

Castle Primary School



May 2026

A message from Steve Morton



What a wonderfully *changeable* few weeks we have had! From bright, sunny playtimes to the occasional dash indoors during sudden showers, our children have embraced every moment with enthusiasm. It has certainly felt like the perfect "growing weather". Not just for the flowers and fields around us, but for our pupils too. Like well-watered plants soaking up both sunshine and rain, our children continue to flourish in all kinds of conditions.

A very special mention must go to our Year 6 pupils, who have completed their SATs. They have approached this important milestone with determination, focus, and an admirable sense of calm. We are incredibly proud of the perseverance and resilience they have shown. Thank you to The Prince of Wales for supplying them all with a well-deserved ice-cream in the sunshine.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. As we move further into the summer term, we look forward to seeing even more growth, in learning, in confidence, and in our school community.

The Photo of the Week



Cabot
Learning
Federation

This school is part of the Cabot Learning Federation, a Multi Academy Trust in South West England.

Dates for your Diary

- Wednesday 10th June– Drogo class trip
- Wednesday 17th June– Corfe Class trip
- Thursday 25th June– Totnes' Bakes for Bits & Bobs 3.15pm
- Tuesday 30th June– #Castle150th :Street Party (details to follow)
- Wednesday 1st July– Yr 6 Stanchester Transition Day
- Wednesday 1st July-Castle Transition Day & Meet the Teacher

Head of school: Steve Morton

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Safeguarding

Safeguarding is high priority at Castle Primary School. We take every opportunity to ensure that our pupil's safety is paramount. We want our pupils to be healthy and happy and to develop well, both physically and mentally. The school follows the latest Government Guidance to ensure we are fulfilling our duties in this important area.

Our Designated Lead (DSL) and contact at School is Steve Morton and our Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Laura Liddell.

Our school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy can be found online at:

<https://castleprimaryschool.clf.uk/policy/safeguarding-and-child-protection-policy/>

If you have any concerns about the safety of a child you can either talk to our DSL or DDSLs or you may phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224.

There is lots of online safety advice on our website, please click on the link to find out more.

Camelot Club

At Castle Primary School we offer thriving wrap-around care in our Camelot Club. The staff, Mrs Middleton, Mrs Newman and Miss Gurney are caring, enthusiastic and professional; the environment is friendly and there is a wide range of interesting activities for children aged 4 to 11 years to enjoy.

Camelot Club breakfast sessions run from 7.45am until 8.45am @ £4.75 where the children enjoy a wholesome breakfast, access a variety of activities and get themselves ready for the day ahead. Children in our Reception through to year 4 are then escorted to their classes while year 5 and 6 pupils take themselves to their classes for a prompt start.

Camelot Club after school provision runs from 15.15 until 17.45. Children can attend short sessions until 16.15, later sessions from 16.15 until 17.45 or full sessions. They are offered a light snack and drink to keep them going until home time. There is plenty to do during these sessions; crafting and lego are always popular, but gardening, outdoor play, playdough and picnics are seasoned favourites too! Children are encouraged to read with an adult and there is plenty of time to get started on homework, with adult support on hand.

After school club has the following sessions:

3.15pm - 4.15pm @ £5

4.15pm - 5.45pm @ £6

3.15pm – 5.45pm @ £7.50

Tax-Free Childcare

You can get up to £500 every 3 months (up to £2,000 a year) for each of your children to help with the costs of childcare, this can be used towards **Breakfast club** and **Camelot after school club**.

This goes up to £1,000 every 3 months if a child is disabled (up to £4,000 a year).

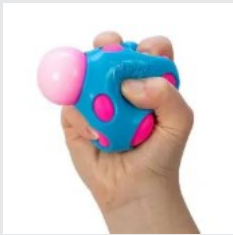
Castle SEND 25/26



Mrs Liddell SENCO/ Senior Vice Principal

As we move further into the Summer Term, it has been lovely to see the children continuing to grow in confidence and independence across the school. We have been particularly focused on strengthening inclusive classroom practice and supporting children's communication and sensory needs, ensuring all pupils can access learning in a way that works best for them.

