



Newsletter 7

18th December 2025

Dear all,

What a term! It feels like an age ago that we were returning from the summer holidays, tanned, warm and full of energy, unveiling our beautiful mural and welcoming Mrs Webber to the school. What a change a few months makes! (Although for those of us that were present at the FOS Christmas party, it appears the children haven't lost a shred of energy...)

We've had a SIAMS inspection, Harvest Service, coffee morning, parents' evenings, Remembrance service, theatre trips, a class assembly, a Nativity and multiple choir performances. We've introduced Shine Time, our STOKERS learning behaviours and The Nest. We've continued our ongoing collaborations with Willow Set, the church and the community, launching our 'Community Heroes' programme. And as if that wasn't enough, Father Christmas even turned up this afternoon!



The children continue to do us and themselves proud, working hard, representing the school wonderfully and buying into the unique and wonderful culture that makes this such a special school. Equally, my thanks goes out to the staff who have worked so hard this term, supporting me, each other and the children.

And finally, to everybody out there who has supported the school this term, thank you: to Friends of School (and those that turn out to help at FOS events); to Reverend Simon and those connected with the church;



those amazing people who organise fundraising events that raise money for the school (Bonfire Bingo, Christmas sing-a-long); to those that brought in Somerset Gazette tokens which meant we won £1000 of Amazon vouchers; to all parents who brought in bottles for the (very Stokey) bottle line; to our volunteer readers and helpers. We couldn't do what we do without all of you.

Now, a bit of a round up from a very busy last three weeks!

Raven class assembly

In the first of a series of class assemblies that will run throughout the year, Ravens treated us to a wonderful assembly in the church, singing sea shanties with Mr Selby and giving some very eloquent reasons as to the causes of World War I as well as treating us to some French. I thought they spoke brilliantly and clearly. Well done, Ravens!

Family Learning

Family Learning took place in the hall with children and their parents making Christmas decorations and other festive crafts. Well done to the families involved. There will be more Family Learning sessions later in the year so look out for more news.



Year 6 theatre trip – Shakespeare in Love

Year 6 were fortunate once again to be invited to Wells Cathedral School's senior school performance of Shakespeare In Love. Based on the much-loved film, the stage adaptation was brilliantly performed by students not many years older than our Year 6s. There was comedy and tragedy, brilliant music and an amazing set – plenty of inspiration for our Ravens as they look towards our end of year performance...



Reception/Year 1 theatre trip – Jack and the Beanstalk

Meanwhile, at the other end of the school, our Reception and Year 1 children had a fantastic afternoon at the Tacchi-Morris Theatre watching the pantomime *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The performance was full of laughter, music, and excitement, and the children were captivated from start to finish. They followed Jack on his daring adventure up the enormous beanstalk, met the friendly cow, and even encountered the fearsome giant in his castle above the clouds! The story reminded us all about the importance of courage and kindness, and of course, the joy of a happy ending.

The trip was the perfect way to get into the Christmas spirit, with plenty of festive fun, cheerful songs, and sparkling costumes that brought extra magic to the afternoon. A huge thank you to the Friends of School for generously funding this wonderful experience – it truly made the day special for all the children!



Christingle Service

The Christingle service is a familiar part of the yearly rhythm, and children remember fondly each year making their Christingles

in school. After a service in the church with Reverend Simon where we learnt about the theology behind it, we were joined back in school by Simon, Open the Book members and some of the older children from Willow Set to make our Christingles.

Christmas Sing-a-long

The Christmas Sing-a-long in the village hall on Saturday was a fantastically well-supported event and my huge thanks go out to Anne Merritt, Julie Meikle and everyone else who was involved on putting it on, raising a great amount of money for the school. A third of the school turned up to sing in the school choir on Saturday afternoon, led by Mrs Webber, which makes me very proud. Thank you everyone!



Nativity/Carol Service

Otter Class have worked incredibly hard this half term preparing for their nativity performance. On Tuesday, they proudly shared their production with you all at the church, and it was a joy to see their efforts come to life. For some of the children, this was their very first time performing in front of such a large audience – and they did brilliantly! Well done Otters for your confidence and enthusiasm!



The Oak Partnership Trust Carol Concert

Our choir was also part of a joint schools concert at West Monkton Primary school, performing alongside pupils from West Monkton, Ruishton and Blackbrook as part of the Trust's carol concert. Singing a range of Christmas songs alongside the other schools as well as by themselves, they did really well, especially our two soloists. Well done everyone!

