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The Upton Schools

Belonging Growth Excellence

Newsletter

23rd October 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of a busy half term, I would like to thank Parents and Carers for their support, it was so nice to see so many of you at the recent parent evenings across both the schools. I hope the children have a good rest over half term and you are able to spend some time together as families. This week I thought I would write to you about online safety as it is such an area of concern. We regularly talk about online safety in our Computing lessons and in assemblies, but it is a message that does need backing up at home too.

Keeping Children Safe Online

The online world offers many exciting opportunities for learning, creativity and communication. However, it is important that children use technology safely and with appropriate adult supervision.

Over recent years, schools and safeguarding agencies have seen increasing concerns relating to children's use of social media, online gaming and messaging platforms. Whilst many parents are aware of popular apps such as TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram, it is important to remember that platforms such as YouTube also carry risks. Although often viewed as an educational or entertainment site, YouTube can expose children to inappropriate content through recommendations and algorithms. Children may also be encouraged to interact with channels, livestreams or online communities where contact from unknown individuals can occur.

More recently, media reports have highlighted concerns regarding some user-created games on Roblox, where inappropriate content, including references and images relating to self-harm, has been found within certain experiences. Whilst Roblox removes content that breaches its policies, the vast amount of user-generated content means parents should remain vigilant and regularly monitor what their children are accessing.

We would also like to remind parents that WhatsApp has a minimum age requirement of 13 years old. Children under 13 should not be using WhatsApp. In primary-aged friendship groups, WhatsApp conversations and group chats can quickly lead to misunderstandings, exclusion, inappropriate language, cyberbullying and friendship difficulties that frequently spill over into school. Many safeguarding concerns reported in schools originate from problems that have occurred within children's group chats outside school hours.

Top Tips for Parents

1. Regularly Check Devices
· Know which apps, games and websites your child is using.
· Check recent viewing history on YouTube and other platforms.
· Review game activity and chat functions.
· Have open conversations about what your child enjoys doing online.

2. Supervise Online Activity
· Keep devices in family spaces where possible.
· Encourage younger children to use devices where adults can see screens.
· Avoid unrestricted access to devices behind closed bedroom doors.
· Establish clear family rules around screen time and internet use.

3. Use Parental Controls and Access Restrictions
· Activate parental controls on devices, broadband routers and gaming consoles.
· Use YouTube Kids for younger children where appropriate.
· Restrict app downloads and purchases through Apple Screen Time or Google Family Link.
· Apply age-appropriate settings on gaming platforms and devices.

4. Review Privacy and Contact Settings
· Disable direct messaging where it is not needed.
· Ensure profiles are private rather than public.
· Regularly review who can contact your child through games, apps and social media.
· Remove unknown followers, contacts or friends.

5. Reset Algorithms Regularly
Many platforms use algorithms which learn from what a child watches and then recommend similar content. If a child accidentally views inappropriate material, the platform may continue to recommend similar videos.

Parents can help by:
· Deleting watch history and search history.
· Selecting "Not Interested" on unsuitable recommendations.
· Removing subscriptions to inappropriate channels.
· Creating a fresh supervised account if recommendations become problematic.

On YouTube:
1. Open YouTube.
2. Go to Settings.
3. Select History and Privacy.
4. Clear Watch History and Clear Search History.
5. Consider turning off watch history for younger children.
6. Use "Not Interested" when unsuitable videos are recommended.

A Valuable Resource for Families

Parents can access up-to-date guidance on gaming, social media, online exploitation, cyberbullying and parental controls.

We strongly encourage all families to explore Hamwic's Online Safety Hub on Online Safety Hub - Hamwic Education Trust which provide practical advice and guidance to help keep children safe in an ever-changing digital world. Parents can access up-to-date guidance on gaming, social media, online exploitation, cyberbullying and parental controls.

Remember

The most effective online safety tool is not technology, but regular conversations between parents and children. Showing an interest in what children do online, setting clear expectations and maintaining appropriate supervision can significantly reduce risks and help children develop safe and responsible online habits.

Together, we can ensure that our children enjoy the many benefits of technology whilst staying safe, happy and protected online.

Parking

We kindly ask all parents and visitors to be considerate when parking around Purbeck Close and Guest Road, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day.

Recently, there have been increasing concerns about vehicles parking across or obstructing residents' driveways, making it difficult for local residents to access their homes safely. We are proud to be part of this community and ask everyone to show respect and courtesy to our neighbours.

Please ensure that:

· Driveways and dropped kerbs are kept clear at all times.