Fidget Toys



Fidget toys (stress balls, spinners, or cubes) and sensory chew toys have gained popularity in recent weeks and months as tools to help children manage feelings of restlessness, anxiety, or hyperactivity. These toys can provide a tactile outlet for some children to channel their excess energy, helping them to better focus on their tasks and engage in their learning. In our school, we understand the value that some fidget toys can bring to children with various needs, including those with ADHD, sensory processing issues, or anxiety disorders. These toys can serve as discreet tools to aid concentration and promote a calm, productive learning environment. However, we also recognise many have become viral toys that all children are eager to get their hands on and bring into school. To help us ensure that fidgets are not a classroom distraction but rather a supportive measure to assist children with their attention and focus, please do not send your child into school with fidgets. Instead, please chat with your child's class teacher about your concerns so we can look together at whether a fidget and/or other strategies are needed to support your child's attention and focus.

Thank you for your support.

Supporting Transition

Over the coming weeks, transition work will continue across the school. For many children, this is an exciting time, but we recognise it can also bring uncertainty, particularly for those with additional needs.



In school, we are supporting transition through:

- Teacher meetings to share information, strategies and provision.
- Opportunities for children to meet new staff
- Additional visits and tailored transition where needed
- Liaison with receiving settings, including secondary schools
- SEND review parents' evenings next half term

How families can help at home:

- Begin to talk about the next step in a calm and positive way
- Use visuals (calendars, countdowns) to prepare for change
- Keep routines as consistent as possible
- Share any concerns with us early

Useful support for families:

Somerset Local Offer:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/the-local-offer/>

National Autistic Society – Transitions:

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/transitions>

Upcoming events:

The Community Inclusion Activity Team's May Half term calendar is out!

There are plenty of inclusive activities to entertain children with disabilities or additional needs, over the May Half Term break!

[Inclusion Team's Activity Calendar](#)



Attendance Breakdown:

| | | | |
|----------|--------|------------|--------|
| Drogo - | 95.77% | Dunster - | 92.90% |
| Corfe - | 95.89% | Tintagel - | 95.99% |
| Totnes - | 95.14% | | |

School total = 95.11%

Drogo



Drogo class have had a very busy few weeks, with lots of outside learning in the sunshine! We have enjoyed learning the story of The Three Little Pigs and this has inspired lots of den and house building activities. Last week we took on the challenge of helping the pigs to escape from their island by building them boats. Everyone showed amazing resilience and perseverance as they tried different ways to get their boats to sail. We are pleased to report that all of the pigs are now safe and enjoying a peaceful life! As part of our animals topic the children have been learning about life cycles and finding out how to care for pets. We loved sharing stories about our pets, and discussing all of the things we have to do to be responsible pet owners.

The children are making amazing progress with their phonics and are busy learning the phase 4 common exception words. It would be great during half term if they could spend a little time reading these, and practising the words from phases 2 and 3. We are so impressed with the reading and writing in Drogo Class - everyone is working so hard. In Maths, we have been learning how to use number tracks and rekenreks to subitise the numbers to 5 and the children are confidently explaining their reasoning using the stem sentences.

It's hard to believe that we are about to enter the final half term of the year. Hopefully the sun will keep shining, so just a reminder to please apply sunscreen before school and make sure that everyone has a hat to wear - we spend lots of our day outdoors and need to keep everyone safe. Have a wonderful holiday!



Corfe



The Spring term came and went with the Easter holidays taking up much of it. We hope you all had a lovely break as well as enjoying the bonus bank holiday at the beginning of May.

It was lovely to see so many parents and family members support our toy museum. The children were so excited to welcome you into school and share all their knowledge with you. Thank you so much for being so positive and encouraging. Thank you so much for the toys that we were able to exhibit in our museum and to Ina, who very kindly shared her beautiful Judy the rocking horse with us.

You will have seen this half terms knowledge organiser which highlights the key questions we will be answering in Geography. Miss Gurney has been developing her teaching and can already tick off taking a class of children to Kenya on a plane! We have revisited our understanding of continents, explored Kenya and looked at similarities and differences between Nairobi and London.

Lila and the secret of rain is our guided reading text and writing focus. Year 2 are writing information reports and using adverbs in their narrative work. Year 1 continue to perfect writing a perfect sentence with the correct punctuation. They are really developing their vocabulary and using it well to embellish their work. This week both year groups wrote a fantastic description of an African storm full of super language.