Christmas Lunch and FOS Christmas Party

Our penultimate day of term was dominated by two big events. First up was the Christmas lunch in the school hall. Thank you to FOS who decorated the hall in advance and were there throughout the day, cleaning and tidying and making things look brilliant before going again with the



Christmas party after school. Thank you also to the Year 6 parents who kept up the tradition of serving the lunches at their children's last Christmas lunch!

Young Somerset Wellbeing Art and Understanding Emotions groups

Pivoting away quickly from all the Christmas activities to tell you briefly about some of the groups that have been working with Young Somerset this half term in school. There have been two groups running – a Wellbeing Art group and an Understanding Emotions group. As much as we like to rave about the academic achievements of our children and their brilliant performances and enrichment opportunities, we know that a huge part of our work at school is about supporting children with their wellbeing, and teaming up with Young Somerset for opportunities like this can only be a good thing.

Shine Time – Using AI to re-write A Christmas Carol

The AI production of “A Christmas Carol” was brilliantly performed and enjoyed by KS2 children. With only 2 weeks to “write”, rehearse and perform, we were always up against the clock. It was great to see different children performing a range of roles. Diverse facial expressions that had been practiced in the weeks prior added to the performance, alongside rapid, last minute costume additions and changes – it was a true school performance.



Music from next term

Given the number of children who clearly love making music in the school, I'm delighted to tell you that our music opportunities will grow from next term. Led by the brilliant Julie Meikle.

- School band will recommence on Tuesday afternoons in the new year for KS2, with the main instruments being cornet/trumpet, clarinet and euphonium
- In order for children to try these instruments before committing, Julie has kindly agreed to run a taster session on the afternoon of Thursday 8th January where all KS2 children will have the opportunity to try these instruments and decide if they would like to join the band
- Julie will also be offering music lessons in school time on Tuesday afternoons charged at the same rate as Somerset Music lessons (£7.50 for a shared lesson; £15 for an individual lesson). Many of you will know that Julie is an extremely talented multi-instrumentalist and as such will be offering lessons in singing, guitar, brass instruments and clarinet.
- Look out for more details as the new term starts including how to book in!

Wassailing is back!

One of my favourite memories from last year was our wassailing adventure in January, making ivy crowns and parading down to the allotments en masse, banging saucepans as we went to toast the orchards. I'm delighted to say we will be teaming up with the Stoke Environment Group once again to wassail on Friday 9th January, straight after school.

Staff changes for next term

Finally, it is sadly time to say goodbye to Mrs Baldwin after many, many years of support for the school. We will miss her hugely.

In January, we are looking forward to welcoming Mrs Mullally back after her time out of school this term and I am very pleased to announce (if there is anyone left in Stoke who wasn't aware) that Mandy Boobyer will be joining us from Willow Set as a teaching assistant. Welcome to the team, Mandy!

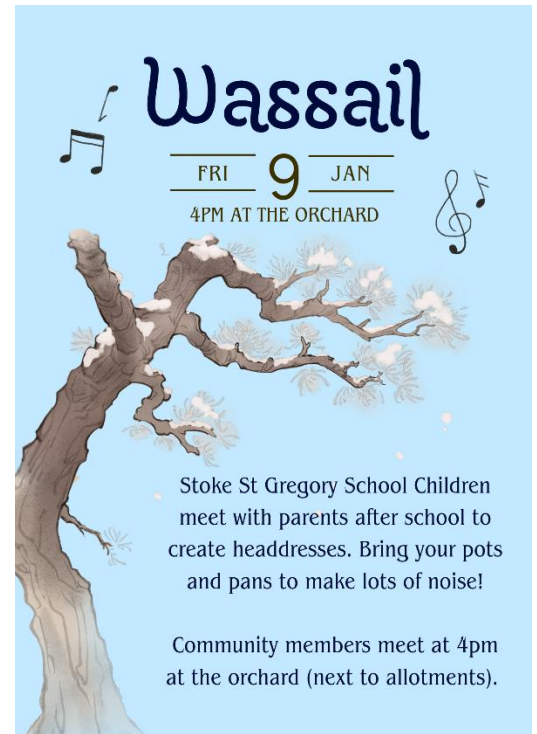
Merry Christmas! `

David Rowland

Headteacher

Key dates:

Monday 5th January	INSET day
Tuesday 6th January	INSET day
Wednesday 7 th January	Children return to school
Thursday 8 th January	Taster session – band instruments (during school)
Friday 9 th January	Wassailing! 3.30 onwards
Tuesday 27 th January	FOS Soft Toy Amnesty





Friends of School



SOFT TOY AMNESTY

Much needed toy clearance after Christmas?
Donate gently used or new soft toys
for our future teddy tombola fundraiser

January 27th - 08.45am-9.00am

Please bring to the school playground in a bag(s) and leave with a dedicated member of the FOS team

For more information visit:
 friends of Stoke St Gregory School




Facebook - Friends of Stoke St Gregory Primary School

UNWANTED GIFTS?

