



St. Francis

Church of England Primary School

Joy from faith, joy of learning, joy in the journey

Week ending: 30.01.26

'I have told you this so my joy may be in you' John 15:11

Upcoming dates

Wednesday 4th February:

Y5/6 Boys' football league matches at Witton Park

Tuesday 10th February:

Safer Internet Day

16th – 20th February:

School closed for half-term

Monday 23rd February:

Entries on for the Walk to School badge competition – see below

Thursday 5th March:

World Book Day – see below

Wednesday 18th March:

Y5 Let's Go Sing at Ice Arena;

Friday 20th March:

Rocksteady Concert at 9.15am

Wednesday 25th March:

Easter Performance Y4 - 9.15am - parents and carers are invited

As we progress through this half-term, our 'Aspiration' focus continues to guide our school's ethos. This week, we have been exploring a profound principle: 'Do the right thing not the easy thing'. Our discussions centred on the importance of personal integrity, encouraging our children to reflect deeply on their behaviour and learning. We challenged them to always aim high, demonstrate honesty, and consistently follow the established rules.

For National Storytelling Week this week, Mr Turner led an engaging exploration of personal narratives, inviting our children to share and reflect on their favourite stories. These conversations have highlighted the power of storytelling in connecting, inspiring, and understanding one another.

I am delighted to celebrate the commitment of our children to active and healthy lifestyles. Today, a significant number of our pupils received their WOW Walk to School badges for January - a testament to their dedication to sustainable and healthy travel. We encourage this momentum to continue throughout February, promoting both physical activity and environmental consciousness.

We will be learning about other ways to live a healthy lifestyle during our Healthy Living Week in April. Until then please do consider the snacks, drinks and packed lunches being provided to your children, to ensure they are also promoting a balanced diet ready for great learning!

Our school remains committed to nurturing not just academic excellence, but also character development and personal growth. Each day presents an opportunity to learn, improve, and support one another.

ScholarPack changing to Arbor

You should be receiving an email from School Spider very soon asking you to register for 'Arbor'. This will be replacing our ScholarPack platform and it is therefore extremely important that all parents move across to the new system as soon as they receive the invite to do so.

If you have any problems changing your account, please do give us a call.

Best Attendance of the week!

Fair attendance for most houses this week - with the majority close to the national target of 96% and above.

The percentages were:

Summer 92%; Spring 95.4%; Winter 95.6%;
Autumn 96.4%

Well done to our Autumn house team!



Reception class award winners



Year 1 award winners



Year 2 award winners



Year 3 award winner



Year 4 award winners



Year 5 award winner



Y6 award winners



Parent and carer invitation to join us every Friday for Celebration Worship

Please do join us whenever you can on Friday mornings between 9.00 – 9.30am for our Celebration Worship.

It is always lovely to share the awards and achievements of our amazing young people with the whole school community.

Please also remember that your child can send in any certificates, medals or trophies on Friday mornings, from clubs and hobbies they attend outside of school. We love to celebrate the talents of our children.



WOW Walk to School badge competition – reminder!

Encourage your child to enter the national competition below. You can print out the sheet from this newsletter or get your child to pop into the office to ask for a printed copy.

Closing date for your child's entry to be returned to school is Monday 23rd February.

Winning school entries will be sent to the national competition on Tuesday 24th February and the theme for next year's Walk to School badges is Walk the Senses.

A respectful reminder about communicating with each other

Recent discussions have highlighted the need to reinforce our commitment to constructive dialogue and respectful engagement. At St Francis CE Primary, we believe that **open and considerate communication** is fundamental to supporting our children's education and well-being.

Key points I would like to emphasise:

1. Respectful Conversations

- Every member of our school community deserves to be heard
- Disagreements are natural, but they must be expressed thoughtfully
- We encourage dialogue that focuses on understanding, not confrontation

2. Principles of Constructive Dialogue

- Listen actively to different perspectives
- Express concerns calmly and clearly
- Seek collaborative solutions
- Prioritise the best interests of our children

Our goal is to create an environment where diverse viewpoints can be shared calmly and compassionately. When we disagree, we can do so *with mutual respect and understanding*.

