



Vernham Dean Gillum's Church of England Primary School Newsletter



Creating compassionate, courageous, creative citizens for the future in God's love

April 2026

Welcome Back! We hope you and your families enjoyed a restful and restorative Easter break. As we return to school for the summer term, our Collective Worship has focused on a powerful theme: Interconnectivity. To help our students visualise this, we have been exploring the beautiful "peep-through" book *We Are All One* by Britta Teckentrup. The book reminds us that every raindrop, every creature, and every person is a vital part of one great, living circle.

From the Earth to the Moon

We took this concept even further this week by looking at the incredible images captured by the Artemis II mission during its recent journey around the Moon. Seeing our "Blue Marble" home hanging in the vastness of space offered the children a unique perspective:

No borders: From that distance, the Earth has no lines or divisions.

Fragility: Our planet is a small, beautiful island that we must all protect together.

Unity: The mission itself - a collaboration of many nations - proves what we can achieve when we work as one.

Our Collective Prayer

During our service, we shared a prayer of oneness, reflecting on how our small actions at school - a kind word, a shared toy, or a helpful hand - ripple out to make the whole world a better place.

"We are many, yet we are a whole. We are different, yet we are kin. We are all one."

A Conversation Starter for Home

This week, you might like to ask your child:

If you were looking at Earth from a spaceship, what is the one thing you would want to protect most?

How can we show "oneness" in our own family or neighbourhood today?

We are so excited to journey through this new term together with you and your children.

Many best wishes,

Ian Hickman
Executive Headteacher

Safeguarding

New YouTube Feature

One of the most common concerns from parents when it comes to YouTube is the lack of parental management features, in other words the videos their children can and should not see. Parents may not know that there are features within both the main YouTube app and the YouTube Kids app. Google have now released another feature, which specifically allows a parent to set up a Supervised Experience account on the parents device. This is important because many younger children will watch YouTube videos on their parents device, where it is likely there are no restrictions in place. So this new feature is a welcome addition.

To tie all these features together Alan Mackenzie, who is an e-safety expert, has produced an article explaining Supervised Experience (on the main YouTube app) and Parent Allow listing (on the YouTube Kids app)

Link: [YouTube Settings for Parents](#)

School Christian Value



This half-term our spotlight is on the Christian value of Service. Our daily act of worship is based on a theme linked to justice.

"... Serve one another in love." Galatians 5:13

Easter Egg Hunt

On the last Friday before half-term, members of the PTA kindly came into school to organise a Easter Egg Hunt for the children.

The children had great fun searching the school grounds for a golden egg, a carrot and four chocolate eggs. Once they had successfully found all of their items, they were also rewarded with a delicious chocolate lolly.

It was lovely to see the children working together - those who had finished their hunt showed real kindness by helping others who were still searching for their eggs and carrot.

A huge thank you to the PTA for organising such a fantastic event. The children had a truly fabulous time and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.



Robins Class

Robins' Class have been excited to welcome a very special new class member – Sunny the Meerkat!

Sunny comes all the way from the Kalahari Desert and has quickly become a much-loved part of the classroom. Through Sunny, the children have been learning all about the different weather conditions in his home environment, including the hot days and cooler nights of the desert.

He has also been teaching the class about his diet, helping the children discover what meerkats like to eat and how they find their food.

The children are thoroughly enjoying learning with Sunny and look forward to finding out even more about his life in the desert.



Attendance

We would like to thank all parents and carers for their support with the new gate opening and closing times.

This new system has already proved to be a success this week, with children arriving promptly and settling into their classrooms ready to learn.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and is helping to ensure a smooth and positive start to each school day for all children.

Upper KS2

As the weather begins to get warmer, we would like to gently remind parents and carers about the importance of personal hygiene for our Upper Key Stage 2 children.

At this age, many children are becoming more aware of changes in their bodies, and it can be helpful for them to begin using deodorant as part of their daily routine. This can support their confidence and help them feel comfortable throughout the school day, particularly during warmer weather and physical activities.

Thank you for your support.

School Uniform

We would like to remind all parents and carers of the importance of children wearing the correct school uniform at Vernham Dean Gillum's Primary School.

Wearing the correct uniform helps to promote a sense of pride, belonging and equality within our school community. It also ensures that children are dressed appropriately for both learning and play throughout the day.

Please ensure that children come to school in the correct uniform each day, including suitable footwear (no trainers or boots). We also kindly ask that all items of clothing are clearly named to help prevent any lost property.

Thank you for your continued support in maintaining high standards across the school.

School Pond

As you are aware, there are currently tadpoles in the school pond. To help keep the tadpoles safe and their habitat undisturbed, we kindly ask that children do not throw anything into the pond. This includes sticks, stones or any other objects, as these can harm the tadpoles and affect the environment they rely on.

We would appreciate your support in reinforcing this message at home so that all children can continue to enjoy and learn from this special experience responsibly.

London Marathon

In April 2026, Miss Dickinson will be running the London Marathon in support of Mind, a charity that provides advice, support, and information to help people experiencing mental health problems, while also working to raise awareness and promote better mental health for all.

If you would like to support Miss Dickinson in raising funds for this important cause, please click the link below or scan the QR code to donate. Thank you for your support.

https://www.justgiving.com/page/milliemaidickinson?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=EM&utm_campaign=LFCFRUK_60DaysToEvent_Active



REMINDERS

Rucksacks

Rucksacks should be brought into school for school trips and special activities.

For everyday use, book bags are recommended as they are ideal for carrying reading books, reading records, homework, and letters.

Thank you for helping us keep our classrooms and cloakrooms tidy.

Snacks

Please provide your child with a healthy snack such as fruit, vegetables, or cheese for break time.

Thank you for supporting a healthy and enjoyable snack time for all.

Parking

When dropping off or collecting your child, please use the Burydean car park.

We kindly ask that you refrain from parking in School Close, as this is a residential area, and please do not use the school staff car park.

Thank you for helping us keep our children and community safe.



May

8th - Non Uniform Day - Bring a bottle for tombola
11th - Y6 SATS Week
18th - Walk to School Week
18th - Owls Class Trip to Stonehenge
22nd - Break up for half-term

June

1st - Return to school
5th - Non Uniform Day - Bring a bottle for tombola
12th - Pyjama
18th - Whole school archaeology dig
25th - Y6 Leavers Service at Winchester Cathedral
29th - Class photographs

July

2nd - Non Uniform Day – Bring a bottle for tombola

4th - Village Fete

16th - Work Showcase

22nd - Leavers Service

22nd - Last day of term

INSET DAYS 2026

Friday 3rd July