



St. Katharine's C.E. (V.A.) Primary School

Whole School Newsletter

Friday 4th September 2026



Welcome back

A big, warm welcome back to everyone this week and to our new children and families at St Katharine's. We are excited for another year of flourishing at St Katharine's!

Worship

Staff took part in worship at St Nicholas' Church on our training day, led by Rev. Mike Powis, the vicar of the new parish of Southbourne-On-Sea. He talked about the story from the Bible of Jesus welcoming children and demonstrating how special and unique they are. In our whole school worship on the first day of term, Mrs St John shared a special, reserved chair, and used it to illustrate that, following the example of Jesus, every child is important, belongs to our school and will flourish in their learning and their play this year.

Fences and gates/entrances and exits

Thank you for your patience while we all get used to the new fences and gates. Work will continue for three more weeks around the perimeter of the school. To access the office after 8:55am, when the gates close, please go to one of the single gates and press the bell button. The system will connect you to someone in the office who will be able to see and talk to you and open the gate. The middle gate is for deliveries only. When you leave, you will need to press the green release button near the gate and pull.



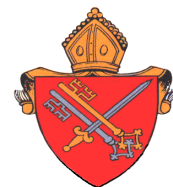
Before and after school

Routines for years 1-4 remain the same and if you have siblings in different year groups you can make a plan to use the same gate if needed. Children in years 5 and 6 are encouraged to build independence by saying goodbye to parents in the lane and walking through the car park (shut to traffic at this point) to the double gates and into school. They exit the same way. The smaller gate next to the car park entrance is for adults only who need to go to the office at the start or end of the day.

Early years parents and children will need to ensure they only enter via the entrance nearest to the golf club car park, on the pavement towards the small gate next to early years. After dropping off or picking up from the EY door, we would like to establish a one-way system, exiting via the double gates, keeping to the left (years 5 and 6 will keep right). If EY parents are waiting for older siblings, we ask that you keep well away from the exit routes for year 5 and 6. It sounds complicated but we will show you next week!



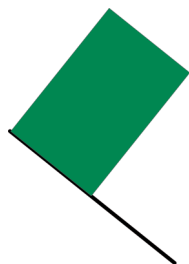
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Eco-Schools



We're delighted to share that our school has been awarded the Eco-Schools Green Flag with Distinction. This fantastic achievement recognises the commitment and hard work of our pupils, staff and wider school community in promoting sustainability and caring for our environment. We would like to thank everyone for their support and contribution towards this success. Thank you to Mrs Lee-Stanton for her commitment to this aspect of our school. Congratulations to all involved. We are incredibly proud of this achievement and the positive difference our school continues to make for the future.

Our report was a delight to read - here is a small part:

"It is fantastic to see your school's ethos, curriculum and everyday practice becoming increasingly aligned with your Eco-Schools vision. By embedding these values into daily school life, you are helping pupils develop lifelong environmentally friendly habits."



Meet the teachers

We have already held the year 5 and 6 meetings. Remember that years 1-4 meetings are next week after school. Children will come outside to meet you and then you will be brought to the year group area by staff when they are ready; children and siblings will be looked after in the studio and will be collected by a member of staff. There is food tasting in the hall after the year 3 and 4 meetings so do make your way there after the meeting. We will send home copies of the presentations by the end of next week for those of you who are unable to make it.

School Uniform



We have had a few enquiries about which items of uniform to buy. There are no notable changes to the policy, but if you are needing to replace items, the three core branded items are as follows: tie, school jumper, PE top. Other items can be bought from other shops without branding or you could continue to buy the branded item if you choose. Please note that sweatshirts, shorts and joggers for PE must be plain navy; PE socks can be plain navy or the sky blue hoop ones if preferred. Please see below for the school uniform policy around jewellery and hair which can also be found on our school website [School Uniform Policy](https://www.stkatharinesceprimary.co.uk/school-uniform-policy).

A reminder from our school uniform policy:

Jewellery

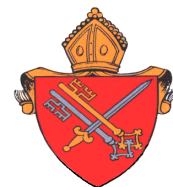
No jewellery should be worn. Earrings are not allowed at any time, including clear plastic ones. Parents are advised to get any ear piercing carried out at the very start of the summer holidays so that they will be ready to be removed in September. Friendship bracelets must be removed for school. Smart watches must not be worn to school or on visits.

Hair

No coloured braids, coloured hair or tramlines. Hair bands ('alice' bands, ribbons, hair ties, scrunchies) must be plain blue, white or hair coloured (not patterned) and no wider than 3cm; any bows should be small.



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Musician of the Month

Our Musician of the Month for September is Lord Kitchener:

Aldwyn Roberts (1922 to 2000), better known by his stage name Lord Kitchener (or "Kitch"), was a Trinidadian calypsonian who has been described as the "Grand Master of Calypso." He travelled to England on the *Empire Windrush* in 1948 and, upon arriving at Tilbury Docks, performed his specially written song "London Is the Place for Me" for Pathé News. Within two years, he was a regular performer on BBC radio and was in great demand for live performances.

Genre: Calypso

Active: 1943 to 1999

Origin: Arima, Trinidad and Tobago

Listen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QDH4lBeZF-M>



Instrumental Lessons (Years 4, 5 and 6)

If you have signed up for instrumental lessons this year, these will start in the week beginning 14th September, apart from guitar lessons, which will begin one week later.

Further information will be sent home next week.



Orchestra and School Band

These clubs will start on 16th and 17th September respectively.



Missing Books

We are missing many school reading books, in particular 'Barrington Stoke Books' please check your home bookshelves for any school books and return back to us via your children or the school office.

Absence during term time

Please note no holidays are authorised during term time, please remember to use the 'Leave of Absence during term time' form, which can be found on our website using the link: [Leave of absence during term time form](#).

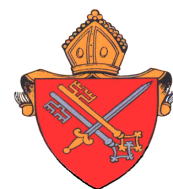


Reporting Absences

If your child is absent due to illness please ring the school office and leave a voicemail on the absence line at 01202 426663 or email office@skps.email before 8.45am. Please remember to call in or email on each day of their absence.



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Nut Free School

We would like to remind parents and carers that we are a nut free school. Please also check ingredients on packaged food that you send into school with your child. We have a number of children who can have a very serious allergic reaction should they come into contact with nuts.



Hot School Meals

Please remember to order your hot school meal by 12.00pm (midday) the day before the meal



Free School Meals

As you may be aware, there are some important changes to Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility that will come into effect from September 2026. The Government has announced that, from the start of the 2026/27 academic year, all children from households receiving Universal Credit will be entitled to Free School Meals. This means that many more families will now be eligible for support.

BCP Council has advised that all families must submit a new Free School Meals application,

2026-2027	
Autumn Term	Tuesday 1st September to Friday 18th December 2026 at 1.30pm
Inset Day	Tuesday 1st September 2026
Inset Day	Friday 23rd October 2026
Autumn Half Term	Monday 26th October - Friday 30th October 2026
Spring Term	Monday 4th January to Thursday 25th March 2027 at 1.30pm
Spring Half Term	Monday 15th February - Friday 19th February 2027
Summer Term	Monday 12th April to Wednesday 21st July 2027 at 1.00pm
Summer Half Term	Monday 31st May - Friday 4th June 2027
Bank Holiday	Monday 3rd May 2027
Inset Day	19th, 20th and 21st July 2027