ou</b>

\*Note that the pronunciation of 'ture' has a slight schwa sound at the end.

### Sounds introduced in Phase 3

Grapheme	Catchphrase	Pronunciation phrase	Phase 5 Graphemes
ai	 <p>tail in the rain</p>	Open your mouth wide and say <b>ai ai ai</b>	<p>ay a a-e eigh aigh ey ea</p>
ee	 <p>sheep in a jeep</p>	Smile with your lips apart and say <b>ee ee ee</b>	<p>ea e e-e ie y ey</p>
igh	 <p>a light in the night</p>	Open your mouth in a relaxed way and say <b>igh igh igh</b>	<p>ie i i-e y</p>
oa	 <p>soap that goat</p>	Make an 'o' with your mouth and say <b>oa oa oa</b>	<p>o o-e ou oe ow</p>

Grapheme	Catchphrase	Pronunciation phrase	Phase 5 Graphemes
oo	 <p>zoom to the moon.</p>	Open your mouth just a bit, put your hand on your tummy, pull your tummy in and say <b>oo oo oo</b>	<b>ue</b> <b>u-e</b> <b>ew</b> <b>ou</b> <b>ui</b>
yoo		Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say <b>yoo yoo yoo</b>	<b>ue</b> <b>u</b> <b>u-e</b> <b>ew</b>
oo	 <p>hook a book</p>	Open your mouth just a bit, put your hand on your tummy, pull your tummy in and say <b>oo oo oo</b>	<b>u*</b> <b>oul</b>
ar	 <p>march in the dark</p>	Open your mouth wide, push your tongue down and say <b>ar ar</b>	<b>a*</b> <b>al*</b>

Grapheme	Catchphrase	Pronunciation phrase	Phase 5 Graphemes
ear	 get near to hear	Smile with your lips apart, push your tongue to your teeth as you say <b>ear ear ear</b>	ere ear
air	 chair in the air	Open your mouth wide, push your tongue down as you say <b>air air air</b>	are ere ear
zh		Pucker your lips and show your teeth; push the air over your tongue as you say <b>zh zh</b>	su si

\*depending on regional accent

More about phonics for parents can be found on the Little Wandle Website: [For parents | Letters and Sounds](#)

There are many clips that you can use to support your child at home.

Videos



Phase 2 sounds taught in Reception Autumn 1



Phase 2 sounds taught in Reception Autumn 2



Phase 3 sounds taught in Reception Spring 1



# \*Free Courses for Adults

## It's never too late to learn!

If you're a parent or carer with a child of primary school age or younger, you can access a range of free\* online qualifications delivered by our ATT Further Education College and funded by the Adult Skills Fund.

Our Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications are nationally recognised, NCFE-accredited courses. Learning is all online and can be accessed flexibly at times that suit you- there's no need to attend school-based sessions. You'll receive structured, expert support from the ATTFE team throughout the course.

These courses are available to parents & carers of young children living in the communities around:

- Sun Academy Bradwell
- Star Academy Sandyford
- Icen Primary Academy

## Register Your Interest Now

Scan or Click the QR



See the full list of courses and costs overleaf...

## \*Funding & Eligibility

To be eligible for a fully-funded place, you must:

- Be a UK resident
- Be aged 19+ on 31 August 2025
- Be unemployed or earning under £30,450
- Live in an eligible area

You may be eligible for co-funding if you are over 19 and live in an eligible area; 50% of your course fees are funded by the Government, and you must pay the other 50% yourself.

Funding is limited; apply soon to secure your place. Enrollment closes Friday 27th March.



