



We put Christ at the Centre of
our Lives: Think, Speak, Act.



Newsletter Date:
Friday 16th January, 2026

St. Philip Neri with St. Bede Catholic Voluntary Academy

Maths Rockstar Day!

What a great Maths Rockstar Day we've had today! It's been fabulous to see the children (and staff!) dressed as rockstars. As a school, I think we absolutely smashed it! It's been even more impressive to see all of our children engaged in numbers in a range of different ways, through Maths apps, games or just having fun with numbers. All children from Year 2 upwards have also been given time on iPads to practise their time tables using an app called Times Tables Rockstars. This app is a fun and engaging way for children to practise their times tables. We are also able to track their progress as they play. A separate letter will be shared on your child's Class Dojo page to explain more about Times Tables Rock Stars.

All children from Year 3 to 6 will come home today with an individual *heatmap*; this tells you how successfully your child is able to recall times tables facts. Given that secure knowledge of times tables facts is crucial for mathematical success, we appreciate any help, support and encouragement you are able to give your child. And we thank you for helping your little rockstar look the part today!

A new Spelling Scheme: Ready, Steady, Spell

In case you missed last week's Newsletter, we have launched a new, exciting spelling scheme for all children from Year 2 to Year 6 called Ready, Steady, Spell. This scheme supports teachers to deliver spelling lessons that are progressive, systematic and designed to build confident, accurate spellers. The programme offers full National Curriculum coverage through a cyclical model that reinforces and embeds learning over time.

Ready, Steady, Spell provides our children with a consistent framework for the teaching of spelling with engaging resources and memorable Rule Rhymes used from Year 2 to Year 6. The programme supports all learners, including EAL learners and children with special educational needs. .

Many parents often ask how you can support your child at home with spelling. Through the use of this programme, there are seven strategies which are taught in school and can also be easily used to support the learning of spellings at home. The strategies are: *syll-a-beat*, *phonic sound*, *rule rhyme*, *picture it*, *word build*, *wrong say right spell*, and *tricky bit*. These strategies replace the previous *Look, Cover, Write, Check* method which research shows to be less effective. Please see the [Home Support Booklet](#) available to view on our website which will help you understand the new format for weekly spelling lists and provide details of each of the seven strategies and how you can use these to support your child's learning of spellings. We hope you find this new approach provides you with greater support for helping your child.

Attendance this week: 97.5%

FS2WQ 96.7%

FS2NM 100%

Y1BS 95.4%

Y1JD 95.7%

Y2AN 99.3%

Y2RT 99%

Y3RB 96.3%

Y3JD 96.3%

Y4AS 96.9%

Y4DK 98.4%

Y5BF 99.7%

Y5GC 98.8%

Y6LB 97.3%

Y6GS 96.6%



Staffing Update

Mrs Steele is hopeful that she will continue teaching her Year 1 class until half term, which is when she anticipates beginning her maternity leave. This, of course, could be subject to change! I'm delighted to confirm that Mrs Bridges, who is a well-known teacher in our school, will be covering Mrs Steele's maternity leave. Mrs Bridges has already met the children and already is in regular contact with the Year 1 team. We look forward to welcoming her back to our school when the time comes.

NottAlone

If you or anyone you know is struggling with their mental health and are in need of advice and help, NottAlone is a really good starting point. This comprehensive website provides local mental health advice, covering a range of areas from self-harm, to family separation, suicidal thoughts or worries about gangs/gang culture. Click [here to visit the NottAlone website](#).

First Holy Communion Enrolment

If your child is a baptised Catholic, in Year 3 or above, and you would like to enrol them onto the First Holy Communion programme, please complete the Enrolment Form which can be found on Class Dojo. A copy can also be obtained from the school office. Please ensure your completed form is returned to school by **Wednesday 21st January, 2026**.



Please note that First Holy Communion will take place on **Saturday 6th June, 2026 @ 10am in St. Philip's RC Church, Mansfield**. The programme will be delivered by our school chaplains – Clare Lund and Luke Potter **every Thursday after school until 4.30pm starting from Thursday 29th January**. More details will be confirmed once your child has been accepted onto the programme.

Word of the Week

Next week, our Word of the Week will be **discipleship** which will form the basis of our acts of collective worship throughout the week.



Liturgy of the Word/Mass

| Date | Type of Service | Who's Involved? |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Tuesday 20 January | Mass | Year 1 |
| Tuesday 27 January | Mass | Year 6 |
| Tuesday 3 February | Liturgy of the Word | Year 5 |
| Tuesday 10 February | Mass | Year 4 |

As ever, families and parishioners are most welcome to join us at 9.30am in Church for each celebration.

Lime Trees Wrap Around Care & After School Clubs

If you need wrap around care, please be reminded of the service that *The Lime Trees* provide right here on our school site. Their breakfast club runs from 7.30am and after school provision runs until 6pm. Find out more here on [our website](#). We are excited to confirm that after Easter, The Lime Trees will move from the cabin into our Dining Room. Not only will this make dropping off and collecting easier, but we're also confident that it will improve the experience for our children too.

Please also note that there are some spaces left in this term's After School clubs. We have a range of clubs available for children in Key Stage 1 and 2 from football, to dodgeball, nature studies to gymnastics. Please see Class Dojo for all the details.



Pupil Premium Grant

For those of you unaware, the government provides a *Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)* for eligible families which provides additional money for schools to use to improve educational outcomes for our children. Not only does PPG funding help schools, but it also benefits parents too as it entitles you to:

- Free school meals;
- Free milk;
- Trips and residential visits subsidised where 50% of costs are paid by school;
- Participation in after school clubs subsidised by 50%;

Checking your eligibility is easy and takes just a couple of minutes. Login to [Nottinghamshire County Council's SynergyHub](#), simply enter your National Insurance Number, Date of Birth along with your child's details and the system will inform you if you are eligible. The Local Authority will then inform school which will enable us to offer you the above subsidies. Children attending maintained nurseries (which ours is) can also qualify. More information about Pupil Premium can be found [here](#). If you need any further help, please don't hesitate to ask. And, like all other personal data, please be assured that being in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant is never shared.

Key Dates

As well as checking the dates below, we strongly advise that you check Class Dojo regularly to see notifications of other events, including specific year group activities and Class Charity Events. Please note that new events may appear each week so please check back each week in case new events appear!

| Date | Time | Event | Location | Who's Involved? |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Tuesday 20 Jan | During School Day | Other Faiths Roadshow | School Hall | Year 2—Year 6 |
| Wednesday 21 Jan | During School Day | School Trip | Space Centre | Year 1 |
| Friday 30 Jan | 09:00—09:30 | Virtues Assembly | School Hall | Whole School |
| Friday 6 February | 9.00am—9.30am | Come & See Assembly | School Hall | Year 1 & Year 2 |
| Monday 23—25 February | | Residential Visit | The Briars | Year 6 |
| Friday 27 February | 09:00—09:30 | Virtues Assembly | School Hall | Whole School |

Looking ahead, we have two INSET days planned: Thursday 12 February and Friday 13 February; therefore, school will close for pupils at 3.30pm on Wednesday 11 February. **Pupils will return to school on Monday 23rd February at 8.40am.** [Click here](#) to view the full year's Term Dates.