I kindly request that all communications – whether in person, via email or social media, or during meetings – reflect these principles. Our children learn by example, and demonstrating respectful communication is a powerful lesson. Our school values of faith, friendship and love, are particularly relevant here: as a school our aim is to educate children, through the examples we set, who care deeply about themselves and each other; who can forgive mistakes and move on with joy together.

Don't judge a book by its cover!

Does your child have a book they have finished reading?
Would they be happy for it to have a new owner?

If so, for World Book Day:

- Wrap the book in plain paper
- Write or draw some clues for the plot, type of book and age range on the wrapping
- Write some adjectives to describe the book
- Bring to school!

World Book Day - Book Swap!

WORLD BOOK DAY
5 MARCH 2026

The image shows a display of books wrapped in plain paper with hand-drawn clues and adjectives. The books are arranged on a shelf, and a yellow banner for World Book Day is visible in the bottom left corner.



LIVING

STREETS

LET'S
WALK TO
SCHOOL

Badge design competition 2026

WOW – the walk to school challenge

WALK the SENSES



WHAT SHOULD YOU DRAW?

What do you see, hear, smell, taste or feel as you walk or wheel to school? Have you spotted a fluffy cloud in the sky or a cute dog passing by? Maybe you like the sound of feet walking. Or do you like the smell of flowers or wild garlic on the journey to school? Maybe it's the taste of your favourite yummy snack or it could be feeling the rain on your skin.

EXAMPLES MAY INCLUDE:

- Seeing a tree, a rainbow or wildlife
- The sound of birds singing or people talking
- The smell of flowers or food from a shop
- Tasting your favourite snack on the journey to school
- Feeling sun or snow on your skin

**WHATEVER
WAKES UP
YOUR SENSES,
DRAW IT!**

SUSTAINABILITY AND WOW BADGES



Our WOW badges are made in the UK from repurposed plastic material, including old fridge trays, plastic plates and off-cuts of yoghurt pot material. WOW badges can also be recycled. Find out more: livingstreets.org.uk/recycling



CLOSING DATE

TUESDAY 24 FEB 2026

PUPILS

Pupil name:

Age:

What did you draw? How does your picture use one of your senses?

TEACHERS

School email:

School name and address:

Local authority:

Please read the following points on this poster and be aware that a report has been received by schools today that some children in Essex have seen TikTok posts encouraging self-harm and dangerous life-threatening behaviours.

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about

TIKTOK

AGE RESTRICTION
13+

(certain features are restricted to over-18s only)

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AGE-INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

While TikTok's "Following" feed only displays videos from users someone follows, "For You" is a stream of clips based on their previously watched content. Most videos on a child's "For You" feed will therefore be light-hearted and amusing, but it could potentially surface something unsuitable. TikTok's guidelines prohibit the sharing of illegal or inappropriate content, but the sheer volume of uploads mean they aren't manually monitored and vetted.

18
CENSORED

DANGEROUS CHALLENGES

Due to TikTok's immense popularity, some young people have unfortunately been influenced by videos challenging them to perform harmful, criminal or even deadly acts. One extreme example was the "blackout" trend, which encouraged users to hold their breath until they passed out from a lack of oxygen. It led to two families filing lawsuits against TikTok over the tragic deaths of their children.

CONTACT WITH STRANGERS

With around 1.1 billion users globally, the potential for contact from strangers on TikTok is high – especially as accounts created by over-18s (or youngsters using a false date of birth) are set to public by default. This not only means that someone's profile is visible to everyone else on the app; it also lets their videos be suggested to others and enables anyone to comment on them or download them.

IN-APP SPENDING

TikTok is free, but users have the option to buy TikTok coins, which can be used to purchase emojis in the app. These emojis are then sent as rewards (retaining their monetary value) to other users for videos they've created. Coin bundles range from £9.99 to an eye-watering £99; TikTok's policy is that they can't be bought by under-18s, but it's possible to bypass this with a fake birthdate.

ADDICTIVE NATURE

TikTok can be addictive, especially for young people; compulsive repeated use can interfere with sleep patterns and be a distraction from other activities. The platform recently introduced default usage time limits of 60 and 100 minutes for new members under 18 (in the UK, children with TikTok average 102 minutes per day on the app), but these restrictions can easily be removed in the settings.

