

6th February 2026



# Our Weekly Update



## Headteacher update

Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

Following the information shared in last week's newsletter about the National Year of Reading, we have enjoyed marking National Storytelling Week this week in school. In assembly on Monday, we discussed the importance of good stories and looked at some children's classics. On Tuesday, teachers swapped classes at the end of the day and shared one of their favourite stories with a different group of children. There is another reading recommendations poster at the end of this newsletter - we hope you find these useful. Please note that we have changed the day we are marking World Book Day. We will be dressing up and celebrating this on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March instead of Friday 6<sup>th</sup>.

You may have noticed over the last couple of weeks that our website has had a refresh. The design and layout should be more user-friendly and the photos have been updated. Key dates have been added and newsletters, Curriculum Overviews and term dates are all up to date. Hopefully this is a useful resource for parents, carers and families.

There are lots of exciting things taking place in school next week. Year 5 have the next round of the Walters Cup football, Years 3 and 4 are looking forward to their Ancient Egyptian day and Years 5 and 6 have an Ancient Greek day. Our House Captains are leading assembly on Monday, parents and carers are invited to an information meeting about the Year 4 Multiplication Check on Wednesday, and Years 5 and 6 have an Open Classroom Afternoon after school on Friday. It's certainly not dull!

A reminder that next week is the last week of this half term and school is closed to children from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> February. Let's hope that we get some brighter and warmer weather for the children's time off school!

Best wishes for a lovely weekend,

Jonathan Clarke and the SPS Team



# Key Dates – updates in blue



Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	Safer Internet Day
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> February	Years 3 and 4 Ancient Egypt Day
Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 5/6 Ancient Greece online workshop
Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February	Year 5/6 Ancient Greece Day
16 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> February	Half Term
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> February	Open Classrooms
Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day (details to follow)
Week beginning 9 <sup>th</sup> March	Science Week
Wednesday 11 <sup>th</sup> and Thursday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Parent/Carer Consultation Meetings
Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	Sport Relief
Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> March (09:20)	Year 3 and 4 production to parents/carers
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Last day of the spring term
Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> March – Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter break
Week beginning Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May	Year 6 SATs week
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> May (09:20)	Reception production to parents/carers
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> June	Sports Day: KS2 AM and Reception/KS1 PM (timings tbc)



Reception	Hygiene	<p>This week whilst making up orders for the takeaway, we focused on being hygienic. We ensured our hands were thoroughly cleaned with soap to prevent the spread of germs that might make us unwell. At what other times should we wash our hands? What other hygiene routines do you have at home?</p>
Year 1/2	Setting	<p>This week we read the story 'Wild'. Can your child tell you what a setting is and describe the wild forest setting using their senses?</p>
Year 3/4	Barter	<p>In History, we have been looking at how Ancient Egyptians did not have a monetary system and therefore traded items by bartering (exchanging or swapping goods fairly). What sort of items did the Egyptians barter? If they were trading lots of gold, would trading for a bag of fish be fair?</p>
Year 5/6	Solution	<p>We have been investigating what happens to solutes (solids) when they are mixed in solvents (liquids). A solution is when a solute has dissolved completely and become a part of the solution.</p> <p>Another meaning of our word solution is also relevant to our Greek myth writing, where we are working towards our hero finding a solution to a problem.</p>
French	<p>Year 3/4: Practise your spelling with this game: <a href="#">Hangman</a></p> <p>Year 5/6: Practise your pronunciation with the BBC game, Dash and Blink: <a href="#">Dash And Blink: Forgotten French</a></p>	

# 10 Ways to Take 10...

1. Read something you enjoy - it's okay to stop and swap if it's not fun
2. Switch off devices and make reading a new routine
3. Swap out time on socials for 10 minutes reading
4. Record your reading streak via a reading diary or online app
5. Try different formats - comics, magazines, audiobooks or e-readers
6. Listen to audiobooks - on the way to school or out on a walk
7. Check out your school library or local library
8. Choose a quick read and enjoy an easy win
9. Read out loud - share the joy of reading with others
10. Keep a book within easy reach - in your school bag or next to bed

**We are proudly taking part in the 2026 National Year Of Reading and invite all our young people, colleagues and families to take 10 minutes each day to read something you enjoy.**

**Watch this space for more ideas and upcoming events.**

**Join the movement to enjoy reading throughout 2026! #GoAllIn2026**

**GO  
ALL  
IN.**

National  
Year of  
Reading  
2026



**Meridian  
Trust**

# What are they interested in?

If reading isn't something your child's enjoyed up till now....

Have they tried these? Fun-filled, graphic novels are a great way to get into reading.

Visit [BookTrust](#) for more inspiration



### Allow different formats

Here's the key: reading is a habit, and as long as young people are in the habit of picking up something to read, it doesn't really matter what or how they are reading.

Allow young people to read on an electronic device - for many, reading on a device might be a great place to start building the habit of reading.

Graphic novel



Series

*Dog Man* by Dav Pilkey

Graphic novel



Series

*Looshkin* by Jamie Smart

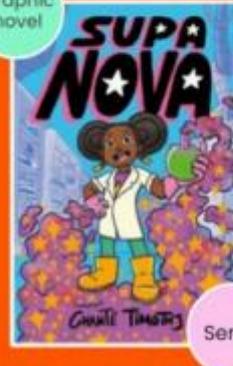
Graphic novel



Series

*Investigators* by John Patrick Green

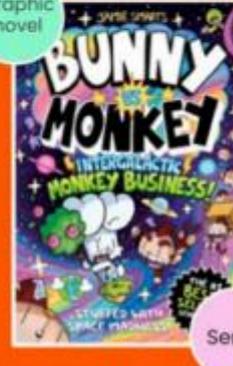
Graphic novel



Series

*Supa Nova* by Chanté Timothy

Graphic novel



Series

*Bunny Vs Monkey* by Jamie Smart

# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

### ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

### CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

### REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

### EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

### PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.



### ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.



### MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.



### PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.



## Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College