· Parking restrictions are observed.

· Roads and pavements remain safe for pedestrians, particularly children and families walking to school.

· Extra time is allowed for drop-off and collection to avoid the temptation to park inconsiderately.

Your cooperation helps maintain positive relationships with our neighbours and ensures the safety of everyone in our school community. Thank you for your support and understanding.

Have a relaxing half term and I look forward to seeing you all on the 2nd November.

Best wishes

Duncan Churchill
Executive Head Teacher
Upton Infant and Junior School



Online Safety Hub - Hamwic Education Trust

Upton Junior School Announcements



Diary Dates

- 23rd October – Last day of Term – return Monday 2nd November 2026
- 5th November - Year 6 Parents SATS Information Evening
- 11th November – Flu immunisations
- 16th November – Odd socks day – Anti Bullying Week
- 17th & 18th Nov – Year 5 Bird Trip – more info to follow
- 19th November – Robin Hood Pantomime
- 23rd November – Inset Day
- 25th November – Drop-in Nurse sessions – bookable via the school office

PE Days

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Monday				
Tuesday	PE		PE	
Wednesday		PE		PE
Thursday	PE		PE	
Friday		PE		PE

Upton Infant School Announcements



Diary Dates

- 23rd October – Last day of Term – return Monday 2nd November 2026
- 11th November – Flu immunisations
- 16th November – Odd socks day – Anti Bullying Week
- 19th November – Robin Hood Pantomime
- 23rd November – Inset Day

PE Days

	Honeybees	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Monday			PE	
Tuesday		PE		
Wednesday			PE	
Thursday				PE
Friday	PE			PE

Upton Schools Calendar 2026 - 2027

Sep 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Oct 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Nov 2026

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Dec 2026

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		1	2	3	4	5
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Jan 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Feb 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

Mar 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Apr 2027

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				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Jun 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Jul 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Aug 2027

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Bank and Public holidays 2026/2027

Christmas Day	25th December
Boxing Day	28th December
New Years day	1st January
Good Friday	26th March
Easter Monday	29th March
May Day	3rd May
Spring bank holiday	31st May
Summer bank holiday	20th August

School Holidays
Bank Holidays
Inset Days
Hamwic Development Day

The Upton Schools

We recognise that good attendance (above 96%) is key to good pupil outcomes. The links between regular attendance, reaching potential attainment and future life opportunities are well researched. For this reason, the school will encourage good attendance and be robust in monitoring attendance and take action when attendance falls below the expected level. Good attendance impacts significantly on progress, learning, friendship groups and the child's overall happiness at school.

Easy as

1. There are 190 school days in a year; this leaves 175 days to spend on family time and holidays.
2. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that their child(ren) attend school every day and on time.
3. The school opens at 8:40 ; registration is from 8:50 . Please arrive as close to 8:40 as possible to maximise learning opportunities for your child.

Equates to number school days off each year		
	100%	Perfection
4 School days missed	98%	Impressive
6 School days missed	97%	Good
7 School days missed	96%	On Target
9 School days missed	95%	Slight Concern
13 School days missed	93%	Concerns
20 School days missed	90%	Very Concerning
30 School days missed	85%	Serious Concerns

Attendance Matters — **Every student Every Day**

We're here to help!

We understand that there are many reasons why children may be absent or late for school. Please speak to staff about ways that we can support you with this.

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	almost 1.5 years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	over 2.5 years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	almost 8 years



FREE TO A GOOD HOME – Baby Grand Piano

We are looking to rehome a George Rogers & Sons baby grand piano from Upton Junior School.

The piano is in good working order, plays well and has been tuned. There is some cosmetic wear consistent with its age, as shown in the photographs.

Free of charge, but the recipient must arrange and cover the cost of professional collection and transportation from Upton, Poole.

Please contact the school office if interested.





ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

POPPY APPEAL

From Monday 2nd November we will be selling various Poppy goodies in the playground during break-times. Items start from a suggested donation of 50p upwards.

PSFA Help Wanted

We are raising funds for the school minibus and are looking for helpers for events etc, any amount of time would be amazing.

Please contact Sarah on **heatonsarah@hotmail.com**

Upton in Bloom Poetry Competition



Introduction:

This is an annual competition for pupils aged 5-11 years, run by Upton in Bloom, in conjunction with Upton Infants, Upton Juniors, Lytchett and Yarrells Schools. The competition categories are year groups 1-2, 3-4, 5-6.

