



Primary Post

Primary Post 272, Tuesday 22nd September 2026

Tetbury Hill
MALMESBURY
Wilts
SN16 9JR
01666 823514

The newsletter of
Malmesbury C of E Primary School
Headteacher: Steve Heal BSc, PGCE, NPQH

Happy new year, everyone. One of the joys of school is a new year twice a year. The 2026-7 year is in full swing and everyone seems settled into their new classes, including our lovely new EYFS intake and Year 1 off on the first trip of the year this week.

The school's expansion plans continue to come together and we're now looking at a start around March, with a 1-year build time. All the new buildings are off our existing site, enabling us to carry on operations as usual, but it will be exciting to watch the construction process as it moves ahead. All the extra space of the new classrooms and a second hall will be transformational for the children. We will not be expanding pupil numbers immediately, and when that is needed it will happen one class a year over many years, making the growth gradual and manageable. The biggest prize is the collaboration with Dyson engineers in the purpose-equipped spaces. This year we'll be continuing our work to build children's enthusiasm for STEAM subjects, in preparation.

As always, there is plenty more change on the horizon for us to manage. In the spring, the government will publish a revised national curriculum and there are big changes coming to the way Special Educational Needs are met too. Anyone who stands still will very quickly find themselves left behind, but this isn't a school which stands still for long, except to appreciate all the good things we already have. We look forward, as always to everything that this year will bring.

Mr Heal

Welcome Back

The gates swing wide, the new year starts,
With **Love** and **Kindness** in our hearts.

With **Courage** to try and **Respect** to show,
Independence to lead and **Creativity** to grow.

With **Love** at the heart of all that we do,
We'll learn, laugh and discover what's waiting for
you.

So welcome back — let's make this year shine,
**Growing together in wisdom and love, one day at
a time!**



The Retirement of Mrs Matthews

We have some very special news to share, although Mrs Matthews will probably tell us that we are making far too much fuss!

Mrs Matthews made the decision to retire during the summer term. She was very clear that she didn't want anyone to know and certainly didn't want any fuss. We quizzed her closely, just to make absolutely sure, and she genuinely meant it! However, after **38 years and 4 months** of service, we felt that she deserved at least a little bit of recognition.

Mrs Matthews is the longest continually employed member of staff at Malmesbury Primary School, having started here on **1 April 1988**. That really does feel like the end of an era.

For 38 years, Mrs Matthews has been one of the people who simply makes the school work. She has been the first one here in the morning, opening up the school and making sure everything is ready for the day ahead — checking there is enough toilet roll, putting away the fruit delivery (and deciding what was actually edible and what should go to the compost!), making sure we have milk, sorting vegetable deliveries, opening gates and getting the rooms ready.

She has also been one of the last to leave, locking up the gates and putting the school to bed — often having to encourage a few stragglers to finally go home, particularly Mr Watkins!

Over the years, she has cleaned the school, emptied the bins and done just about every job imaginable at lunchtime: washing plates, preparing tables, serving puddings and salads and, in earlier years, running around after our EYFS children.

Even during COVID, when school was such a challenging and nerve-racking place to be, Mrs Matthews was there, quietly getting on with whatever needed to be done. Her time supporting EYFS on the playground during that period was particularly remarkable.

The thing about Mrs Matthews is that she has never looked for recognition. She has simply turned up, worked incredibly hard and quietly got on with the job — day after day, year after year.

After **38 years**, she has seen an incredible amount of change at Malmesbury Primary School and has been a constant throughout it all.

So, Mrs Matthews, although you really didn't want any fuss, we do want to say **thank you**.

Thank you for 38 years of hard work, care, reliability and for all those countless jobs that have kept our school running.

You will be very much missed, and we wish you a long, happy and thoroughly well-deserved retirement.