TIKTOK NOW

Introduced in late 2022, the "TikTok Now" feature lets users post a daily video or photo at the exact same time as their friends. Users receive a synchronised notification at a random time of day, giving them three minutes to take a video or real-time photo. This addition can not only be a distraction to young people but could lead to them inadvertently sharing private content such as their location.

Advice for Parents & Carers

ENABLE FAMILY PAIRING

Family Pairing allows parents to link their TikTok account with their child's and control their settings remotely. Parents can then, for example, turn on Restricted Mode (reducing the chances of a child seeing inappropriate content); set screen time limits; and manage their child's ability to send messages (and to whom). Children can't alter these settings without parental approval.

MAKE ACCOUNTS PRIVATE

Although under-18s will have their TikTok account set to private by default, bypassing this setting is relatively easy. However, parents have the ability to manually set their child's account to private – meaning that their videos won't be visible to strangers and they won't be able to exchange messages with people who aren't on their friends list.

LIMIT IN-APP SPENDING

If your child is using an iPhone or Android device to access TikTok, you can alter the settings to prevent them from making in-app purchases. We'd recommend that you enable this feature, as it's quite easy for a young person – without realising what they're doing – to spend a significant amount of real money buying TikTok coins so they can unlock more features of the app.

DISCUSS THE DANGERS

If your child wants to use TikTok and you're happy for them to do so, it's crucial to talk about the potential risks in this type of app. For example, ensure they understand not to share any identifying personal information – and that they realise they could be exposed to inappropriate content. Thinking critically about what they see on TikTok can help children become generally more social media savvy.

READ THE SIGNS

If you're concerned that your child might be spending too much time on TikTok, or that they've been emotionally affected by something inappropriate or upsetting that they've seen, it's important to know how to spot the possible signs: increased irritability and a lack of concentration are potential red flags, as are failing to complete homework or regularly not eating meals.

Meet Our Expert

Carly Page is an experienced technology journalist with a track record of more than 10 years in the industry. Previously the editor of tech tabloid The Inquirer, Carly is now a freelance technology journalist, editor and consultant.



NOS
National
Online
Safety
#WakeUpWednesday

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[@national_online_safety](https://tiktok.com/@national_online_safety)

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National Year of Reading – 2026

Blackburn with Darwen Libraries are pleased to announce their first National Year of Reading offer for schools – Junior Book Bingo. Pop in to Cherry Tree Library to take part!



National
Year of
Reading
2026



Green
Library
Hubs



Name:

School:

Library Card No:

Junior Book Bingo

**Read a book about
wild animals**

**Read a book about
plants**

**Listen to any eAudiobook
(CD or BorrowBox)**

**Read a poem with a
nature theme**

How to play

- Use your library card to borrow and read four books from the library
- For each book, write the title, author and one thing that sticks out in your mind
- Bring your completed form back to your nearest Blackburn with Darwen Library
- We'll give you a certificate, and put you in a draw to win a prize!
- Draws will take place regularly until **30th June 2026**

Book one

- Title
- Author
- What sticks out in my mind

Book two

- Title
- Author
- What sticks out in my mind

Book three

- Title
- Author
- What sticks out in my mind

Book four

- Title
- Author
- What sticks out in my mind



Do you have any old photos of St. Francis School that we could share with our children as part of our 60th anniversary celebrations?

Do you have any memories from when you were at school here?

If so, please pop in to the office and let us know!

Reception class plea for outdoor toys!

The wet weather over the last few months has taken its toll on our youngest children's outdoor play equipment.

If you have any toys or equipment – in very good condition – that could be played with by our Reception children in their outdoor area, please drop them off with any of EYFS class team.

Outdoor Play

As we move closer to Spring (hooray!) we are starting to refresh our OPAL zones on the bottom field. For the time being, children are only allowed to play on the playground and top field.

Thanks to those Y6 children for helping Mrs. Fielding to tidy the area. They've volunteered to help next week too!

We also have a dedicated group of younger children who are litter picking around school every day. We thank them for this but also remind our school community to use the bins whenever they have some rubbish to dispose of!