The aim of the competition is to help pupils appreciate the value of, and an appreciation of the environment, through a better awareness of their surroundings.

Dates:

All entrees must be in by Monday 9th November to Mr Thompson to give enough time to judge. All entrees will be judged and those chosen to attend the final will be informed.

The date set **for the finalists' readings is Wednesday 25th November at Lytchett Minster Church, starting at 9.30**. Parents are of course invited and if possible, bring their child to the event if selected.

The theme this year is **"Wings, Wonders & Wild Places** - discover the amazing plants, creatures and hidden world of Dorset's heathlands.**"**.

Format:

One side of A4 – handwritten or typed up and **decorated** by the pupil.

Judging criteria

Written Poem (50% of marks)

•Use of vocabulary – is it exciting/moving/appropriate for the theme of the poem.
•Structure of the poem – does it flow?
•Use of rhyme – if they use rhyme is there consistency in how it is used e.g. couplets etc.
•Is it as good at the end as it is at the start or does it fade away?
•Correct/effective use of punctuation.
Presentation (25% of marks)

•Does each new line of the poem start on a new line?
•Imaginatively decorated with thought for the theme.
Performance (25% of marks)

•Clear pronunciation of words.
•Good volume.
•Effective pace.
•Is it read in a manner which reflects the nature of the poem?

Upton in Bloom Poetry Competition



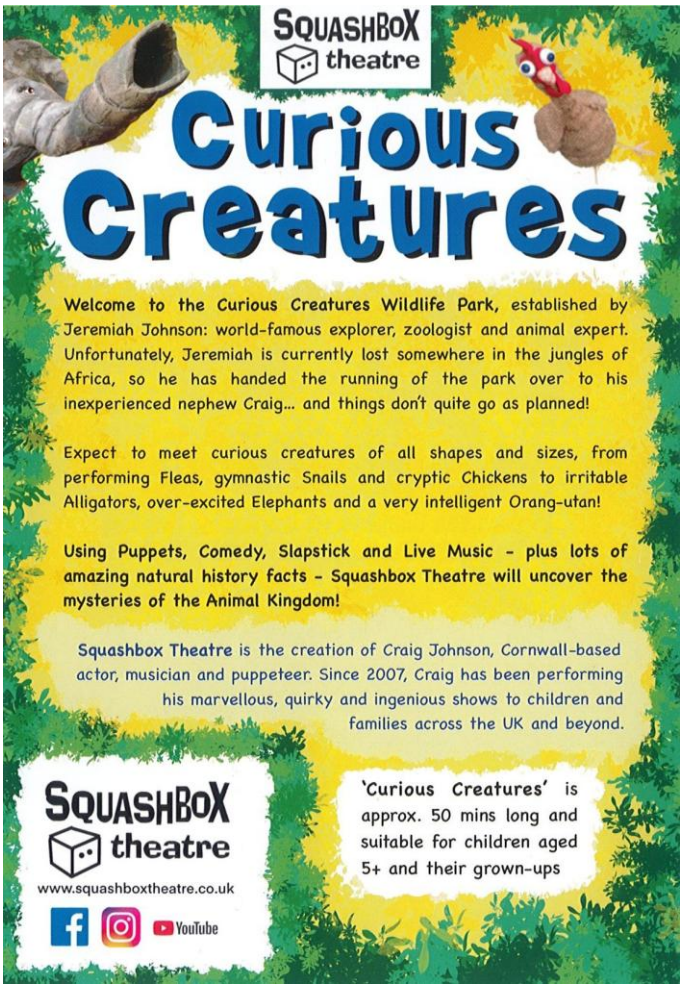
Finalists:
Mr Thompson (Years 3-4 and 5-6) and Miss Davies (Years 1-2) will pick 3 children from the year groups as finalists. The poems from these children will be read out on Wednesday 25th November at 9:30am and parents may also be asked to accompany the children. The poems read will be judged by retired teachers and an Upton in Bloom Committee member.
Marks will be awarded for **quality of poetry**, **decoration** and **presentation performance.**

