



Newsletter

No. 15. 23rd May 2025

Website: www.ourladydevon.sch.uk

Facebook: Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Barnstaple

In Our Lady's Catholic Primary School we learn about God and try to follow his footsteps by showing care and respect for one another.

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a fantastic fortnight it's been at Our Lady's! The sunshine has brought smiles all around, and it's been wonderful to see the children enjoying their learning and playing in such glorious weather. From sports fields to residential adventures, there's been something exciting for everyone.

Year 4 Residential to Wildside

Our Year 4 children had an unforgettable experience at Wildside! From outdoor challenges to team-building games and wildlife adventures, they embraced every activity with curiosity and courage. A huge thank you to the staff team who accompanied them and made this trip both safe and special.

Year 6 Residential to Barton Hall, Torquay

Meanwhile, Year 6 headed to Barton Hall in Torquay for their much-anticipated residential. With a jam-packed itinerary including climbing raft building, and evening fun, they certainly made the most of every moment. The children showed maturity, resilience, and plenty of good humour throughout. Again, our heartfelt thanks to the staff who supported this trip—you truly made a difference!

Cricket Festival!

Well done to our brilliant Year 3 and Year 4 pupils who took part in the local cricket festival. Their enthusiasm, teamwork, and sporting skill were outstanding, and they represented our school with pride. We are incredibly proud of their positive attitude and sportsmanship throughout.

VE Day Celebrations

We proudly marked VE Day with a wonderful celebration across the school. The children came dressed in red, white and blue, creating a sea of patriotic colour in honour of this historic occasion. Year 4 and Year 5 also had the special opportunity to attend the flag raising ceremony at Rock Park, where they represented our school with respect and pride. It was a moving moment of remembrance and community spirit, and we are proud of all the children for the way they engaged in learning about the importance of this day.

Well Done, Year 6 – SATs Superstars!

A huge congratulations to our amazing Year 6 pupils who absolutely *smashed* their SATs last week! We are so proud of the determination, focus, and positive attitude they showed throughout. To celebrate their hard work, they enjoyed a well-earned pizza lunch together—great job, Year 6!y engaged in learning about the importance of this day.t the event.

Sporting Stars in Year 1

It's been a busy week for our younger children, too! Year 1 had a brilliant time at the Multi-Skills Festival, where they tried a range of exciting activities designed to boost their coordination, fitness and fun.

Devon County Show Adventure

A group of children had the fantastic opportunity to attend the Devon County Show last Friday. From farm animals and food stalls to rural crafts and hands-on learning experiences, the children had a brilliant day exploring the best of Devon's countryside life. It was a fun-filled, educational experience that they won't forget in a hurry!

Thank You to Our Amazing Staff

Finally, we would like to extend our deepest thanks to our wonderful staff team. Their dedication, care, and support for our children—both in and out of the classroom—makes all the difference. Whether it's leading residentials, preparing for big events, or offering daily encouragement and guidance, they go above and beyond. We are incredibly grateful to have such a committed and caring team.

As always, we thank you for your continued support. We hope you enjoy the weekend sunshine as much as we have this week and have a relaxing half-term break. We look forward to seeing you all back in school on **Tuesday 3rd June**.

Warm regards,

Mr Meech
Executive Headteacher

Mrs Daunton
Head of School



Barn-a-b's at Our Lady's

A small group of older children from Barn-a-b's did a mini pilgrimage for Mary. We went along Chanters Hill. We prayed for the families on the street. We prayed for our families and admired the flowers in the gardens.

We are back to school on TUESDAY 3rd June.

Our last half term will be busy with transition plans for our older children. We will be learning about holidays, the seaside, as well as going on our trip to the farm.

We wish you a lovely, healthy half term, and look forward to seeing you in June.

Cathy, Jane, Liia, Lisa and Tracey



as

Message from Miss Ashton, Year 6 Teacher

Year 6 completed their SATs tests this half-term. Everyone showed resilience and determination to succeed. We are very proud of all their hard work!



VE-Day Celebrations

Our Y4 and Year 5 children attended the Barnstaple 80 year celebration event for VE Day last week. This involved a flag raising ceremony at Rock Park followed by a showing of a new commemorative film about WW2 and North Devon, VE 80 craft activities and historical talks.



Reception and Year 1 Class Visits to Exmoor Zoo

The children had such a wonderful day and we saw lots of amazing animals.



Headteacher's Awards

Well done to the following children who have recently received Headteacher's awards:-



Owl	Kingfisher	
Ehi	Poppy	Ava Bradfield
	Eliza	Violet-Rose
	Jack	Bradley
	Violet-Rose	Jack
	Suki-Blue	Doro
		Harper-Grace

**EVERY
SCHOOL DAY
COUNTS**



**Attendance
Matters**

Every student. Every day.

