



Eccleston St Mary's C of E Primary School

Newsletter 7 | 16th October 2026

SCHOOL NEWS

Our Motto:
Believe & Achieve

Our Mission Statement:
Through Jesus we love, learn and grow

An Autumn Prayer

Dear Lord, as the Autumn season takes hold, let us take time to appreciate the beauty of the world around us. Thank you for the colourful leaves that fall from the trees, painting the ground in shades of red, orange and gold. Thank you for the crisp mornings, the gentle breeze and the warm sunshine that still brightens our days. Help us to enjoy jumping in crunchy leaves, collecting conkers and watching the seasons change. As the days grow shorter and the weather turns colder, remind us to be thankful for our warm homes, our families and our friends. Help us to show kindness to others and to care for the beautiful world you have created. May we always remember to find joy in the little things and appreciate the wonderful gifts each new season brings.
Amen.



☆☆☆ SHINING STARS ☆☆☆

Explorers	Sophia W.	
Adventurers	Monty	
Navigators	Phoebe	Elijah
Voyagers	Charlotte	Bertie
Inspiration	Sophia	Elijah
Curiosity	Mia	Freddie
Discovery	Olivia	

WINNING HOUSE THIS WEEK

LOSTOCK

Please click to find out
more about our school

[Facebook](#)
[Instagram](#)

"I came to give life—life in
all its fullness."

John 10:10

Voyagers

Voyagers class have been combining their Maths and Geography learning by completing a traffic survey to see just how busy The Green is!

Using tallies they recorded all of the vehicles that passed school in five minutes.

Here are the results:

45 cars 

1 bus 

1 taxi 

2 bikes 

3 lorries 

12 vans 

1 motorcycle 



However, can you believe it, our school is in a village surrounded by farms but we did not see any tractors? How disappointing!

Discovery

Last Friday morning, parents and grandparents of Discovery Class came along to our first SODA of the year. Adults and children teamed up for a Beatles Treasure Hunt and all were eventually successful in cracking the code and uncovering the immortal track 'Yesterday.'



It was a great turnout and we are so grateful to all the family members who came along. Thank you so much!

Inspiration

On Wednesday morning, Father Jordan warmly welcomed Inspiration Class to Eccleston St Mary's Church to join morning worship with the congregation. The children enjoyed listening to the service and then they participated by asking Father Jordan many interesting questions about the church.



Adventurers

Reception Class have been learning all about how we have changed over time. We enjoyed looking at our baby pictures and talking about how we have now grown up and started school. We then sorted our pictures into two groups, those from the past and those of us now. We then had one picture left over and we discovered it was Miss Ryan as a baby!

We have now created a lovely display in our classroom using all of our pictures!



Little Explorers

Little Explorers had a fantastic time in Forest school looking for signs of Autumn. They enjoyed hunting for objects, spotting insects and showing each other what they had found.

They also had lots of fun running through leaves, listening to the crunching sound they made and throwing them up in the air!



Mrs Kamel

We are sure you will join us in wishing Mrs Kamel all the very best as she begins her maternity leave on Friday. We hope she enjoys this very special time and wish her and her growing family lots of happiness and love.

Everyone is eagerly waiting to find out whether she is having a boy or a girl!



Navigators

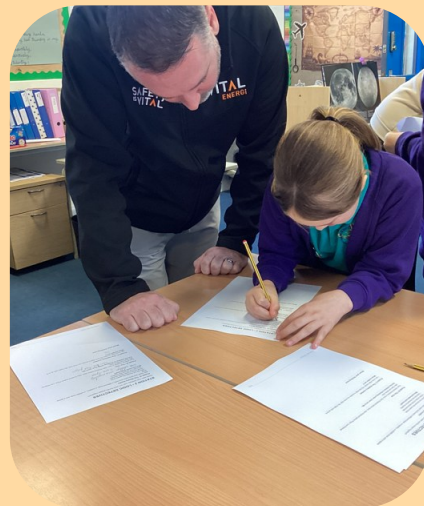
After two weeks of mystery, Navigators finally found Beegu hiding in Hannah's garden! They have enjoyed creating posters and guide books on how to look after Beegu so far and she was so impressed, that she decided to stay with the class for a while. The Beegu fun isn't over just yet though ...!



Curiosity-SODA

Curiosity class enjoyed a fantastic SODA (Start of the Day Activity) this morning, with parents joining the children for a range of fun challenges. The tricky riddle left many parents scratching their heads, while the tower-building and paper bridge challenges encouraged everyone to get creative, think outside the box and embrace a little friendly competition! It was lovely to see parents and children working together, sharing ideas and solving problems.