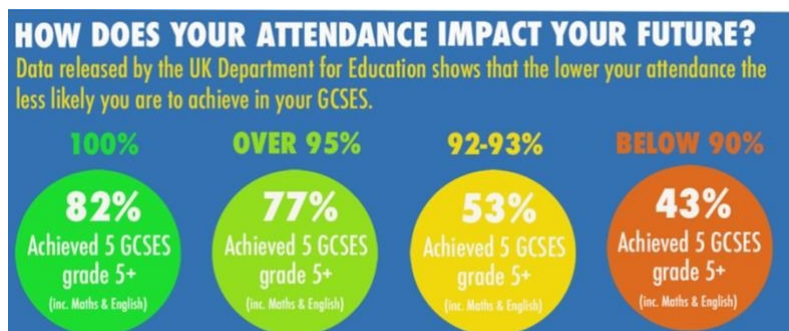
Absences and Attendance

At our school, we are committed to helping every child achieve their very best. Regular attendance is essential if children are to succeed and make the most of the opportunities available to them. One of our core principles is to support pupils to thrive—and good attendance is the foundation of a successful and fulfilling school experience.

Everyday Counts: Why Attendance Matters

Coming to school every day is one of the most important ways children can succeed.

- **Learning adds up:** Pupils with 95%+ attendance are 25% more likely to meet expected standards in reading, writing and maths by Year 6. Missing just 10 extra days a year can make a big difference.
- **Gaps grow quickly:** Children who miss lessons often find it harder to catch up, and absence can widen the gap between pupils.
- **Habits for the future:** Good attendance builds positive habits that lead to better GCSE results and more opportunities later in life. See below for details:



- **The national picture:** Primary schools in England currently have an average absence rate of around 6 to 7%.

What Families Can Do

- Aim for **96%+ attendance** (no more than 7 days of absence across the year).
- Book medical or dental appointments outside school hours whenever possible.
- Let us know if your child is struggling—we're here to help.



Together, we can make everyday count for **learning, friendships and the future.**

If your child cannot attend school, please record their absence through **Arbor**. This helps us process absences quickly. You can also contact the school via: admin@malmsbury-pri.wilts.sch.uk

Together, we can make every day count for learning, friendships and the future.

School Snacks and lunches

We ask that children bring healthy snacks for break and lunchtime. Recently, we have seen an increase in chocolate bars and sugary snacks, which can lead to an energy spike followed by tiredness later in the day. Please help us by encouraging healthier choices.



School Uniform and PE Kits

Most children have come back to school in the correct uniform and look smart - thank you for this. We are seeing lovely, shiny leather or leather like shoes and fresh shirts and jumpers. **We do however still have some trainers, particularly in the older year groups and girls that are insisting on wearing skirts that are too short.** We will be sending notes home in the coming weeks to make changes to this.

We already have an ever-increasing selection of lost property. Clothes that are named, when found are returned to class but without names tend to get lost. **Please name all your children's school clothes and PE kits in order so they get back to their owners.**

This was the lost property bin this evening:



**ST MARGARET'S CALNE**
CO-EDUCATIONAL NURSERY & PREP

Free hockey skills session

Fun, games and hockey coaching with specialist sports teachers

For children in Years 3 and 4

Thursday 24 September, 4-5pm



To book:
events@stmargaretsprep.org.uk

**KIDS PADEL COACHING**
PLAY | LEARN | IMPROVE | BELONG

SKILLS | CONFIDENCE | FUN

**5 WEEK BLOCK**
STARTING
23RD SEPTEMBER

**WEDNESDAYS**

**16:00 - 17:00**
8-9 YEAR OLDS

**17:00 - 18:00**
10-11 YEAR OLDS

**TETBURY PADEL BARN**
PLAY INDOORS ALL YEAR ROUND

BOOKING VIA 

DATES FOR THE DIARY

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 15th, 22nd, 29th - Year 3 Tennis
 Wednesday 23rd - Friday 9th - Parent Evening Bookings
 Wednesday 30th - Whole School Planetarium

OCTOBER

Tuesday 6th, 13th - Year 3 Tennis
 Wednesday 7th October FOMPS Disco
 Monday 12th Year 2 and 3 Harvest Festival 2.30pm
 Tuesday 13th - Flu Jabs AM Start (media Suite)
 Tuesday 13th - Tuesday 20th Year 6 Bikeability
 Tuesday 13th - Parent/Teacher Meetings 4.00 - 6.30
 Thursday 15th October to 26th November 4PD Swimming
 Thursday 15th Parent Teacher Meetings 5.00 - 7.30
 Last Day of Term 1 - Tuesday 20th
 Wednesday 21st TD DAY

