



St Margaret's  
Academy

ST MARGARETS ACADEMY

Spring Newsletter #23  
20th March 2026



Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you to everyone for embracing a *splash of red* today in support of Comic Relief. It has been wonderful to see our school community come together with such enthusiasm. By uniting in kindness and compassion, we help create positive change far beyond our own school.

In assembly this week, we reflected on our school values, particularly **kindness** and inspiring others to make a difference. Days like today show these values in action. It has been inspiring to hear how many children are following Radio 1 presenter Greg James and his

extraordinary challenge. His determination is a powerful reminder that with hard work, commitment, and **aspiration**, anything is possible. His journey is encouraging children everywhere to believe in themselves and to take small steps that can lead to big change.

Thank you once again for your support and community spirit. Together, we continue to show what can be achieved when we care, connect, and take action. Please click on the [link](#) if you would like to and can donate to Greg James' challenge for Comic Relief.  
well done to everyone involved.

## Celebrations in the Community

We are delighted to share that our school has been invited to take part in the celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the opening of the [Babbacombe Cliff Railway](#). This is a wonderful honour, and we are very proud to be involved in such a special local event.

To celebrate the centenary, a special event will be held at the Cliff Railway on Wednesday 1st April 2026. A number of guests will be joining the occasion, including the great-grandson of Alderman Taylor, who was Torquay's Mayor at the time of the railway's original opening in 1926.

The formal celebration will begin at the Top Station at 10:00am. Following this, we will all travel down to the Lower Station on the Cliff Railway, where the event will continue- complete with cake to mark the occasion.

The organisers have invited one boy and one girl to attend the ceremony on behalf of the school, supported by members of staff. I spoke with the children in today's assembly and explained that, to keep things fair, we will hold a lucky dip during Monday's assembly to select the two representatives. If you would prefer that your child is not entered into the draw, please contact the school before 12 noon on Monday 23rd.



## Forest Skills Training in the Orchard

This week, several members of staff took part in Forest Skills training in our beautiful Orchard. The sunshine made it a wonderful experience, and the team are now excited to bring new outdoor learning opportunities to pupils across the whole school.

Outdoor learning has huge benefits: it supports wellbeing, builds confidence and resilience, encourages teamwork, and sparks creativity. Our Orchard provides the perfect natural space for pupils to explore, learn, and thrive.

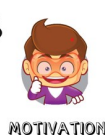
We can't wait to put our new skills into action and continue developing our outdoor learning offer for all children at St Margaret's.



ACTIVE THINKING



RESILIENCE



MOTIVATION



## Aspiration in Action

### Y4 Dodgeball Competition

On Thursday 12th March, the Y4 Dodgeball team went to St Cuthbert Mayne to compete in a Dodgeball competition against other schools in our local cluster. We played against St Marychurch, Homelands and Shiphay.

All the schools were able to take 30 children split into 3 squads of 10 and the teams were organised into an A, B and C pool. All of the teams played each other in their pool and after playing 3 games each, the A team achieved 2nd place, the B team came 3rd place and the C team achieved 2nd place in their pool.

All the players had lots of fun throwing dodgeballs and hitting their opponents. Archie and Freddie had a special mention for showing good sporting values and received a medal for their efforts. All the children represented the school very well and we are very proud of them.

### Year 5 & 6 Netball

Monday saw some of our Yr5 and 6 girls head to Paignton Academy to take part in the Bee Netball Tournament against eight local primary schools. This was an all day event of games organised by Devon School Games and coaching from Dart Netball Club and Churston Grammar School Young Leaders.

The purpose was to develop sport skills and understanding, develop transferable skills and tactical awareness as well as develop character and life skills (resilience, determination, co-operation, mutual respect, tolerance and courage).

Considering the girls had little practice of actual games, they were incredibly resilient. They were nervous and unsure at the start, but by the end they were confident, competitive, vocal to one another within the game and working hard to do their best. We had 3 wins, one of which was 8-0, an incredible result. Scores from Arabella, Ginny and Olivia H.



ACTIVE THINKING

RESILIENCE



MOTIVATION

## New Neurodiversity Advice Line—Here to Support You!

Livewell and CFHD are pleased to announce the launch of a free, confidential [Neurodiversity Advice Line](#) for children, young people, and their families across Plymouth and Devon.

This dedicated service is designed to offer support, guidance, and signposting for anyone navigating the Neurodiversity Pathways. Whether you're seeking reassurance, practical strategies, or help connecting with the right services, our team is here to help.

What you can get advice on:

- Anxiety
- Diet and eating
- Friendships and social skills
- Sleep
- School-related difficulties
- Support strategies at home or school
- Linking with other teams and services in your local area

How to contact them Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm on - 01752 435404

If you or someone you care for needs support, information, or just a listening ear, please reach out. We're here to help every step of the way.