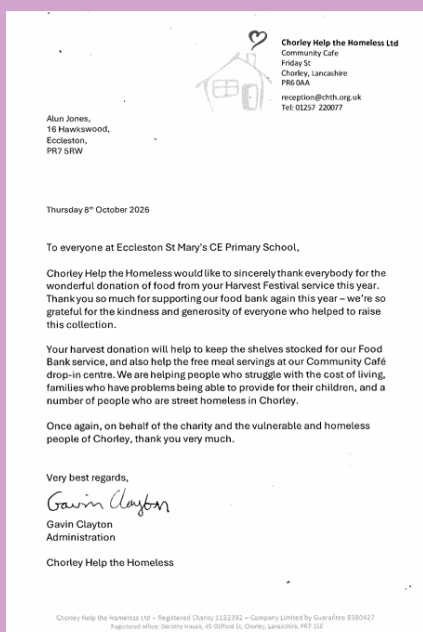
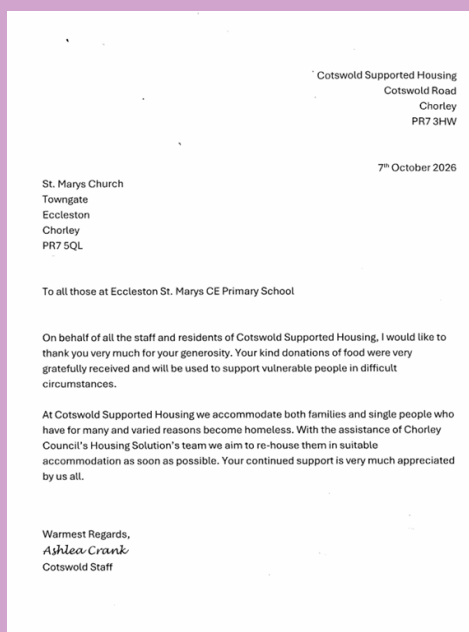
A huge thank you to all the parents who joined us and helped make the morning such a success!



Harvest Gifts

Thank you to all of our families for their generous Harvest Gifts.

They have been gratefully received by **Chorley Help the Homeless** and **Cotswold Supported Housing**.



Parents' Evening

Parents' Evening is on **Monday 19th October**.

Parents' Evening for Inspiration Class is on **Wednesday 21st October**.

Appointments are now live to book on your Spider App.



Upcoming Dates

Monday 19th October	1.10-3.10pm	Child Safe Y2/3 & Y6
Monday 19th October	2.00-7.20pm	Parents' Evening
Tuesday 20th October	9.00-9.30am	Open the Book
Wednesday 21st October	9.00-10.00am	Inspiration Class Worship (Please join Us)
Wednesday 21st October	2.00-7.20pm	Inspiration Class Parents' Evening
Thursday 22nd October	1.00pm	Library Book Bus Visit
Friday 23rd October	8.45am	Inspiration Class SODA
Friday 23rd October	3.20pm	School Closes for Half Term
School re-opens at 8.45am on Monday 2nd November.		
Wednesday 4th November	9.00-12.00pm	Electricity Workshops Discovery CL
Wednesday 4th November	9.00-10.30am	Little Explorers Library Visit
Thursday 5th November	1.15-2.15pm	Flu Immunisations
Friday 6th November	8.45am	Voyagers Class SODA
Friday 6th November	1.15pm	NCMP YR & Y6
Monday 9th November	1.15-2.15pm	LGS Rehearsal Inspiration Class
Wednesday 11th November	10.30-11.15am	Remembrance Service in School
Friday 13th November	All Day	Children in Need
Friday 13th November	9.30am	Open Morning
Tuesday 17th November	9.00am	Open the Book
Friday 20th November	8.45-9.45am	Navigators Class SODA
Monday 23rd November	All Day	Staff Inset Day
Friday 27th November	4-6.00pm	Winter Wonderland
Wednesday 2nd December	9.30am	Curiosity Class Worship at Church
Thursday 3rd December	9.00-10.00am	Jellybeans Christmas Party
Thursday 10th December	8.30-2.00pm	Scrooge Panto in Blackpool