Heart of Gold Awards

Well done to all the children who have achieved our Heart of Gold Award for displaying our school rules. We are so proud of you:-



Ruairidh	The whole of	Isabella
Eli	Swallow Class	Olaedo
Freddie C		

Dinner Money and Extended Day Fees

Please could we ask you to check your parent pay accounts as there appears to be a lot of dinner money and Breakfast and After School Club fees outstanding. If you require a link code to sign up for Parentpay, please see Mrs Welland in the school office.

All children from Year 3 and above need to pay for their school dinners at £2.81 per meal, unless you are entitled to means tested free school meals. It is important that all dinner money is received by the school. Thank you for your co-operation.

PUNCTUALITY MATTERS!

Being frequently late for school adds up to lost learning:

- Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year.
- Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.
- Arriving 30 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 19 days a year.

19 days lost a year through being late means 90% attendance.



missed minutes =
missed learning
= missed opportunities!

EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Devon
County Council

Each academic school year is 38 weeks (Sept-July) or 190 days. The following chart shows how missed days affects overall attendance.



**Dear Lord, Bless our school. That by
working together and playing
together, we may learn to serve you
and to serve one another.**

Amen

Summer Term Dates

Fri 23rd May	Last day of half term
Mon 27th May	Half Term Holiday
Mon 2nd June	School Closed—Non Pupil Day
Tue 3rd June	School Returns for Pupils
Wed 11th June	Y6 Trip to see War Horse
Thu 12th June	Olympic Legacy (invitation only)
Tue 17th June	Barnstaple Carnival Art whole school
Fri 20th June	PTFA Summer Fete 2-6pm
Tue 1st July	BaB's Visit to Caffyns Farm
Fri 4th July	Sports Day, Cricket Club 10am
Thu 10th July	Induction day at The Park School
Fri 11th July	Induction day at The Park School
Fri 18th July	Leavers Mass at Church 10am
Fri 18th July	PTFA School Disco
Tue 22nd Jul	Last day of summer term

**Next Newsletter will go home on
Friday 13th June 2025**

PE Days

We have changed the PE days for Kingfisher and Owl classes for after the Easter Holidays. The new days for each class are as follows:-

Robin	Tuesday and Thursday
Heron	Thursday and Friday
Puffin	Tuesday and Wednesday
Owl	Wednesday and Friday
Eagle	Monday and Thursday
Kingfisher	Monday and Friday
Swallow	Monday and Tuesday

Children should be coming into school in their PE kits and remaining in them all day. PE lessons will continue to be held outside even in the rain so please ensure that your child has a thin waterproof coat.

PTFA News



Our Lady's Catholic Primary School, Barn-a B's pre-school and the PTFA are delighted to invite you to our Summer Fete.

Friday 20th of June 2025 2pm-6pm

Do you have a talent, skill or goods to sell? Or do you know someone in the community who should be part of this day? If the answer is yes then the PTFA would love to hear from you .

Please email the school office - admin@olcs.uk - and the details will be passed onto the PTFA.

Stall pitches are available for a small fee.

Stalls already organised;

Bake N Brew Bakery
Glitter tattoo, hair clips and hair spray stall
Sponge the teacher
Face painting
A barrel prize

There will also be a sizzling BBQ & an Ice Cream Van .

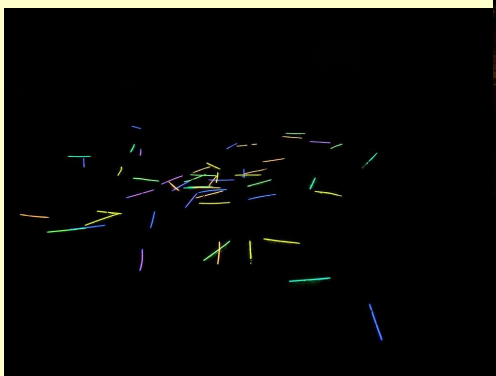
This event is open to everyone at school and the local community to include family, friends, neighbours, colleagues and residents.

We would love as many people as possible to come and support us.

Friday 18th July we will be holding an end of year school Disco.

Please contact the school office if you would like to become involved in helping our lovely band of parents and staff that run our Parent, Teacher and Friends Association. They work tirelessly during the year to raise funds for school resources and treats and events for the children.

Year 4 Residential at Wildside



Y6—Swallow Class Residential

Year 6 had a fantastic time away on their residential! From abseiling, to fencing, to a giant swing and campfire, there were so many exciting activities that they all got stuck into.





Our Lady's Catholic Primary School and Barn A B's Pre-School Have spaces for September 2025

We currently have spaces in all of our classes (Reception through to Year 6) for September 2025, including our pre-school (Barn A B's).

We take children from 2 years of age and operate a term time only pre-school with wonderful outdoor facilities on-site.

If you would like to arrange to come and visit our wonderful, friendly and welcoming school, please contact our school office on 01271 345164 or email admin@olcs.uk to arrange a tour.