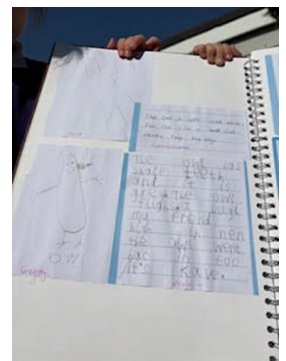
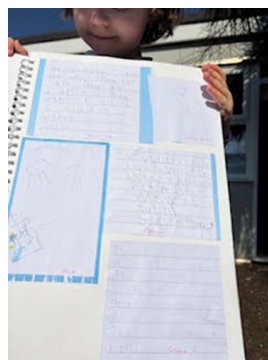
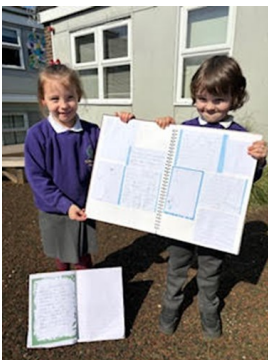
## Celebrating Our Fabulous Year 1 Writers!

I have been absolutely blown off my feet by the incredible writing taking place in Year 1! Our young authors have been working so hard, and their creativity, imagination, and growing confidence as writers shine through every page.

I am incredibly proud to share their newly published class book, which showcases not only their wonderful stories but also their beautifully detailed illustrations. It is a true celebration of the brilliant writers they are becoming.

A special thank you to Elsie and Gregory for sharing this wonderful achievement with us all, your enthusiasm and pride have made this moment even more special.

We hope you enjoy reading their stories at parents evening next week as much as we have enjoyed watching them come to life.



## **Meningitis B Safety Alert**

We are writing to make you aware of a national safety alert issued by the National Alliance of School Premises Management (NASPM) following a recent outbreak of Meningitis B in the UK. The current cases are localised to Kent, and there is no cause for concern within our school community.

This information is being shared simply as a precaution and to ensure everyone feels confident about the symptoms to look out for.

### What is Meningitis B?

Meningitis B is a serious infection that can develop quickly. Early recognition makes a big difference, which is why NASPM is encouraging all schools to share guidance with families.

### Key Symptoms to Watch For

Meningitis symptoms can appear suddenly and may look like flu at first. Please be aware of the following:

- A high fever with cold hands or feet
- Severe headache
- Stiff neck
- Dislike of bright light
- A rash that does not fade when pressed with a glass
- Confusion or extreme tiredness
- Vomiting, joint pain, or seizures

If someone becomes unwell quickly or symptoms worsen, seek medical help immediately by contacting your GP, calling NHS 111, or dialling 999 in an emergency.

### What the School Is Doing

As a precaution, we are:

- Ensuring our first-aid and welfare team are fully briefed
- Reinforcing good hygiene routines across school
- Sharing NHS symptom information with families for general awareness

There is no suspected case in our school, this is purely preventative guidance.

### Further Information

You can read the full NASPM Safety Alert here:

<http://naspm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/NASPM-Meningitis-Safety-Alert.pdf>

It provides more detail about symptoms, advice, and links to organisations such as the Meningitis Research Foundation and Meningitis Now.

We appreciate your continued support. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the school office or speak with a member of the leadership team.

## Art Competition—Entries Due on 1st April

Thank you to everyone who entered the Royal Academy of Arts competition – The winner will be chosen by May 2026 so keep your eyes peeled!

In the meantime, we have another competition you may want to enter with Sky Arts Access all Arts.



Where do you feel happiest? Is it playing in your garden? On holiday by the sea? Cuddled up with your family? Or somewhere else entirely?

Our Access All Arts Week theme this year is JOY and we want to see the places that make your pupils smile.

We're inviting primary school pupils across the country to draw a picture of a place where they feel happy, and the winning drawings will be brought to life by the animation studio behind Obki, Glowdogs and MC Grammar.

That's right! Ritzy Animation is bringing their magic to your classroom, and one lucky winner will see their artwork transformed into a 20-second animated scene!

If your child would like to enter the competition, please look out for more information sent out from Miss Pritchard on Monday

**Draw Your Happy Place Competition**

This year's theme is JOY and we want to bring your happy place to life!