#TransformingLives

#TransformingPD

Level 3 Course	Course Cost
Level 3 Mental Health	<del>£1,285.20</del> Fully Funded
Level 3 Understanding Autism	<del>£1,587.60</del> Fully Funded
Level 3 Diploma Counselling Skills	<del>£2,268</del> Fully Funded
Certificate in Cyber Security Practices	<del>£1,260</del> Fully Funded

Level 2 Course	Course Cost
Introduction to Neuroscience in the Early Years	<del>£756</del> Fully Funded
Awareness of Mental health Problems	<del>£1,344</del>
Understanding Behaviour that Challenges	<del>£1,092</del> Fully Funded
Business and administration	<del>£930</del> Fully Funded
Children and young people's mental health	<del>£1,134</del> Fully Funded
Counselling skills	<del>£1,008</del> Fully Funded
Customer Service for Health and Social Care Settings	<del>£789</del> Fully Funded
Cyber Security	<del>£924</del> Fully Funded
Data Protection and Data Security	<del>£660</del> Fully Funded
Excellence in Customer Service for Hospitality	<del>£1,050.00</del> Fully Funded
Equality and Diversity	<del>£1,080</del> Fully Funded
Information advice and guidance	<del>£957.60</del> Fully Funded
Mental Health First Aid and Advocacy in the Workplace	<del>£1,008</del> Fully Funded
Preparing to work in adult social care	<del>£1,503</del> Fully Funded
Retail Operations	<del>£849.60</del> Fully Funded
Safe Handling of Medication in Health and Social Care	<del>£1,008</del> Fully Funded
Safeguarding and Prevent	<del>£828.00</del> Fully Funded
Specific Learning Difficulties	<del>£928.80</del> Fully Funded
Team Leading	<del>£1,152</del> Fully Funded
Understanding Autism	<del>£1,276.80</del> Fully Funded
Understanding Coding	<del>£1,302</del> Fully Funded
Mental Health in Early Years	<del>£882.00</del> Fully Funded
Working with individuals with Learning Disabilities	<del>£1,201.20</del> Fully Funded
Working with people with mental health needs	<del>£1,302</del> Fully Funded
Warehousing and Storage	<del>£727.20</del> Fully Funded
Understanding Domestic Abuse	<del>£1,092</del> Fully Funded
Understanding Adverse Childhood Conditions	<del>£864</del> Fully Funded

## Join Us For Story Time!



Parents and carers are invited to us for your child's end of day story.

Join Us For a Story at 2.55pm–3.10pm on the following dates: 5th March, 16<sup>th</sup> April & 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**STAR Academy • Sandyford**  
**School Uniform Policy**

Full details of our uniform policy are available online at [www.staracademy.attrust.org.uk](http://www.staracademy.attrust.org.uk)

**TOPS :**  
Star Academy Logo or plain navy.  
Polo shirt with cardigan, crew neck sweater or fleece.



**BOTTOMS & DRESSES :**  
Grey or navy trousers, shorts, skirt, pinafore or salwar kameez.  
Summer only : gingham dress or school playsuit.



**ACCESSORIES:**  
Grey or navy blue tights  
Grey or navy blue socks  
Black shoes (NO trainers)  
Navy blue hijab



Star Academy Logo Uniform items can be ordered online at [www.smartuniform.co.uk](http://www.smartuniform.co.uk)  
Or visiting Tunstall Trade Park, Unit 2 Highgate, Brownhills Rd, Tunstall ST6 4JU

# NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK

🚀 Star Academy will be taking part in National Science Week 🚀

We would like to invite our parents and carers to join us for our exciting science based learning sessions which will all run from 2:00 - 3:10pm

**Monday 9th March Y3** : How can you tell how old a shark is?

**Monday 9th March Y4** : Does the way food looks, change how it tastes?

**Tuesday 10th March Y1** : How do birds build their nests?

**Tuesday 10th March Y2** : How do boats float?

**Tuesday 10th March Y6** : What's the best design for a paper plane?

**Wednesday 11th March Y5** : How do bees help flowers?



# EASTER Competition

**Y1 & Y2 : EASTER BONNET COMPETITION**

**Y3 & Y4 : DECORATE AN EGG** (could be hard boiled, polystyrene, plastic egg)

**Y5 & Y6 : CREATE AN EASTER GARDEN**

Entries to be handed in on Monday, March 23 to class teachers. A prize will be awarded to our favourite entry in each year group.

# Easter CHOCOLATE BINGO

**TUESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**  
**2:40 - 3:10PM**

*It's one of our favourites!*

Parents and carers are warmly invited to join us for some fun at our FLORANGE Easter Bingo session! Celebrate the Easter season with some chocolate prizes, cheerful company, and a chance to win.

