

SHORTLANESEND SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER



AUTUMN TERM 2026 | Friday 11th September



where everyone smiles, learns and grows

FROM MR RICHARDS

Welcome back to a new school year and to the first edition of our newly refreshed school newsletter. I hope that all families enjoyed a happy and restful summer break.

We have had an incredibly positive start to the term. It has been wonderful to welcome our children back to school and see them return settled, enthusiastic and ready to learn. During visits to classrooms this week, I have been delighted to see children so settled.

As we begin the new academic year, we are continuing to make improvements across the school, both in the way we communicate with families and in the educational experiences we provide. We are committed to keeping you informed as these developments take place.

One of the first changes this year is the increased information we are sharing about children's learning. Class letters and curriculum overviews have recently been sent home to help parents understand what their children will be learning this term and how they can support learning at home.

Our newsletter has also had a summer makeover. We hope you find the new format easier to navigate and that it provides a helpful insight into school life, children's achievements and the exciting learning taking place. You will also find key dates and events for the term ahead in our updated diary section. Further information about each event will be shared nearer the time.

We would also like to invite parents and carers to visit their child's classroom at **2:55pm on Tuesday 15th** September. This is an opportunity to meet your child's teacher, see their learning environment and ask any questions you may have about the year ahead. There is no need to book.

As always, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or concerns. The best way to do this is by speaking to a member of staff at the beginning or end of the school day, or by emailing hello@shortlanesend.org.uk.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to working in partnership with you throughout the year and to sharing many successes together.

Class Certificates

Gannel Class - Alice

Lynher Class - Dakota

Helford Class - Harry

Kenwyn Class - Max

Tamar Class - Phoebe



Important Reminders

- Please return your child's medical information form as soon as possible.
- Club sign-ups go live today (Friday 11th September) at 5pm.



PSHE and Safeguarding

This week, we started our new PSHE unit entitled 'Me and My Relationships.' Children across the school will be learning more about themselves and the relationships they have in their lives.

All staff have received their annual safeguarding training. If you have any safeguarding questions or concerns or would like any advice please speak to Mr Richards.



Attendance

Gannel Class - 98.47%

Lynher Class - 95.6%

Helford Class - 94.8%

Kenwyn Class - 98.2%

Tamar Class - 99.2%

Whole School - 97.1%



House Points

Buzzards - 159

Choughs - 180

Curlews - 190

Puffins - 164

House captains to be announced next week!

What have we been up to this week?

Gannel Class

This week the children have been consolidating their understanding of place value and numbers to 10 million. In PE, we have started to choreograph our own Samba dance and in ICT, learning about web addresses. We have all begun reading the Class book, Moo, and diving into Ancient Egypt in our reading VIPER sessions. A great start to the new term where the children are confident, resilient and focused.

Lynher Class

This week, the children created colourful paintings inspired by the four seasons. In Science, we carried out gravity investigations, investigating the rate at which balls drop to the floor. We have also continued reading There's a Werewolf in My Tent. The children are really enjoying the story and its humour, and it has prompted lots of discussion and laughter. The class has made a fantastic start to the year. I have been particularly impressed with how calm, focused and hardworking they have been in lessons.

Helford Class

Helford class have settled in really well and have been working hard all week. We have created some beautiful Egyptian artwork and have started reading our first book together, The Koala Who Could. We have been learning about nouns this week and have been making and partitioning numbers in maths.

Kenwyn Class

This week, we have been settling into our new class and getting to know each other. In English, we have been exploring Stuck by Oliver Jeffers through Drawing Club, using drawing, vocabulary and sequencing words to create our own stories. In History, we began learning about toys today and thought about our favourite toys and the materials they are made from. In Art, we started creating artwork inspired by the shapes, patterns and colours we can see in shells.

Tamar Class

This week in Tamar class our new Reception and Nursery children have been getting to know their new teachers, friends and the routines at school. We have been reading lots of stories, learning new songs and the reception children have had their first phonics lessons. The children have also been drawing some super self-portraits. We are so impressed with how well our children are settling into school life and have had a lovely positive start!

Nurture

It's been lovely to see the children return and settle back into the nurture room. This week the children have begun working on the topic of "Ourselves". We have been creating self-portraits and special memory boxes. We've been practicing our rolling and passing skills in PE and learning about hard and soft food in cooking. Well done team nurture!

Diary Dates

Date	Event
15 th September	Classroom drop-in – meeting your child’s class teacher and looking to the year ahead 2:55pm
18 th September	Jeans for Genes – wear jeans with school uniform jumpers / hoodies / cardigans
23 rd September	School houses launch event (in school)
25 th September	Non-uniform day in aid of Children’s Cancer Unit Fund at the Royal Cornwall Hospital.
29 th September	Open Classrooms 8:30am, all welcome
1 st October	Reception and Nursery Trip to Shortlanesend Park
2 nd October	Individual School Photos
7 th October	Coffee morning for families of children with SEND
8 th and 9 th October	KS2 Trip to Truro Museum (details to follow)
19 th October	EYFS trip to Kenwyn Church
22 nd October	Harvest Assembly at 2:30pm, all welcome
26 th – 30 th October	Half Term
3 rd November	Parents Evening
4 th November	
11 th November	KS1 Trip to Falmouth Maritime Museum (details to follow)
13 th November	Children in Need non-uniform day
16 th November	Anti-Bullying Week Wear odd socks on Monday 16 th November
17 th November	KS2 House Assembly – Choughs
18 th November	Junior Life Skills Trip for Y5
18 th November	Reception Trip to Truro Library
25 th November	Open Classrooms 8:30am, all welcome
18 th December	End of term assembly 9:00am, all welcome
18 th December	Last day of autumn term
INSETS (school closed to all children)	4 th January 2027 7 th June 2027 23 rd July 2027

Free School Meals

 You may recently have received notification that your child is now entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) following changes to the eligibility criteria.