In Maths, Year 2 continue with multiplication and division. Year 1 are looking at measure and position and direction.

Sports day practice is now part of our PE programme where we join up with Drogo class. Both classes have also joined for forest school which proved successful. It is lovely to have such helpful and kind members of Corfe Class who support and encourage our reception children.

As we look towards the end of Summer Term 1, we have Castle's got talent to look forward to. After half term we have our class trip to the Fleet Air Arm Museum which will support our History of flight topic.



Totnes

It has been a short term, but we have certainly managed to squeeze a lot in!

In English, we have produced some fantastic non-chronological reports about our Solar System, linked to our previous work in Discovery lessons. We wrote about how humans' understanding of space has changed over time, what is in our Solar System, how humans have explored space throughout history, and what the future of space exploration may hold. We also included some of our own mind-blowing space facts. Did you know that Uranus spins on its side, that Venus is the only planet that rotates clockwise, and that 1 million Earth's could fit into the Sun? Amazing!

Our Discovery lessons have had a history focus, and we have enjoyed learning about the Tudor monarchy. We focused on significant monarchs such as Henry VII, Henry VIII (and his 6 unfortunate wives) and Elizabeth I, as well as key events such as the Battle of Bosworth, the English Reformation and its impact, and the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Our guided reading texts have also been linked to the Tudors, where we have learned about the Tower of London and the Crown Jewels, Tudor medicines and Tudor crime and punishment.

In Science, we have been learning about 'Light' and have been able to enjoy lots of practical activities linked to this. We grouped sources of light into natural and artificial sources. We observed how light travels in straight lines and how this leads to the formation of shadows. We also learned how to stay safe in the sun and produced some bright and colourful posters to give people guidance about this.

In our art lessons, we have been looking at how art can express personality, emotion and individuality and used a range of media such as oil pastels, charcoal and paint. We produced graffiti 'tags' using techniques such as serifs and then drew portraits based on the work of Kathe Kollwitz who showed strong emotions in her pieces. Next term, we will continue this unit, using Picasso's 'Guernica' as a basis for our own work.

Year 3 have also enjoyed their first few Ukelele sessions with Mr Male, learning about rhythm, pitch, volume and tempo. They have been working so hard, that 'Ukelele Thumb' has been a common complaint in our classroom! Y4 have been using this time to consolidate their times tables practice through a variety of different activities. Before the half-term, your child will bring home their 'heatmap' which shows the times tables they are confident in (green), and those that they need more practice with (orange / yellow / red). We would really appreciate your support in encouraging your child to focus on these at home as we approach the Y4 'Multiplication Check' in June.

We have continued to enjoy our Forest School sessions with ROAM, making the most of the dry weather off-site in Jubilee Woods and also in our school grounds. Den-building has been a particular highlight!

We are looking forward to our rearranged 'Castle's Got Talent' final next week and then a jam-packed final term when we return in June. Totnes will be swimming on Friday afternoons, we have Sports Day, Transition Day, Montacute House Day and an exciting trip to the Roman Baths – to name just a few!

Wishing you all a very relaxing break, and we will look forward to seeing the children when they return on

Monday 1st June.

Totnes Team ☐



Dunster

Term 5 has been short-but-sweet, with lots of great learning going on in Dunster Class. It has been lovely to welcome Mrs Thompsett to Team Dunster, and everyone seems to be settling into our new routine. The children have been looking forward to our Discovery focus on the Tudors, and this has led to a real atmosphere of curiosity in the classroom. We have been developing our history AND geography skills through this topic, looking at how the topography of the battlefield at the Battle of Bosworth helped Henry Tudor to win the War of the Roses, as well as how the geography of the British coastline contributed to the failure of the Spanish Armada. The children have loved finding out about the notorious reign of Henry VIII, and especially the fates of his many unfortunate wives!

In Art, we have continued the Tudor theme, by looking at the illuminated manuscripts produced by monks prior to the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1500s. Children have had a go at adding embellishments to the letters of their initials, and are building up to creating their own 'illuminated alphabet'.