Friends of School need your help!

We are looking for donations towards Mothers & Fathers Day stalls, being organised later this year.

Please consider donating any of those unwanted / unneeded Christmas gifts

All contributions would be greatly appreciated; please leave with school office staff. Thank you!



FRIENDS
of Stoke St Gregory Primary School

Charity No. 1037493



ChatHealth



Parent advice & support
Healthy lifestyles
School transitioning
Emotional health



is your child 5-19 and are you looking for confidential help and support?

A safe and easy way to contact your School Nursing Team

Just send a text
07480 635 515



Improving LIVES

Disclaimer: This is not an emergency service; it operates Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm and is only available by using a UK mobile number. Your messages are stored on our secure system and can be seen by the School Nursing Team who run our ChatHealth Service. Although this is a confidential service, in the event of an safeguarding issue the School Nurse has a duty of care to act on this and may escalate the concern.

There aren't any places at my preferred school, what can I do now?

I'VE MOVED INTO THE AREA AND NEED HELP FINDING A SCHOOL FOR MY CHILD.

CAN I APPLY FOR MORE THAN ONE SCHOOL, AND CAN I LODGE MORE THAN ONE APPEAL?

IS THERE ANYONE THAT CAN SUPPORT ME PREPARING FOR MY APPEAL?

CHOICE ADVICE

Somerset Choice Advice is a free and impartial service which supports families with advice and practical support through the school admission and appeals processes.

This service exists to ensure that parents can play an active and informed role in securing a school place for their child

Call us on **01823 356 903**

Fill in our online form
www.somerset.gov.uk/choice-advice

Contact us via email
choiceadvice@somerset.gov.uk
or scan the QR code






FREE CHRISTMAS INFLATABLE POOL PARTY

Somerset Council **fusion** **Strode SWIMMING & FITNESS**

Just to thank you to all the schools who have been with us over the year we like to hold a free inflatable party on the 30/12/25, 5-6pm. We will also have a swim teacher on hand for free swim assessments. Spaces are limited so call 01458 443918 quote your school and book your place. Have an amazing Christmas, The Strode team

Sponsored by **Swim School**

Free casual swimming included

SWIM HAPPY, SWIM WITH CONFIDENCE

Learn to swim with Fusion Lifestyle

- ✓ Preschool, junior & adult lessons available
- ✓ Kids swim for FREE* in general swim sessions
- ✓ Track your child's progress online

Scan the QR code to find out more

Swim School **fusion**

fusion-lifestyle.com/swimschool

HELP US WIN £1,000 FOR OUR LIBRARY

Nominate us and you could win a £100 gift card!

nationalbooktokens.com/schools-prize

SCAN ME

NATIONAL BOOK tokens

In association with **Read for Good**

#rebuildthelibrary

Christmas Holiday Camps

Northgate- 22nd, 23rd, 29th & 30th December

Woolavington- 22nd, 23rd & 29th December

North Petherton- 23rd, 29th & 30th December

INSPIRED SCHOOLS

£20 Per day

10% Whole week discount

15% Sibling discount

07494175299

hello@inspiredschools.co.uk

<https://inspiredschools.ipalbookings.com>

SCAN ME

For paid places

Limited free places available for children on benefit related free school meals

Happy Healthy Holidays FREE Places Bookable at 10am on Monday 24th November

**SUPPORT
OUR LOTTERY
TODAY**

**£1 per
week**

**Weekly
cash prizes**

**£25,000
jackpot**



**YOUR
SCHOOL
LOTTERY**

Splitting the £1.00

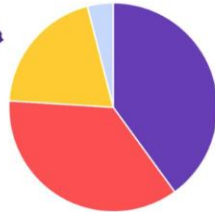
How it works...

It's simple—choose 6 numbers between 0-9 and if they match the weekly lottery draw, you win great prizes. One of our players will win a cash prize every week, maybe even the £25k jackpot! Tickets cost just £1 per week and the proceeds are donated to Stoke St Gregory Primary School

Every Saturday at 8pm the numbers are drawn and posted online. Winners are notified by email and winnings paid into the account of your choice.

The easiest way to join our lottery is online by direct debit or debit card.

It's so easy to join and will make a real difference to Stoke St Gregory Primary School



- 40p goes to our school
- 36p goes to cash prizes
- 20p goes to admin costs
- 4p goes to VAT

The Maths... 100 tickets sold a week means

= £30 weekly cash prize

= £2,080 a year for our school



Buy A Ticket

GambleAware 18+