RootNotes MUSIC WORKSHOPS

FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & FAMILIES

Alwington Village Hall, Fairy Cross, Bideford EX39 5AW

ROOTNOTES FAMILY MUSIC **Tuesdays, 4-5pm**

Explore different musical activities, find your voice, and join the band

Sessions are for children aged 5-11 with parents/carers

Older & younger siblings are welcome to join in too

Instruments are provided or bring your own. No experience needed!



ROOTNOTES YOUNG FOLK

For young musicians age 9+

Learn folk tunes from around the world, develop your music & performance skills, and play in a band

Tuesdays, 5.15-6.15pm



ROOTNOTES RHYMETIME

A fun music and song session for under 5s and their families/carers

Fridays, 9.45-10.30am



RootNotes groups are led by Community Musician **Becki Driscoll**

For more info email becki@rootnotes.org.uk or message 07811 279230

COMMUNITY SINGING CIRCLE

A monthly singing group for all ages led by Natural Voice Practitioner

Lara Conley

No experience needed, just your voice!

First Mondays, 4-5pm



www.rootnotes.org.uk



Supported using public funding by



**ARTS COUNCIL
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What Parents & Educators Need to Know about MINECRAFT



WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Still the best-selling game of all time, Minecraft is a bastion of creativity and community, with hundreds of millions of players building and crafting in its almost endless world. The popularity of Minecraft among gamers of all ages means it's important to remain informed about the game, including how to play it safely and whether it's suitable for the children in your care. That's why we've created this guide explaining the risks associated with Minecraft and how to ensure a purely enjoyable gaming experience.

SCARY ELEMENTS

While Minecraft can be seen as a kind of 'digital LEGO', certain game modes include creatures accompanied by eerie sound effects. These can be a bit too frightening for some younger players, potentially leading to distressing in-game combat and other encounters – although the combat is quite basic and free from any real depiction of violence.

GRIEFING

Some players in Minecraft take pleasure in deliberately damaging or destroying another person's creations. This behaviour, known as 'griefing', is a form of bullying – it intentionally ruins someone else's experience by erasing hours of their work and forcing them to start over. Many public servers regard griefing as a serious offence and often ban those who engage in it.

ADDICTIVENESS

Minecraft's focus on creativity means that, as with any creative endeavour, it can be easy to get carried away. If your child is finding it difficult to manage their time because they're drawn in by Minecraft's gameplay loop of resource gathering and building elaborate projects, it could have a knock-on effect on their social interactions and schoolwork.

PUBLIC SERVERS AND COMMUNICATIONS

With public servers being so easily accessible in Minecraft, it's highly likely that children will end up chatting with strangers through the in-game text chat. Some servers even place an emphasis on social interaction, actively encouraging communication between players. While there's nothing inherently wrong with this, it does carry certain risks. In addition to the concerns around speaking with strangers online, players who host their own servers may have their IP addresses exposed, posing a further security concern.

ADDITIONAL PURCHASES

Minecraft is available as a free trial on a variety of devices; however, the full game requires a one-off purchase, which is typically around £15. After that, players have the option to buy additional cosmetic upgrades or subscribe to Minecraft Realms. Realms is an entirely optional subscription service that allows users to run their own private server to play with friends. Without proper supervision, younger players may end up making unintended or excessive purchases.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CHOOSE THE RIGHT MODE

Selecting Creative or Peaceful mode allows children to play Minecraft without having to contend with enemies. It's also a great way for you to get used to playing the game with them, since the difficulty level is far lower. This allows you to work together on a long-term project, creating something special without the threat of enemies and creatures attacking you or damaging your building.

HOST A PRIVATE SERVER

The easiest way to find a safe server for children to play on is to make one yourself. Hosting a server prevents strangers from finding it, unless they've been given its address and password. A private server also lets you control who's allowed to enter and – if necessary – ban anyone who shouldn't be there. This is the closest equivalent to parental controls in Minecraft. Hosting a private server, however, will cost a monthly fee.

TALK ABOUT STRANGERS

At some point in their lives, almost everyone will make contact with a stranger online. Talking to children about online safety, therefore, is essential – as is having a plan for dealing with any hostile or difficult people. It's important that a child knows never to tell a stranger about themselves online and that they should come to you straight away if they do encounter a problem.

RESEARCH CONTENT CREATORS

Much of Minecraft's early stages can be an exercise in frustration for players who don't know where to start. Thankfully, there's a wealth of material online and in video format to help you learn the basics. Just be mindful that some of this content may not be appropriate for children, so you should consider watching it yourself first.

PLAY MINECRAFT WITH YOUR CHILD

As a creative building tool, Minecraft makes it great fun for children to team up and construct vast buildings accompanied by imaginative landscapes, much like working with LEGO or model kits. Playing in a game mode that includes enemies can encourage critical thinking and teamwork; however, you should consider which game mode is appropriate for the child in your care.

Meet Our Expert

Lloyd Coombes is Gaming Editor at the Daily Star, and has worked in games media for more than 6 years. A long-time gaming enthusiast, he is also a parent and therefore a keen advocate of online safety for children of all ages.



The National College

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