In English, we have been using *Lady Mary*, a novel by Lucy Worsley, a famous historian, to help give our non-fiction work on 'writing to argue' some context. We have used drama and discussion to build up to writing a balanced discussion of the way that Mary I was treated throughout the reign of her father King Henry VIII. The children have been really into this and are looking forward to getting on with writing their arguments next week.

We have also been looking at a short film called *The Alchemist's Letter* to inspire some narrative work. We have explored sentence level work, especially the starters. Having created our own memory machines, we set about writing a film narration which we shared with the class to be our audience. In Guided Reading, we have focused mainly on the Tudors, covering Tudor houses, the royal dynasty, Henry VIII's six wives (with a little segue into *Six: The Musical*) and Elizabeth I's issues with her cousin Mary Queen of Scots. We also marked the 100th birthday of Sir David Attenborough with a focus on his life, and also considering the famous footage of him being accepted (and sat on!) by a group of gorillas in Africa in the 1970s.

In Maths, Year 5 have been continuing to work on decimals, as well as getting to grips with calculating perimeter and area. Year 4 have been tackling fractions, as well as keeping their arithmetic skills ticking over, and preparing for their upcoming Times Tables check. Please do encourage your child to keep practising these, especially using the Garage element on TTRockstars, as this will help your child to target the weak spots on their heatmaps, which will be shared soon.

In Science, we have been studying light. Having learnt the basics, we have created mirror mazes, explored natural and artificial light sources and investigated shadows too.

In PE, we have focused on athletics and have learnt to improve our sprint technique including the crouched start; learnt all about shot put including the glide and turn and, most recently, the triple jump trying to master the hop, step and jump which was all really well-received.



In Forest School, we have explored a new off-site destination – Hedgecock Hill Woods. This is a more mature woodland in East Stoke, and the children have enjoyed the games and exploration opportunities this new environment has given us. Ask your child about 'Stealth' or 'Tree Friends' to find out more about what we have been up to. Please ensure your child brings clothing which covers their arms and legs for these sessions, as it helps safeguard against sunburn, stings, bites and scrapes when we are out and about!

All in all, a great term. We hope you enjoy the May half term break when it arrives, and look forward to seeing you again in June for Term 6!

Team Dunster ☐

Tintagel

Another half term is nearly complete, and time seems to be ticking by faster than ever! With SATs now behind us, bellies full of ice cream from The Prince of Wales pub (a huge thank you for such a kind donation), and minds buzzing with leavers' preparations, Tintagel are ready to embrace the summer term and sprint towards the summer holidays.

Over the past six weeks, your children have absolutely loved our class text, *Holes*. The discussions, predictions and character work have been fantastic to see. Raven assures me that the film version is very good too—so perhaps that's one to enjoy together during the holidays! With SATs officially OVER, I wanted to share a little overview of Life After SATs so you can see just how many exciting opportunities lie ahead.

Learning for the Second Half of Summer Term

Although SATs are now over, our core learning expectations remain firmly in place.

History: We will begin our fascinating unit on Ancient Greece.

Maths: Lessons will focus on consolidation, fluency and applying skills with confidence.

Reading: This remains a key priority across the curriculum.

English: Tintagel will continue to develop formal writing skills, with a focus on reports, setting descriptions and narrative writing.

Looking Ahead

Alongside our learning, there is so much to look forward to:

Ice creams on Ham Hill

Leavers' production preparations

Enterprise business planning

And, of course, the always-popular Montacute House Day

It promises to be a busy, exciting and truly memorable final term at Castle.

Let's make this last term one to remember for your Tintagel children—it's going to be a special one.



Nursery

This half term, Nursery have been exploring the theme '**Growing**'. The children have enjoyed learning about the life cycles of flowers, frogs, chicks and butterflies, and have shown great curiosity as they discovered how living things change over time. Our learning was enriched by lots of exciting sensory play, including a frog pond tray and exploring flowers by making perfumes and potions.

In phonics, we have been listening carefully to initial sounds in words, while in maths the children have been completing 6–8-piece puzzles, creating AB patterns, and learning to represent the number 5. Through SCARF, we explored how humans and animals grow, helping children to reflect on their own development.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back for the final term of the school year, where our new theme will be '**Travel and Transport**'.