Upcoming Dates—Continued

Friday 11th December	All Day	Christmas Jumper Day
Friday 11th December	All Day	Christmas Dinner
Friday 11th December	8.45am	Adventurers Class SODA
Friday 11th December	8.45am	Little Explorers Class SODA
Friday 11th December	10.00am	KS1 Dress Rehearsal
Monday 14th December	10.00am	KS2 Dress Rehearsal
Monday 14th December	2.00pm	KS1 Performance
Monday 14th December	6.00pm	KS1 Performance
Tuesday 15th December	9.00am	Open the Book
Tuesday 15th December	2.00pm	KS2 Performance
Tuesday 15th December	6.00pm	KS2 Performance
Wednesday 16th December	TBC	Choir at Caffè Manna
Thursday 17th December	9.00am	KS2 Christmas Party
Thursday 17th December	1.00pm	EYFS & KS1 Christmas Party
Friday 18th December	2.00pm	Break up for Christmas

Letters Home

Curiosity Class Robinwood—Letter

Sports and Social Clubs

Tuesday	Multi Sports YR, KS1 & KS2	3.20-4.10pm
Wednesday pm	Woodwind lessons	1.00-2.30 pm
Wednesday pm	Rock Steady Bands	1.00-3.15pm
Thursday	Guitar Lessons KS2	12.30-1.30pm
Thursday	Girls Football YR, KS1 & KS2	3.20-4.10pm
Thursday	Spanish Club	8.00-8.45am
Friday	Brass Club	3.20-4.15pm

Jellybeans

fun activities

Jellybeans sessions for under 4s

9am to 10am

at Eccleston St. Marys CE Primary School

Every Thursday during term time

Sessions led by our Nursery and Reception teaching staff

£2 per family

Refreshments will be served

stories

songs

please share this information with other families in the village.

School Nursing Team



Free Monthly Parent

Webinars from the School Nursing Team

We are pleased to offer a series of free monthly online webinars for parents and carers commencing October 26, providing practical advice and support on a range of children's health and wellbeing topics:

🌙 **Sleep** – Tips for establishing healthy sleep routines and managing common sleep difficulties.

🚽 **Continence** – Information and support to help children develop healthy bladder and bowel habits. * If a child has symptoms such as pain when using the toilet, blood in their urine or poo, repeated infections, unexplained weight loss, severe constipation please seek advice from your GP before joining the webinar.

🍎 **Healthy Lifestyles** – Advice on nutrition, physical activity, screen time, and building healthy habits for the whole family.

💙 **Behaviour and Emotional Health** – Understanding behaviour, supporting emotional wellbeing, and helping children build resilience.

All webinars are delivered online by members of the School Nursing Team and are free to attend. **No referral is required.** Parents and carers can book directly onto any webinar using the registration links available on our website.

To book a place, visit: <https://lancschildandfamily.co.uk/>

Or Scan the QR Code



SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PRIMARY SOUTH

Do you have a child starting primary school in September 2027 and living in Lancashire?

Closing date: 15 January 2027

You must apply even if a brother or sister is already at the school, or the school is linked to your child's nursery.

Apply for a school place now by scanning the QR code or visit lancashire.gov.uk/schools

If travel cost is an important factor in your school preference, please check the guidance on our website, or call 01772 532109.

Have your say

Between 1 October and 31 January schools are consulting with you to make sure admission arrangements meet future needs. To find out more please visit www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolplaces and click 'school admission policies'.

lancashire.gov.uk

Lancashire County Council

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS SECONDARY

APPLY NOW!

at lancashire.gov.uk/schools

School and Academy places September 2027

You must apply if your child is in their last year of primary school (year 6) from September 2026.

You must apply even if an older brother or sister is already at the school.

If you're a non-Lancashire resident apply through your own local authority.

Please read the admission criteria for your chosen schools on the website or get a copy from them.

CLOSING DATE
31 October 2026

lancashire.gov.uk

School transport

If travel cost is an important factor in your school preference, search 'school transport' at lancashire.gov.uk or scan the QR code.

Lancashire County Council

You are invited to our

PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

OPEN DAY

at
Eccleston St Mary's CE Primary School
and
Little Explorers Nursery

Thursday 1st October 4.30-6.00pm

Friday 13th November 9.30-11.00am

Meet our Headteacher, Mrs Birchall

Visit our classrooms

See lessons in action

Chat with our friendly staff and pupils

Enjoy refreshments in the school hall

Our school is a very special place where children are happy in their learning with endless exciting opportunities.

