



Wednesday 24th March 2025

Spring Term Round Up!

As we come to the end of another fabulous spring term, I am amazed at just how fast this term has gone.

I watch with pride how the children in our school show such patience and tolerance with each other. At lunchtimes the older children help our youngest cut up their food; make sure they have a drink; help clear up and simply engage them in conversation. At breaktimes they play together and watch out for each other. Somerby Primary School really is a special place for children to learn and develop as an individual and has a most unique family feel. In February we had a visit from author Troy Jenkinson who commented “It was an honour to work with such dedicated teams and fabulous children. The children are lucky to be educated there”. Such a great testimonial!

Behaviour Boosts

As part of our ongoing work with oracy, our behaviour boost has continued to support developing language. Children are encouraged to answer in full sentences; to listen carefully to others’ ideas and learn to disagree respectfully, using sentence starters as cues. Children are encouraged to say good morning on the gate and to engage in conversation with adults in and around school. Research shows that children speaking in full sentences boosts cognitive development, improves communication and strengthens literacy foundations. Key benefits include better vocabulary acquisition, enhanced memory and reasoning, higher self-esteem and better preparation for reading and writing. Try to encourage your children at home to speak in full sentences to help support this further.

Mental Health

As you will be aware there is a great deal of news around the use of AI and accessing social media, and its negative effect on mental health of children (and adults!). Online activity can be addictive: excessive use of the internet, social media, or gaming can interfere with daily life, relationships, and work. It is considered a behavioural addiction similar to gambling. Excessive screen time is strongly associated with worsened ADHD symptoms—specifically inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity—by providing constant, high-speed stimulation that alters reward processing in the brain. It disrupts sleep, reduces physical activity, and can lead to structural brain changes, such as reduced cortical thickness in regions regulating attention.



Part of Mowbray Education Trust

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As we enter the Easter holidays try to limit screen time: establish device-free zones (like bedrooms); set strict, consistent limits using parental control tools and model healthy habits by reducing your own device usage. Replace screen time with offline activities such as board games, outdoor play, reading or sitting round a table enjoying a device-free meal!

School Uniform

High expectations are important to us and we have noticed again that some non-uniform items are slipping back into school - jewellery, smart watches, trainers, hair accessories to name a few. Please read the uniform section on our website and ensure children are dressed in full uniform, especially during non-PE days, paying particular attention to the following:

- Sensible plain flat black shoes or plain all black trainers (no logo).
- No jewellery.
- Watches are allowed **but not 'smart' watches.**
- No nail varnish to be worn.
- Long hair must be tied up.
- Hair accessories should be in a sensible colour, plain and without embellishment.

Attendance / lateness

The evidence supporting the link between good school attendance and positive outcomes is overwhelming, with higher attendance rates consistently correlating with better academic performance, increased wellbeing, and improved long-term opportunities. Conversely, poor attendance is strongly linked to lower attainment, with 90% of young people with attendance below 85% failing to achieve five or more good GCSE grades.

Did you know...?

- A child whose attendance is 85%, equates to 29 days of missed school days - a whole month of missed learning, which cannot be given back. If this continues each year for the duration of their primary school life, a staggering 203 school days equating to 40 weeks, a whole school year, of missed education!
- A child whose attendance is 90%, equates to 19 missed school days: 19 hours of maths; 19 hours of reading and 19 hours of writing which cannot be given back. Again, over the duration of their time in primary school equates to 27 weeks of missed learning - equivalent to a whole autumn and spring term of missed education.
- A child whose attendance is 96%, which is our school and Trust target, equates to 7.5 missed school days - this gives leeway for genuine sickness in an academic year - equating to 10 weeks of missed education over the 7 years of education.

The National Curriculum builds on prior learning and missed learning causes gaps which can also cause stress, knock children's self-esteem and negatively impact on their educational and life chances.

Arriving late can also be unsettling for your child and the rest of their class, and result in missed learning. Learning in the classroom starts immediately and parents should ensure their child arrives at 8:30am each day.

Arriving late after the register closes, will also be classed as an unauthorised absence for the whole of the morning session. If a child has 10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent of 5 days) within a 10-week period, this will result in a Penalty Notice (fine) issued by Local Authority.

FOSS

FOSS have successfully organised their first ever Spring Craft Fair which took place at the Village Hall at the weekend. Crafters “bought” a table and sold their beautiful crafts while FOSS served refreshments and home-made cakes. As a result, they raised £200 which is brilliant. In addition to this, Somerby School Tuckshop attended the fair and monies raised, coupled with their weekly sales on a Friday, has resulted in a whopping £1,137 being raised for our small but mighty school, during the last year. Thank you so much for all your support buying, preparing, selling or baking to help make this so successful.

Our Environment

The Trust are continuing to help improve our environment. The wall at the back of Willow is due to be rendered as soon as the weather improves and work on the bell tower is imminent to stop water coming into our entrance hall during downpours! Hopefully we can get all the scaffolding down soon to look smart for the summer!

The Wider Community

We have been contacted by Melton Vale Sixth Form College who, as part of their “*Giving Back*” Day where they to develop responsible, community-minded young people, Year 12 students (aged 16–17) will volunteer their time and energy to support local schools, charities, and community organisations. They are coming to our school in May to help with gardening and tidying up our outdoor area, which we are delighted with their support!

Initial Teacher Training Support

We love nothing more than supporting the next generation of teachers and what better place to train than in our lovely school! Over the next 7 weeks, you will no doubt hear all about Miss Wilson and Miss Jackson who are joining us in Ash with Miss Miller as part of their teacher training and we are delighted to have them with us and start them on their teacher training journey.

Stay and Play Session, for new starters in Autumn 2026

Just after Easter we are looking forward to finding out who our new starters are for Autumn 2026. We have organised two stay and play sessions to help the children transition and we have planned in time for Mrs Parker and Mrs Green to meet the children in the children’s own home environment. This is a really important time for us to start to build a picture of our new children to ascertain what support they may need as they start their educational journey. Details of those days will be sent out after Easter.

SATS - Y6 end of Key Stage Two Assessments

Four weeks after Easter, our Year 6 will sit their end of Key Stage Two Assessments. The children have worked so hard this year and we want to keep up the momentum. Please encourage your Year 6 children to practice some maths, reading, spelling and grammar work daily - little and often - to help practice and consolidate their understanding. This is their chance to shine, and we want them to make sure they make good use of the two weeks off!

Summer Dates 2026

We have lots to look forward to as we move into the summer term so please keep an eye on our monthly diary letters and dojo posts to keep up to date with events. I have attached an updated planner covering the summer term.

As we move towards our two-week Easter break, on behalf of us all at Somerby Primary School, we would like to wish our families a happy Easter and we look forward to welcoming you all back on Monday 13th April 2026.

Andrea Brown
Headteacher