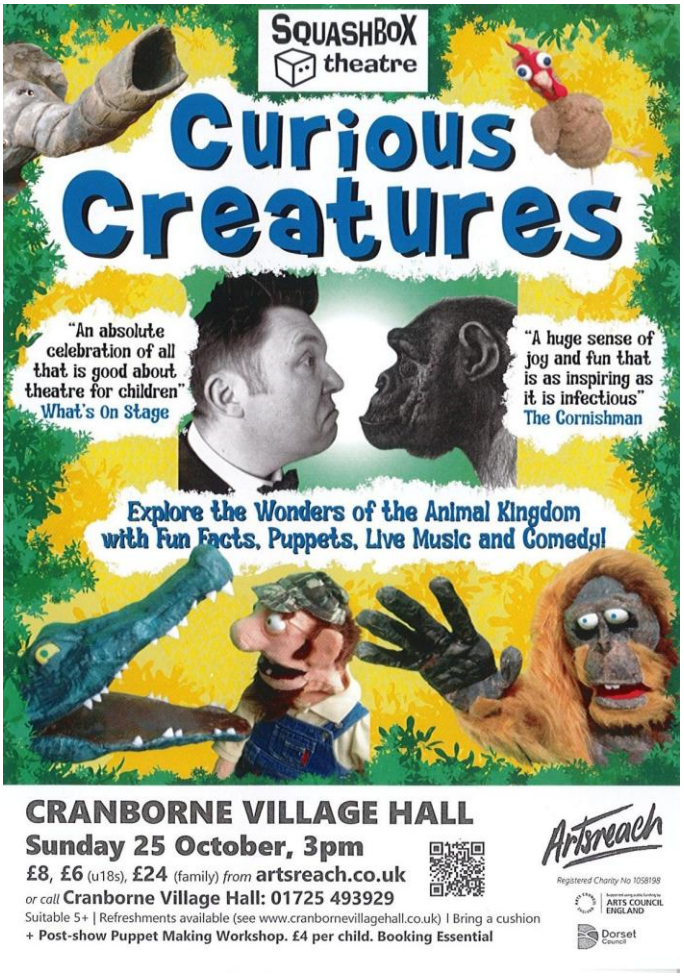
Awards:
A trophy for each winner from each age group and book tokens for 1st 2nd and 3rd places. Certificates for all finalists.

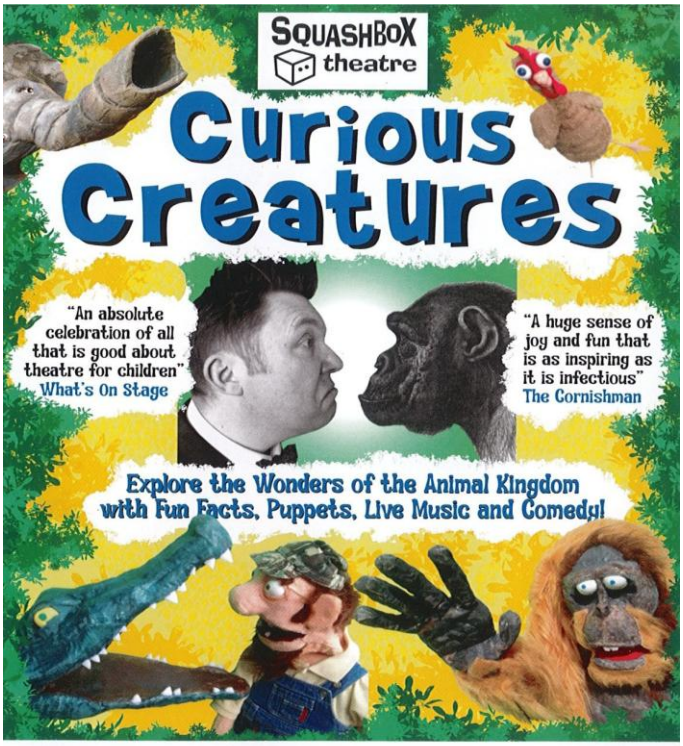
Poetry Competition Resources and ideas
There is a whole plethora of educational resources available through the IUCN UK Peatland Programme webpage: **Bog Day Resources.** The link for this is copied below.
IUCN UK Peatland Programme Bog Day Resources
Here you will find a list of education and engagement resources. But the ones I think will be the most useful and age-appropriate resources to learn about peat and peatlands are highlighted in bold below:
FENS EAST PEAT PARTNERSHIP RESOURCES has a targeted Primary School 'Fantastic Peat Activity Book' & an Amazing Peatlands Activity Book (Secondary School)
Bogs Talking Poetry Class from the Poetry Society- KS2
Inspiring Videos – *The Day We Found the Bog*
Wildlife Watch activities from the Wildlife Trust- *Peatland & Bog Spotters Wildlife sheet*
Yorkshire Peat Partnership Resources The Bog Blog or the Bogcasts
Peat-Fest South- West activities Activity Book & audio Bogcasts