**STAR**  
ACADEMY • SANDYFORD

# Eid CARD COMPETITION

Make a card at home and hand it into the office by 19<sup>th</sup> March to enter.

# World Book Day SPECIAL LUNCH MENU

## Thursday 5th March

Based on two of our favourite story books

- Pigs in Houses :** Sausage in Yorkshire Pudding served with Mashed Potatoes, Carrots & Peas
- Quorn Pigs in Houses :** Quorn Sausage in Yorkshire Pudding served with Mashed Potatoes, Carrots & Peas
- Jacket Potato :** Served with a selection of toppings & salad
- Smart Cookie :** Home made choc chip cookies

Please place your lunch order on MCAS



**WORLD BOOK  
DAY  
THURSDAY 5<sup>TH</sup>  
MARCH**



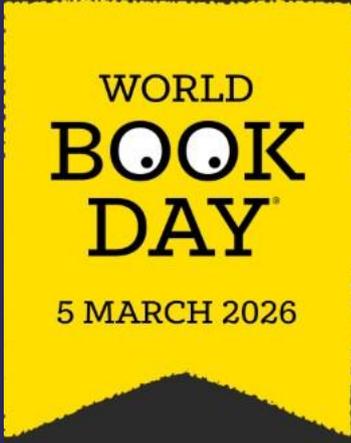
WORLD  
**BOOK  
DAY**

MARCH 2026

**Wear your pyjamas, bring  
a book and enter the  
decorate a potato  
competition.**

**Find out more about the  
competition and the book  
vouchers on the next  
page.**





**World Book Day – Thursday 6th March**

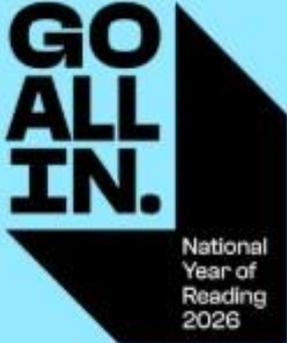
Star will be celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 6th March. To help us mark the day, children are invited to come to school wearing pyjamas.

We are also running a whole-school competition! Children are invited to decorate a potato as either:

- a story character, or
- a word linked to reading or books.

Please send your child’s decorated potato into school by Tuesday 4th March so entries can be displayed and judged.

We can’t wait to see the children’s creativity and to celebrate our love of reading together  



## Go all in for World Book Day

World Book Day will be bigger and better than ever during the National Year of Reading, 2026. World Book Day is a proud delivery partner of National Year of Reading

Go All In – The National Year of Reading campaign to get more people reading, by bringing reading to where culture is.

If you’re into it, read into it.

Children can start using their **£1/€1.50 book token** and choose a World Book Day book for free.



**Thursday 5 March – World Book Day!**

Celebrate reading at home with fun activities, shared stories, and creative ideas.

**Sunday 15 March**

Last day to swap a **£1/€1.50 book token** for a free **£1/€1.50 book**.

**How do children receive a World Book Day £1/€1.50 Token?**

The £1/€1.50 tokens and £1/€1.50 books give all children the chance to choose and own a book – for free.

World Book Day, in partnership with schools and others, distributes the £1/€1.50 World Book Day book tokens to children and young people.



[Get Ready for World Book Day 2026 - World Book Day](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March - Y2 Trip Leicester Space Centre
- Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March - Y3 Ancient Egypt Workshop
- Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March - World Book Day
- Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March - Coffee Morning 8:30 - 9:30am
- Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March - Y1 Field Trip to Tunstall Park
- Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March - Y2 Road Safety Education Session
- Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March - Y6 Multicultural Exhibition & Workshops
- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March - Y2 Staffs Fire & Rescue Visit
- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March - Y4 Trip Lower Drayton Farm
- Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March - Y5 Anglo Saxons Workshop
- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March - Y4 Multicultural Exhibition & Workshops
- Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> March - Special Ladies Assembly 2:30-3:10
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March - Y4,5,6 Invite Only Play With Clay 1:00-3:00
- Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March - Y2 Trip Lower Drayton Farm
- Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March - Y1 & Y2 Easter Bonnet Parade 9:00am
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March - Coffee Morning 8:30 - 9:30am
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March - Hand in Eid Card competition entries
- Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March - Inset Day (School Closed)
- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March - Hand in Easter competition entries
- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March - Walk to school with Easter Bunny
- Tues 24<sup>th</sup> March - Canal & River Trust Water Safety Talks
- Tues 24<sup>th</sup> March - Chocolate Bingo for Parents/Carers 2:40-3:10
- Wed 25<sup>th</sup> March - Y3 Multicultural Exhibition & Workshops
- Wed 25<sup>th</sup> March - End of Term Behaviour Treat 2:00-3:10
- Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> March - Easter Assembly parents/carers 8:50-9:15am
- Thurs 26<sup>th</sup> March - Network Rail Safety Workshop
- Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March - Y1/Y2 Care Home Easter Songs (invite only)
- Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March - Last day of Spring Term

