



## Achieving the best

Hayes End  
South Petherton  
Somerset TA13 5AG  
Tel: 01460 240172  
E-mail: [office@southpethertonjuniorschool.co.uk](mailto:office@southpethertonjuniorschool.co.uk)  
Website: [www.southpetherton-jun.somerset.sch.uk](http://www.southpetherton-jun.somerset.sch.uk)  
EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER of South Petherton Schools Partnership  
Mrs Shan Weston B.A. Hons, PGCE, NPQH, NPQEL

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers of McDermott Class,

Happy New Year! It has been lovely to see all children return after the Christmas holidays with a spring in their step and a smile on their faces. As we return to our regular routines, the children have come back to school with enthusiasm and readiness to learn.

### Curriculum News

#### English

We have begun the term with a focus on nature, following a whole-school theme in support of our visiting author Rachel Delahaye. Children have already written some wonderfully expressive poems inspired by animals in their natural habitats. Over the forthcoming weeks, our writing focus will link with our Geography learning as we explore the book: 'Escape from Pompeii'. We will write non-chronological reports as well as eyewitness accounts.

Children will continue to take part in regular reading sessions, learning how to develop and extend their comprehension skills. This will involve a range of guided, adult-led sessions as well as carefully chosen independent tasks for children to complete on their own. All children will bring home a reading book and reading record. Expectations are that children read at home at least 5 times per week. Please check your child's record and add your signature when you hear them read. When they achieve their reading stamps (recorded at the back of reading records) they will be invited to the half termly reading café.

On a weekly basis, children will be introduced to a new spelling pattern to help them secure their spelling accuracy. They will be given a list of spellings to practise at home and will also receive a weekly quiz in school to check understanding. Spelling Frame can also be used as an extra tool to help learn weekly spellings. Spellings will be sent home on a Wednesday.

#### Maths

We have begun with a Fractions Unit, which will be followed with learning more about decimals. In addition to this, children will revisit their skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division securing their understanding of formal methods. Children will have the opportunity to take part in regular arithmetic challenges as well as ensuring times table knowledge is secure. Children can use TTRockstars at home to support their times tables.

#### Science

This half term, we are studying Materials. Children will learn about separating materials, reversible and irreversible changes as well as understanding about electrical and thermal conductivity. Working scientifically, they will gather and record data to help answer questions.

#### Geography

Our geography unit will focus on volcanoes and earthquakes. As part of this topic, children will learn about the layers of the Earth as well as being able to identify where in the world these natural phenomena are found. We will also explore Italy during a European country study.



## **Computing**

This term, children will learn about programming and how to use what they have learnt to create a mini quiz game. As well as this, there will also be a focus on computer systems and networks. During this unit, children will learn about how internet searches work. We will continue to teach internet safety and take part in regular conversations about how to keep safe online and when using devices.

## **RE**

Why do Christians call the day that Jesus died 'Good Friday'? Within this unit, the children will learn about how the Christian Salvation story fits into the big story of the Bible. They will find out about the main events of holy week and offer suggestions about how people at the time might have felt and responded to these key events. Children will study texts from the Bible that retell the key events of holy week and suggest what these mean for Christians today. Later in the unit, the children will find out about how Christians today remember, celebrate and respond to the events of holy week and Easter. They will begin to make links between some of these events and life in the world today, suggesting why some Christians live their lives in the way that they do.

## **Music**

The Spring Term welcomes new instrument tuition with Year 4 learning recorders and Year 5, ukulele. I can't wait for their concerts later in the term. Look out for the dates!

## **PSHE**

Through the Jigsaw programme, our topic Dreams and Goals will focus on investigating a range of jobs and careers as well as individual dreams and goals.

## **Art and Design**

The children will learn about Keith Haring and the designs he created. They will explore and learn how to recreate some of his bold designs before moving on to create their own piece inspired by their explorations.

## **General Reminders**

- McDermott Class will have PE on a Tuesday and Thursday until 27<sup>th</sup> January.
- On Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, Year 4 begin their school swimming lessons at Crewkerne pool.
- From Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, McDermott PE days will change to Monday and Thursday.
- Water Bottles: Please send in a named water bottle daily. These can be refilled at school.
- Please remind your child to bring a coat to school.

Many thanks for your continued support, please do not hesitate to come and see me or e-mail the school office if you have any further questions.

Best wishes,

Mrs A Chapple  
Class Teacher