Half Term

Thursday 22nd October to Sunday 1st November

NOVEMBER

Monday 2nd - First Day Back
 Tuesday 3rd - Individual and Sibling Photos
 Thursday 5th - Year 6 Bikeability
 Friday 6th - Year 6 Bikeability
 Monday 11th - Armistice Day
 Friday 13th - Children in Need
 16th - Yr 6 Mock Sats week
 Friday 20th - Newsletter
 Tuesday 24th Year 6 Bikeability
 Tuesday 25th Year 6 Bikeability

DECEMBER

Wednesday 2nd - Year 6 trip: REME Museum
 Thursday 3rd, 10th 17th December - Year 6 Swimming
 Thursday 3rd - Year 5 trip REME Museum
 Tuesday 8th EYFS and Year 1 Nativity Afternoon Performance
 Wednesday 9th EYFS and Year 1 Evening Performance (Date TBC)
 Wednesday 9th - Christmas Meal and Jumper Day
 Friday 11th December Christmas Store
 Thursday 17th - Year 6 Christmas Service at the abbey
 Friday 19th - Last day of Term (HALF DAY)

JANUARY

Monday 4th TD Day
 Thursday January 7th Year 6 Swimming
 Thursday 14th, 21st, 28th - 5W swimming
 Friday 15th Newsletter Out

FEBRUARY

Monday 1st Parent Evening Bookings open
 Thursday 4th, 11th February - 5W swimming
 Tuesday 9th - Safer Internet Day
 Thursday 11th February Disco
 Half Term - Monday 15th to Friday 19th
 Tuesday 23rd - Year 6 Tennis
 Tuesday 23rd Parents' Evening (Late)
 Thursday 25th Parents' Evening (Early)





Welcome to Early Years!

Welcome to Reception!

We have had a wonderful start to Reception, and it has been lovely to see how quickly the children have settled into school life. They have been enjoying getting to know one another, exploring their new classroom and the wider school, and becoming familiar with the routines that make up their day. We have been particularly impressed by their enthusiasm and confidence as they have begun this exciting new chapter.



The children have also loved sharing their *All About Me* summer projects with their friends. These have been a fantastic way for them to talk about the people, places and things that are important to them, while helping us to get to know each child and celebrate what makes them unique.

We hope to begin changing for PE soon, so please send in your child's PE kit by **Wednesday 30th September**. Our PE day is **Thursday**. We would really encourage you to give your child opportunities to practise getting dressed and undressed independently at home. Although it can take a little longer, developing these skills helps children to become more confident and self-reliant.



It was wonderful to meet you during our home visits at the beginning of term. Thank you for opening your homes to us and sharing information about your children. Building a strong partnership between home and school is so important, and we look forward to continuing to work closely with you throughout the year.

Our first term will focus on settling into Reception, building friendships and developing confidence and independence. We will be learning more about ourselves, our families, our interests and the things that make us special. We will also be exploring our five senses and beginning to talk about and recognise different emotions. Our learning will be supported by a range of stories, songs, activities and opportunities for the children to explore and discover through play.



We have now begun our phonics programme, *Little Wandle*, and the children have made a fantastic start. We are looking forward to beginning reading groups in the week commencing **21st September**, with children bringing their reading books home on **Thursdays**. Please return reading books to school every **Monday**. Thank you to everyone who attended our phonics meeting; we hope you found it useful and informative.



As we head into autumn and the weather becomes cooler and wetter, please make sure your child has a **labelled coat** in school each day. We will be spending lots of time learning and exploring both inside and outside, whatever the weather!

Thank you for your continued support. We are so pleased with the way the children have begun their Reception

journey and are looking forward to all the learning, adventures and successes still to come.



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL

Year 1

MILEPOST 1

WELCOME TO YEAR 1!

It has been so exciting being back at school with all our friends. We have settled in fantastically with all the new routines, and all our teachers are very proud of us!

We have started our new topic- ***We are what we eat*** and have been learning and tasting different fruits. This has linked well with our writing, where we have made a list of ingredients and even chopped up and tasted our own fruit! We have read stories about vegetables and we've made some vegetable print patterns.

In science, we have been learning about parts of our bodies and have made super skeleton pictures. We are very much looking forward to our farm trip and learning more about where our food comes from!



Year 2

Welcome Back

We have had a fantastic start to our school year in Year 2 and have already been very busy with lots of exciting learning!

