



Upcoming Events

Tuesday 27th January 2026

Ashwater Primary School

Aim High; Be Resilient; Take Care of Each Other

Newsletter No.14 Spring Term

Dear Families,

Last Wednesday, I had the pleasure of chairing a virtual **DISP School Council** meeting, via Teams. This included Halwill, Ashwater, St Giles, Shebbear, Winkleigh, Hatherleigh, Monkleigh and Bow. Representatives from Year 5 and 6 from each school joined the discussion which focused on On-line Safety and what we as school adults and parents can do to help keep the children safe.

I was very impressed with the children from all schools who gave reflective and thoughtful ideas which we will collate and share in a future newsletter. I am sure it will give you much food for thought. Well done to Harley, Ernie and Gabe who represented Ashwater with such confidence and demonstrated they were really thinking about this topic seriously. A particular well done to Gabe who was one of the youngest involved. This session just demonstrates how useful this technology is in bringing people together but we need to know the dangers and know how to keep ourselves and our children safe.

In Friday's Celebration Assembly, we awarded certificates to all those who participated in the 12 Reads of Christmas Challenge. Well done to all the children who logged their 12 reads on their Christmas bookmark. I am so impressed with the excellent 'aim high' attitude shown and most importantly, the children are really developing a love of reading. The names of all those who participated were put into a draw and the two winners, Gemma and Elina will be given a book token.



Burton Art Gallery, Bideford

The children's artwork will soon be displayed in the Burton Art Gallery as part of their Annual Schools Exhibition. You will be able to view your child's work in the Annual Schools Exhibition which will run from 30 January – 15 March 2026

Start of School Day

A reminder that we have a 'soft-start' from 8:50 am so by 9:00 am all children should be in school and ready for learning to start. Coming in, even a few minutes late, can be very disruptive to the children already in class and those arriving late can feel awkward coming into a quiet classroom. Thank you for your support with this.

January 28

After School Club YR-Y6 Badminton

January 29

After School Club YR-Y6 Board Games

January 30

Wild Tribe Class 2

February 16

Last day of term

February 23

Non-Pupil day

February 24

First day back

March 5

World Book Day

March 10

SATs Meeting for Y6 Parents & children

3:45 pm

March 18

Ashwater Parent Consultation 2:30 –

6:00 pm

March 26

Bikeability Y5 and Y6

March 27

Bikeability Y5 and Y6

April 2

Last day of term

April 20

First day back after Easter

May 4

Bank Holiday

May 22

Last day of term

June 1

First day back

June 5

Non-Pupil day

June 26

The Gruffalo, Theatre Trip YR, 1&2.

July 22

Last day of term

Outlines of Support

Sometimes children need a little extra support or intervention. Teachers will be noting any additional support or intervention for those children that need it, on an 'Outline of Support' and will send these home in the next couple of weeks. Please note the 'Outline of Support' is not aimed at children with Special Educational Needs, as these children will have a 'My Plan'. Teachers will invite parents in to look at these together in the next couple of weeks.

If you have concerns that your child may have a Special Educational Need, please raise this with Mrs Cawsey, the Federation SENDCO. You can contact her via the school office to arrange a meeting.

Parent Consultation – Wednesday 18th March. 2:30 – 6:00 pm

This is an important opportunity to meet your child's teacher, look at their books and discuss their progress. We will let you know when you can book in your 10 minute slots. Meetings are offered in person or via Teams.

If your child has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) you will also be invited to a separate meeting to discuss their MyPlan.

Wild Tribe Spring 1st Half 2026

Class 2 will have Wild Tribe on Friday mornings. On Wild Tribe days, children need wellies and waterproof trousers & coats to wear over their uniform. Long hair needs to be tied up.

Clubs

Please see clubs information which is on our website :

<https://www.thecareyfederation.co.uk/ashwater-primary-school/about-us/before-after-school-clubs/>

Class pages

Please see your child's Class Page on our website for information about this term's learning:

<https://www.thecareyfederation.co.uk/ashwater-primary-school/children/class-pages/>

MCAS – MY CHILD AT SCHOOL

We are delighted to update you with the news that from after February half term we will be leaving School Money and starting with MCAS, an app which is fully integrated with our school systems.

This app will allow you to book and pay for your dinners, trips, uniform. We will also use this for online consents for trips and online consents for all school permissions.

Any balances that are on School Money will be transferred to your MCAS account. We will be sending guidance via an email in the next couple of weeks and running parents' awareness sessions.

In the mean while it would greatly assist us if any arrears could be cleared. You will only be able to book school lunches up to half term through School Money. We will open MCAS for you to book lunches on the last day of half term.