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Other Video Resources
From this webpage IUCN UK Peatland Programme Resources go to **VIDEOS** there is a series of more scientific YouTube videos on how peat bogs form.
The Living Layer: Restoring Peatland in the UK's South West – nice documentary film involving the people who help to restore the peat habitats in Dartmoor, Exmoor.
Dorset Peat Partnership- Greenlands Mire – this site is Dorset and one of the larger sites which Dorset Peat Partnership have restored with Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme, in 2024.
Peatland Pavilion (more exploratory) this is VR type technology and could be a link that children would explore in their own time, if they access to computers at school.
Links to Upton Heath nature reserve
Dragonflies on Upton Heath- nice images







[Artsreach event tickets from TicketSource.]



Just a friendly reminder about our Globe Fit Kids Club at Bovington Academy this October half term.

World Autumn Adventures
Monday 26–Thursday 29 October 2026
9am–3.30pm | Ages 5–11
Bovington Academy

Children can enjoy sports, games, crafts, dance and activities inspired by countries around the world.

Free HAF-funded places are available for eligible children using a valid HAF code, alongside paid places.

[View the club and book here]

STARS HOLIDAY CLUB

FUN FRIENDS ACTIVITIES FOR EVERYONE

October Half Term Holiday Club

Mon 26th Oct - Fri 30th Oct

We've got a week packed with fun!
From sports and team games to creative activities and some spooky Halloween surprises, there's something for everyone to enjoy.
Come along, make friends, get active and have an unforgettable half-term!

2 VENUES

Kingsleigh Primary School BH10 5HT

Lytchett Matravers Primary School BH16 6DY

8AM - 4PM DAILY

£25 PER CHILD, PER DAY

FREE HAF SPACES NOW AVAILABLE AT LYTCHETT MATRAVERS

SAVE ON YOUR BOOKING!
20% DISCOUNT AT BOTH VENUES | SIBLING DISCOUNT AVAILABLE

SPORTS · ARTS & CRAFTS · TEAM GAMES · MULTI-SPORTS · HALLOWEEN ACTIVITIES · CHALLENGES · AND MORE!

BOOK NOW!
SPACES ARE LIMITED!

SCAN TO BOOK

A SAFE, FUN AND INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL!

PLAY · LEARN · BE ACTIVE · BELONG

HAF BOOKINGS

To book your HAF space, please email:

Bookings@starscorporateltd.co.uk

Please include your new HAF code in your email.

STARS HOLIDAY CLUB

Award-winning Sports Coaching and Ofsted Registered Childcare Provider

Foundation Sports & Play

BCP Council · Dorset Council · Children's Activities Association · Ofsted

October Half-term Sports & Play Camps!

Our Team
Enhanced DBS Checked, Update Service registered, Sports & Childcare qualified, SEND, First Aid, Anaphylactic and Allergy & Safeguarding trained. Children's welfare always comes first.

Timings & Extras
9.00am - 3.00pm with early drop off available from 8.00am & additional late pick-up times until 4.30pm & 5.30pm. Hot lunches are available to order at all venues.

Vouchers & TFC
Tax-free childcare, childcare vouchers and childcare grants accepted. Ofsted: 2652421

Activities
Three areas of play: Sport (football, gymnastics, swimming), Play (games, lego, outdoor fun) and Craft (art, masks & biscuit decorating). Something for every child!

Dates
Thursday 22nd Oct - 2nd November. Dates vary by location. Please check your specific venue for exact dates.

Bookings
Book at www.foundation-play.com or scan the QR code to check availability at your preferred venue:

Venues
Southbourne: Stourfield Junior School
Poole: BCS Preparatory School
Muscliff: The Epiphany School
Wimborne: Castle Court School
Christchurch: Christchurch Infant School

Ages
3 - 12 years old. 3 year olds only able to book on at BCS & Castle Court.

Contact
dorset@foundation-sports.com
Phone: 01202 007785
Insta: @fsportsandplay
Facebook: Foundation Sports & Play Dorset



Schedule Example

For up-to-date information on daily venue activities, please check in with us. Below is an example of our scheduled holiday club activities and our confirmed weekly themes.

Morning Schedule

08:00 - 08:45: Early sign-ins arrive! Our leaders will have activities set up ready to start the day before the majority of children arrive on camp.
08:45 - 09:15: The main arrival time. Sign-ins and warm-up with free play.
09:15 - 09:30: Group circle time. All children will gather round for circle time as we introduce the exciting activities planned for the day ahead.
09:30 - 11:00: Sports carousel outside and a creative workshop inside.
11:00 - 11:15: Snack Break! Refuel with snacks to keep energy levels high for the next batch of activities.
11:15 - 12:15: Your child will have the choice to participate in age-group matches or alternative sports activities like gymnastics and dance also available. Alternatively, there will be indoor biscuit decorating and themed crafting station, like making october buntings, pumpkin craft and mask creations.