 If you have been notified that your child is eligible, it is very important that you still complete a Free School Meals application form.

Although your child may already be identified as eligible, completing the application ensures that the school receives the additional government funding available to support your child's education. This funding helps schools provide extra resources, interventions, and opportunities that benefit all pupils.

 Applying is quick and easy and can be completed online using the link below:

[Apply Free School Meals](https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals)

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

If you need any help completing the application or have any questions, please contact the school office and we will be happy to assist.

Thank you for helping us ensure that our school receives the funding it is entitled to for our children and families.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about CHARACTER.AI

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Character.AI is an entertainment platform where users create and chat with AI-powered characters. These chatbots can act like existing favourite characters from movies or books, or like friends, mentors, or even romantic partners, responding in an emotional, personally engaging way. Although this can encourage creativity, it can also make a generated conversation feel like a genuine relationship, which is concerning if it takes the place of human relationships.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

AI replies are generated in real time rather than chosen from a fully checked script. Even with safety filters on, conversations can still move into sexual, violent, discriminatory, or self-harm material. These AI characters are often made by users, so a familiar name or child-friendly description does not guarantee that every response from the character will be suitable for a young person.

BLURRED BOUNDARIES

Characters on Character.AI can use the language of friendship, love, and empathy without ever feeling anything. Vulnerable young people may struggle to separate this simulation from genuine understanding. Romantic role-play or a character that demands attention, loyalty, or secrecy could also risk distorting young people's expectations around consent, disagreement, and the give-and-take involved in healthy human relationships.

UNRELIABLE ADVICE

Characters, like other chatbot platforms, are at risk of inventing facts or giving inappropriate advice while sounding completely confident. Characters may also echo a young person's assumptions instead of questioning them. This can become particularly risky when users rely on a character for guidance about health, mental wellbeing, relationships, money, or personal safety instead of checking with a credible source or trusted adult.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

Character.AI chatbots can appear endlessly attentive, supportive, and affectionate, which is one of the hallmarks of the generative AI models that such companions are built on. A young person may start turning to a character chatbot whenever they feel lonely or upset and believe that it understands them better than the humans in their life. This can become more concerning when chatting starts to replace sleep, schoolwork, hobbies and friendships.

PRIVACY CONCERNS

Character.AI chats may feel private, especially when a bot sounds personal and caring, but they take place on a company's online systems. Users could intentionally or unintentionally reveal their name, school, location, routines, images, or intimate concerns. Character.AI says some data may be retained to improve its services and AI models, so young people should never treat a chatbot like a confidential diary.

UNHEALTHY ENGAGEMENT

Be aware of warning signs such as secret accounts, bypassing age restrictions, hiding phone use from adults, chatting late at night, distress when access to the platform or character stops, withdrawal from other people, falling interest in school, or believing the character is conscious. Increased use may also signal that the young person is already lonely, anxious, or seeking help.

Advice for Parents & Educators

KEEP CONVERSATIONS OPEN

Ask what the young person enjoys about Character.AI and invite them to show you how the platform and their favourite characters work. Useful questions include, "Has it ever said something that felt wrong?" and "How can you tell it doesn't have feelings?" Avoid shaming them for using platforms like Character.AI or making them feel there is something wrong with them for doing so.

CHECK AGE, SETTINGS & LIMITS

Character.AI's minimum age is 16 in the UK, but open-ended companion chat is restricted to adults aged 18 or over. Users aged 16 to 17 receive a different experience built around guided 'Stories' and other creative or social features. Check their current settings, never help or encourage a young person to give a false age, and apply the same safety rules to other chatbot apps.

PAUSE, CHECK AND ASK

Teach young people to pause before accepting an answer from characters on Character.AI. Encourage them to check important claims against a trustworthy source and ask a safe adult when the issue matters. Never use a character as the sole source of medical, mental health, legal, financial, or safeguarding advice. Remind them not to share passwords, contact details, school information, live locations, or private images.

NOTICE AND RESPOND

Take action if chats involve sexual content, threats, coercion, abuse, self-harm or danger. Save relevant evidence, report the character and follow the setting's safeguarding process; educators should involve the designated safeguarding lead. If anyone is in immediate danger, contact emergency services. Childline is available on 0800 1111 and the NSPCC Helpline on 0800 800 5000.

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is an educator with almost 30 years' experience across teaching, school leadership and governance. He works internationally supporting schools and colleges with AI leadership and governance and [insert NC courses I have written].



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

See full reference list on our website



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LINK:

TOGETHERNESS

An update on wellbeing for every school parent

[https://mailchi.mp/solihullapproach/wellbeing-for-school-parents-new-online-resources-12773523?e=\[UNIQID\]](https://mailchi.mp/solihullapproach/wellbeing-for-school-parents-new-online-resources-12773523?e=[UNIQID])

**JOIN IN WITH OUR 2026
JEANS FOR GENES DAY EVENT**

**JEANS
FOR
GENES**

What?

Shortlanesend School
Wear your jeans to school day



Scan to donate

When?

Friday 18th September 2026

Wear Jeans, Change Lives

JEANSFORGENES.ORG



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