Mrs Alison Horn
Finance Officer



Useful Links

School Contact Details

Tel: 01409 211228

Email:

admin@ashwater.devon.sch.uk

Website:

[Halwill Primary School – Halwill and Ashwater Primary Schools](#)

Safeguarding: If you have any concerns about a child, please speak to one of the safeguarding team or email safeguarding@halwill.devon.sch.uk

Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Ruh Alford

Deputy Safeguarding Leads

Mrs Catherine Gee

Miss Hayley Frayn

Mrs Rosie Cawsey

Safeguarding Governor

Becky Bridgeman

Term Dates 2025 - 2026

These are on our website:

<https://www.thecareyfederation.co.uk/ashwater-primary-school/parents/term-dates/>

School Lunches – please book by Sunday for the

FREE SCHOOL MEALS – Are you entitled to apply?

Even though your child is entitled to universal infant free school meals in reception, year 1 and year 2, if you are eligible for free school meals it is important that you register as soon as possible as this attracts income for the school and will also allow you to benefit from: -

- **A full set of school uniform**
- **Free attendance at Breakfast and After School Clubs**
- **2/3 reduction in residential fees**



CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals.

Your child may also get free school meals if you get any of these benefits and your child is both:

To apply please use the following link

https://oneonline.devon.gov.uk/CCSCitizenPortal_LIVE/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2fCCSCitizenPortal_live


If you require any assistance, then please do not hesitate to contact the school offices.

Ruh Alford
Executive Headteacher

Safety around dogs

The bond between your child and dog can bring fun and happiness to family life. We don't expect our own dog to bite, but any dog can bite if they feel they have no other option.


Children are most likely to be bitten at home, by a familiar dog. Luckily most bites are preventable and close supervision is key.

 **A calm, happy dog** is less likely to react unsafely to children's natural exuberance.

- Give your dog a safe space of their own where they can go if they need time out. Have a rule to leave them alone when they're there.
- Keep them occupied – physical exercise and mental activity help keep your dog happy.
- Teach your child to be calm and kind with your dog. Avoid shouting, teasing or restrictive cuddles.


 **Close supervision** is the most important thing to keep children safe.

- Watch, listen and remain close when your child and dog are together.
- If either your dog or child seems unhappy, positively and calmly separate them. You can throw your dog a treat or toy, or lead your child away.
- **Understand your dog's body language** so you can spot signs they feel uncomfortable or stressed.
- When you know you'll be distracted during busier times, use safety gates to keep children and dogs separate. Or, take your child or dog with you.


 **Trigger times** – teach your child to leave your dog alone when they are:

- Sleeping – no-one likes to be woken up suddenly.
- Eating or having a treat – they might think you're going to take their food.
- Have a toy or something else they really like – they might not want to share!



 **Your growing child** – as your child changes, the risks can change too.

- Teach the rules to your child from an early age and keep explaining them as your child understands more.
- As your child becomes more mobile, review changes needed, like adding safety gates.
- Think ahead about your changing family life and new risks that can emerge. Read our fact sheet on bringing baby home.

 **Still worried?**

- If you're worried by the way your dog is with your child, talk to your vet. They'll check your dog's health and can refer you to a qualified animal behaviourist.
- Visit the **Animal Behaviour and Training Council** website to find a qualified behaviourist near you.


child accident
prevention trust


Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



This work was
supported by
the Office for Health
Improvement and
Disparities (OHID)

 www.capt.org.uk  [@ChildAccidentPreventionTrust](https://www.facebook.com/ChildAccidentPreventionTrust)  [@capt_charity](https://www.instagram.com/capt_charity)

‘Connecting Moments’- Digital SEND Support for Families

Are you a parent or carer of a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)?

Join us for Connecting Moments – a friendly online space designed just for you.

What’s it all about?

- Connect with other families in a small, welcoming group
- Share experiences and ideas
- Build a peer support network

Please join us on the **12th December at 10am, for a 1 hour session**– email-childsc.familyhub-mailbox@devon.gov.uk to book a space, places are limited and the session will be run via Teams.

If you would like support from the Devon family hub, please scan this QR code and complete our request for support form





Unauthorised Holiday/Leave Request

As you will be aware, Government Guidance advises that schools should not authorise requests for term time absence unless the school has received suitable evidence of exceptional circumstances. The Government does not consider a family holiday to be an exceptional circumstance.

In the absence of suitable evidence of exceptional circumstances, on this occasion the school cannot authorise your request for a Term Time Absence. We believe that if students are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement, and full attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career.

I must take this opportunity to remind you, that should you still choose to take your child out of school unauthorised, then the school must refer the absence to the Local Authority for the consideration of initiating Parental Responsibility Measures. If you have Parental Responsibility, this could mean receiving any of the following.

- A Penalty Notice. Should a Penalty Notice be issued, one notice will be issued to each parent/carer for each child involved. Currently, each Penalty Notice is for £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within the first 21 days. If a Penalty Notice goes unpaid after 28 days, then court proceedings will be initiated. If a previous Penalty Notice has been issued within the past 2 years, then the Local Authority will proceed straight to Court.
- A Magistrates Summons that could lead to a criminal record, a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment for up to 3 months.

We understand the disappointment that a refusal may cause, but as you can appreciate, this policy represents the school's responsibility and commitment towards ensuring your child's full and efficient education.

Yours sincerely
Mrs Ruh Alford
Executive Headteacher