Lunchtime & Afternoon

12:15 - 12:45: Lunchtime! Those who have paid for hot lunches will enjoy a warm meal with their friends.
12:45 - 13:15: We will continue the fun with outdoor play in the playground and outside gyms.
13:15 - 14:45: Your child will spend the afternoon choosing to join in with Nerf battles, gymnastics or showcasing their talents in a fun and interactive group talent show. We'll then head into a forest exploration adventure and finish off the week on Friday with a sweet hunt!

End Of Day & Late Afternoon

15:00: All children will gather together for our the end of day where children will receive certificates and enjoy music, ending the day on a high note as parents arrive for collection.
15.00 - 17.30: Those who are booked into late collection will have a variety of mainly child-led activities to help them wind down before collection. Snacks are provided for those staying late.

BCP Council · Children's Activities Association · Dorset Council · Steve Bernard · Castle Court School · Ofsted

HIGH 5 GYMNASTICS

AFTER-SCHOOL GYMNASTICS

AT LYTCHETT MATRAVERS PRIMARY SCHOOL

WEDNESDAYS
5:15PM - 6:15PM

YEARS
4 - 6

WANT TO JOIN US?

SCAN BELOW TO FIND OUT MORE & BOOK YOUR PLACE

INTERESTED? SEND US AN EMAIL!

SPACES AVAILABLE!

highfiveactivities@gmail.com | high5gymnastics_ | High 5 Gymnastics

SEND SUPPORT

Face to face support for families with children who have SEND needs - diagnosed or undiagnosed

what's on?

26th Oct - SEN Sensory Play session 2pm-3.30pm - Wareham Family Hub Booking essential. For families with children aged 1-8years, older siblings welcome.

4th Nov - Lunch for parents/carers with SEND children - 12.15pm at The United Reform Church Wareham - Booking essential

18th Nov -Parent Support Group at Wareham Family Hub 9.30am-11am No need to book!

16th Dec - Parent Support Group at Wareham Family Hub 9.30am-11am - No need to book!

22nd Dec - SEN Sensory Session Play 9.30am-11am - Wareham Family Hub - Booking essential, For families with children aged 1-8years, older siblings welcome.

Wareham Family Hub PYCF is loacted behind Purbeck School on Worgret Road, Wareham, BH20 4PH

Wareham Family Hub
01929 552 934
office@pycf.org.uk
pycf.co.uk
BH20 4PH

Strictly Stage stars take centre stage

If you would like to enrol your child with Strictly Stage please visit our website:

www.strictlystage.uk

There are limited spaces available and places are secured on a first come first served basis.

If your child already attends strictly stage theatre school, there is no need to re-apply, as they will have a secure place for the entire academic year!

STRICTLY STAGE
THEATRE SCHOOL



Email: hello@strictlystage.uk INSTA: @strictly_stage FB: @StrictlyStageTheatreSchool



Where talent comes to thrive...

STRICTLY STAGE
THEATRE SCHOOL

The Principal of Strictly Stage, Liz, has worked as a professional Singer/Dancer all over the world on various cruise ships such as QE2, P&O, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines and had the honour of working as part of the cast of Andrew Lloyd Webbers, Phantom of the Opera, in London's West End 1994 to 1996.

With a team of professional teachers to support her, Strictly Stage has proved to be highly successful with over 300 children currently enrolled.

Strictly Stage Theatre School has been successfully running in schools in the Dorset area since 2002.

Strictly Stage is a Performing Arts School, based on dance (Commercial, Cabaret, Ballet, Tap & Modern, Hip-Hop and much more), singing (pop, musical theatre) and drama, but most of all having fun!

Your child will have the opportunity to learn various routines to the latest chart music and Musical Theatre Shows such as Wicked, Aladdin, Shrek, Bat out of Hell, Matilda etc.

All Strictly Stage Students work towards and perform in our annual productions at the prestigious Lighthouse Theatre, Poole.

Classes available for ages 18 months+ both boys and girls. Prices start at just £6.50 per session which is payable per half term.

Email: hello@strictlystage.uk INSTA: @strictly_stage FB: @StrictlyStageTheatreSchool