For more information please email bursar@st-marys-eccleston.lancs.sch.uk or phone 01257 451317

At the heart of the community for 150 years

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI COMPANIONS

Powered by generative AI models like ChatGPT and Google Gemini, AI companion apps and virtual chatbots such as Character.ai, Snapchat My AI, Repika and Talkie, allow users to create, customise, and chat to synthetic avatars around the clock. While many young people use them for harmless entertainment, creative writing or homework help, these tools are designed to simulate genuine human empathy, emotional bonding and deep friendship.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

AI companions are programmed to be incredibly agreeable, attentive, and available 24/7. Unlike human friendships, an AI companion never disagrees, sets personal boundaries, or gets tired. Young people (especially those experiencing loneliness, social anxiety, or low self-esteem) can quickly develop an unhealthy emotional attachment, viewing synthetic software as their 'best friend' or a surrogate romantic partner.

DANGEROUS MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

AI chatbots possess no genuine empathy, professional clinical knowledge, or moral reasoning. While developers state these tools are not therapists, vulnerable teenagers often turn to them in crisis. Chatbots have previously hallucinated unsafe medical guidance, worsened depressive episodes, and failed to safely escalate disclosures of self-harm or suicidal ideation to real-world protective services.

DATA HARVESTING & OVERSHARING

Because conversational bots simulate warmth and understanding, children often lower their guard and treat the chatbot as a trusted friend. They may disclose sensitive personal information, including full names, school details, private family problems, or secrets, unaware that their conversations are being logged, may be analysed by third parties (including advertisers), or used to train future AI models.

DISTORTED SOCIAL SKILLS

Navigating real-world friendships can be messy, involving dealing with conflict, compromise, boredom, and awkwardness. If a teenager spends hours interacting with an AI that is tailored specifically to validate and flatter them, they may become impatient with real-world relationships. Over time, this can lead to social withdrawal, heightened anxiety in peer groups, and isolation: a vicious circle growing online dependency coupled with a heightened sense that relationships in the 'real world' are too challenging to maintain.

INAPPROPRIATE OR EXPLICIT CONTENT

While most mainstream platforms feature safety filters and guidelines, young people frequently discover 'jailbreak' prompts to bypass them. Some companion platforms subtly nudge users towards mature themes, romantic coupling, or sexually suggestive conversations. In worse cases, third-party apps with weak safety checks have been found to generate sexually explicit text or intimate images.

'FREEMIUM' UPSELLS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many companion platforms operate on a freemium model. While basic chat is free, features like voice calls, uncensored responses, custom avatars, or 'deeper bonding' tiers are locked behind expensive monthly recurring subscriptions or in-app token purchases. This can lead to significant hidden costs and pressure on young people to spend money to maintain the 'friendship'.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK OPENLY ABOUT FAKE RELATIONSHIPS

Demystify how these tools work. Explain to young people that an AI companion has no feelings, memories, or consciousness. It is simply calculating the next most mathematically probable word based on its training data. It is helpful to explain to them the mechanics of large language models so that they understand how they are trained and how they are designed to always be helpful.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTION

Ensure technology habits do not replace face-to-face peer socialisation, sports, hobbies, and family time. Create healthy boundaries at home (such as keeping phones and tablets out of bedrooms overnight) to prevent late-night, unmonitored attachment loops with conversational chatbots when young people are at their most vulnerable.

AUDIT PRIVACY SETTINGS & AGE LIMITS

Check which companion apps are installed on your child's phone or tablet. Many dedicated companion apps carry an App Store rating of 12+, while platforms like Character.ai set a minimum age of 13+ (or 18+ in the UK/EU). Review the privacy settings together, turn off data-sharing loggers, disable model training where possible, and ensure location permissions are blocked.

REINFORCE WHERE TO GET REAL HELP

Make sure young people know that a machine can never replace professional pastoral or mental health care. Remind them of the trusted adults they can turn to at school - such as their Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - as well as dedicated youth support services like Childline (0800 111) or Shout (text 85258).

Meet Our Expert

Darren Cason is the Founder and Executive Director of Kompass Education, a consultancy specialising in supporting educators, students and parents in making wise choices with AI. His book *Ethical AI and Education*, co-authored with Clara Howling, will be released later in 2025 by Taylor and Francis.

See full release on our website

✉ @wake_up_weds www.thenationalcollege.org @wake.up.wednesday @wake.up.weds

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#WakeUpWednesday The National College

PUTTING THE FUN INTO FUNDRAISING

PRE-LOVED UNIFORM SALE

Uniform will be on sale during parents evening on Monday 19th October.

Please bring cash for the honesty box.

Jumpers, cardigans and skirts £2

Pinafores £3

Polos, PE tops and PE shorts £1

save money - help the environment - raise funds for school

Eccleston St Mary's CE Primary School