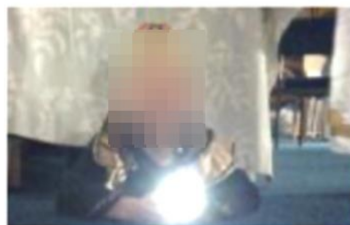
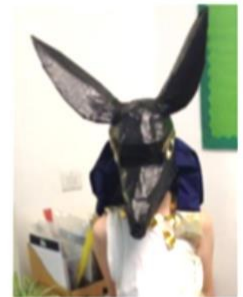
As part of our topic learning, we stepped back in time and transformed our classroom into a Victorian school. The children experienced what school life might have been like for Victorian children, including some of the much stricter rules! Most of the children really enjoyed the experience - although our left-handed children may not have been quite so impressed when they discovered they had to use their right hand for writing and drawing!

In DT, the children have been very brave and adventurous, tasting a variety of different dips. We used our senses to explore and describe their appearance, smell, texture and, of course, taste. It was lovely to see so many children willing to try flavours that were new to them. We have also made a great start in PE. This term, we are developing our ball skills, including throwing, catching and control, as well as exploring gymnastics and building our balance, coordination and movement skills.

It has been a busy and enjoyable start to Year 2, and we are looking forward to all the learning and adventures still to come!



MILEPOST 2



In Years 3 and 4, we have started learning about Ancient Egypt in our Temples, Tombs and Treasures topic. For our Entry Point, we took part in some different activities to give us a taste of life back then. We learned to write with hieroglyphs, created a pharaoh headdress, explored a tomb, and mummified some tomatoes!

Congratulations to the children who have already completed some of their homework tasks. So far, we have enjoyed Egyptian baking, and some amazing 3D Egyptian models of sarcophaguses and pyramids. We look forward to seeing more!



To start the year, each class has also learned a little about their class artist and has had a go at creating a piece of art, inspired by them. In Year 3, Roy Lichtenstein inspired some amazing artwork, and in Year 4, it was Banksy.



MILEPOST 3



A big welcome back to the children and their families after the summer break and to the new children and their families who have joined us this term. All the children have settled in well. There has been lots of excitement about our new topic of Space Explorers with the children showing a keen interest in learning all about our solar system. In fact, we have already seen some wonderful homework projects brought into school that children have shared with their classmates. In class, the children have been enthusiastic in creating model space ships using balloons as a power source and many of the children enjoyed trying some 'Astronaut' food as part of their learning about life on the International Space Station. Linked to our new topic, the children have also been creating fabulous 'rocket' paintings and the children have additionally been creating pieces of artwork in the style of their respective class artists. The final pieces are now bringing lots of bright colours to the classrooms and corridors.

We are looking forward to the rest of this term when there will be further, exciting learning opportunities and we are very much looking forward to welcoming the Planetarium Experience to the school later this term which will be available for all the children right across the school to enjoy as well as other children from youth groups in our local community.

Mrs Hampton.









FREE INTERACTIVE WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN

AGED 4 – 11 YEAR OLDS

Making IN Malmesbury. Lace to lawnmowers!

Come along and have a go at weaving,
spinning, lace making and other
traditional crafts.



JOIN US IN THE RAUSING BUILDING

SUNDAY 27th SEPTEMBER

1:30 – 3:30 pm

(All children must be accompanied by an adult)

Donations Welcome





Weekly Football Sessions

MONDAYS

The Activity Zone
Malmesbury SN16 0DQ

3-4 yr olds	2:00-2:40
4-5 yr olds	3:45-4:30
6-7 yr olds	4:30-5:15
7-9 yr olds	5:15-6:00
9-11 yr olds	6:05-6:50

FOCUS ON
INVOLVEMENT,
FUN AND SKILL
DEVELOPMENT
FOR ALL!

THURSDAYS

Olympiad Leisure Centre
Chippenham, SN15 3PA

4-5 yr olds	4:00-4:45
6-7 yr olds	4:50-5:35
8-9 yr olds	5:40-6:25
9-11 yr olds	6:30-7:15

TWO WEEK FREE TRIAL

Book your child's place at www.kick-a-bout.com

Call DAVID on 07876 112444 | DAVID@kick-a-bout.com

to receive your two week discount code

- ⚽ Fully DBS (CRB) checked coaches
- ⚽ First Aid responders on site
- ⚽ Full insurance
- ⚽ Experienced FA qualified coaches