EASTER HALF TERM HOLIDAY 30<sup>th</sup> March - 10<sup>th</sup> April

READ ALL ABOUT EVENTS:

ON CLASS DOJO



# Term Dates for the Academic Year of 2026/2027

<b>AUTUMN TERM 2026</b>	<b>AUTUMN 2026 TERM : commences Tuesday 1 September - Friday 1 January</b>	
	Teacher Training Day (Closed to Pupils)	Tuesday 1 September
	School Opens	Wednesday 2 September
	School Closes for Half Term	Friday 23 October
	Half Term	Monday 26 October to Friday 30 October
	School Opens	Monday 2 November
	Teacher Training Day (Closed to Pupils)	Friday 27 November
	Last Day of Term	Friday 18 December
	Christmas Holiday	Monday 21 December to Friday 1 January
<b>SPRING TERM 2027</b>	<b>SPRING 2027 TERM : commences Monday 4 January - Friday 9 April</b>	
	School Opens	Monday 4 January
	School Closes for Half Term	Friday 12 February
	Half Term	Monday 15 February to Friday 19 February
	School Opens	Monday 22 February
	Teacher Training Day (Closed to Pupils)	Monday 8 March
	Last Day of Term	Thursday 25 March
	Easter Holiday	Friday 26 March 25 to Friday 9 April (Easter Sunday: 28 March)
<b>SUMMER TERM 2027</b>	<b>SUMMER 2027 TERM : commences Monday 12 April - Wednesday 1 September</b>	
	School Opens	Monday 12 April
	May Day Bank Holiday (School Closed)	Monday 3 May
	School Closes for Half Term	Friday 28 May
	Half Term	Monday 31 May to Friday 4 June
	School Opens	Monday 7 June
	Teacher Training Day (Closed to Pupils)	Friday 25 June
	Last Day of Term	Tuesday 20 July
	Teacher Training Day (Closed to Pupils)	Wednesday 21 July
	Summer Holiday	Thursday 22 July to Wednesday 1 September

## 2026/2027 Inset Days – School closed

1st September

27th November (Trust Inset Day)

8th March

25th June (Trust Inset Day)

21st July



## CHRISTMAS JUMPER DONATIONS NEEDED



We are looking for any old, preloved Christmas jumpers that no longer fit your children. If you have any at home that are no longer needed, could you please donate them to school.

Thanks for your continued support!



## Breakfast Club

We are delighted that so many children are accessing breakfast club.

**All children MUST be booked in online the day before on MCAS. Places are limited.** For children not booked in on MCAS, we will not be able to accommodate, unless it's an emergency. Please contact a member of the Senior Leadership team beforehand, via Dojo to arrange support.

From 7.30—8 am, breakfast club is charged at £1.

From 8—8.30am, it is free.



[STA-office@attrust.org.uk](mailto:STA-office@attrust.org.uk)



01782 235055



[staracademy.attrust.org.uk](http://staracademy.attrust.org.uk)



@attstaracademy



Burnaby Road, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent  
Staffordshire, ST6 5PT

Star Newsletter

# GOVERNOR VACANCIES

## We Are Recruiting New Co-Opted Governors For Our Schools

Could you be a school governor? School governors are members of our local community who care about our school and the young people we support. Being a school governor can be a very positive experience. Share your skills and passion for the success of our school and become a governor.