**Your task:** Draw the place where you feel happiest. This could be real or imagined.

**Make sure you include:**

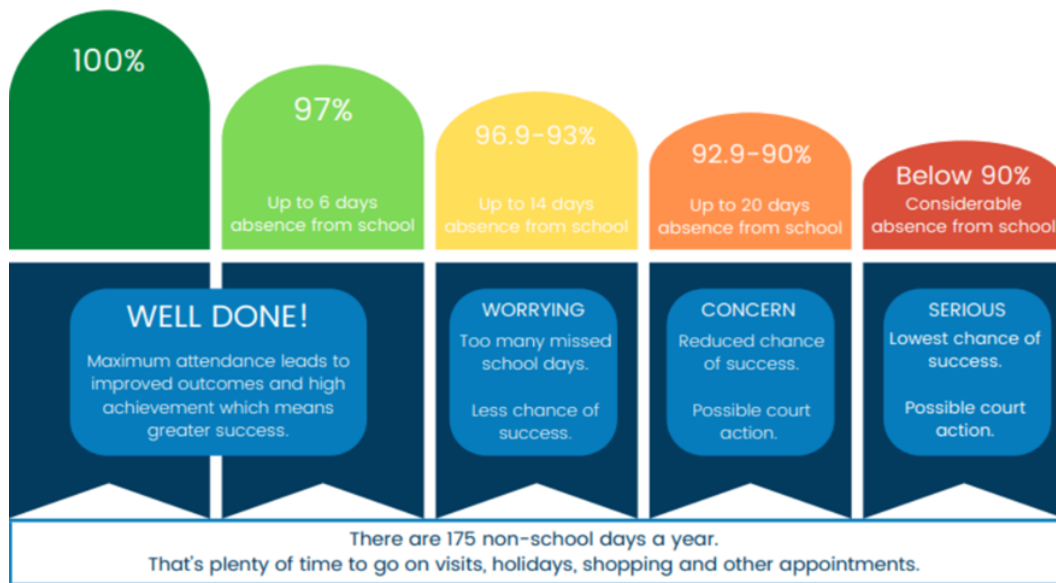
- One thing that can **move**, like a person, animal or object.
- &
- A stunning background scene, like a beach, playground or home.

- 1 Be joyful**  
Make sure your scene shows a moment of pure happiness.
- 2 Be creative**  
Use your imagination to create a totally unique design.
- 3 Be clear**  
Are your special characters or objects easy to see?

**You could win an incredible prize!**

The winning scene will be transformed into a joyful **20-second animation** by Ritzy Animation, the team behind shows like Obki, MC Grammar and Glowdogs!

## Attendance & Wellbeing: Working Together for Every Child's Success



At St Margaret's, we want every young person to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Good attendance and being ready for learning (including arriving on time) play a huge part in this. When pupils are in school regularly, they make stronger progress, feel more confident, and are better able to enjoy positive relationships with friends and staff.

Every day really does count. Even small amounts of missed learning can build up over time and make it harder for children to access future opportunities alongside their peers. That's why we work in partnership with families to support positive attendance and overall wellbeing.

We know that life isn't always straightforward, and sometimes barriers get in the way. Please remember: we are here to help.

### What you can expect from our team

- We will look into any unexplained or concerning absences so that we can understand what support might be needed.
- We will work closely with pupils and parents/carers to remove barriers to good attendance and punctuality.
- We will provide support to help pupils return confidently after any period of prolonged absence.

### What we expect from our pupils

- To attend school as regularly as possible and to arrive on time each day.
- To come dressed in the correct uniform and prepared with the right equipment.

### What we ask of our parents and carers

- Please ensure your child attends school punctually, in the correct uniform, and ready to learn, unless they are genuinely too unwell to attend.
- Avoid booking family holidays during term time.
- Let the school know straight away if your child is unable to attend.
- Try to schedule medical appointments outside of school hours wherever possible

### Working together makes the difference

We all share the same goal: for every young person to feel happy, healthy, and successful. When school and home work in partnership, children benefit enormously. Thank you for your continued support in helping every pupil at St Margaret's make the very most of each school day.

If you ever have concerns about attendance or need help, please get in touch; we're always here to support you.

## Torbay Coffee Morning

There are three Family Hubs across Torbay. They are a great place to meet professionals who can support you and your family – like health visitors, maternity services and family support workers. We are excited to host a session here on Tuesday 21st April 9.15-10.15 please meet in the school reception area.

You can access information on all of the below:

### Our Family Hub network is working together with

- 0 to 19 Torbay, health visitors and school nursing
- 0 to 19 Torbay, Action for Children
- Torbay & South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
- Torbay Council
- Community & voluntary groups

### Get Involved

We have 3 **parent / carer panels** who meet regularly to help shape Torbay's Family Hub offer. These are through

- [Yes Brixham](#)
- [Windmill Centre](#), Torquay
- [Unit 5](#), Paignton

### Volunteer with us

Become a

- Chat play read champion
- Building babies brains champion
- Infant Feeding peer supporter
- Perinatal mental health peer supporter



Funded by  
UK Government

**TORBAY COUNCIL**



Action for  
Children



Torbay and South Devon  
NHS Foundation Trust

### Key contacts

**Torbay Midwives**  
01803 654771

### Health visitors & school nursing (0 to 19 Torbay advice line)

0300 333 5352  
(Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm)



[publichealthnursing.torbay@nhs.net](mailto:publichealthnursing.torbay@nhs.net)

**Family Hubs**  
01803 210200

[familyhub@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:familyhub@torbay.gov.uk)

**The Beehive**, Paignton Enterprise Centre, Bishops Place, Paignton, Devon, TQ3 3DZ

**The Barn**, Rea Barn Rd, Brixham TQ5 9DF  
**Zig Zags**, 32 Market St, Torquay TQ1 3AQ

### Torbay Council

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/>



### Virtual Family Hub

Take a look at our virtual family hub, packed full of information and advice plus groups and activities across the bay.



[www.torbayfamilyhub.org.uk](http://www.torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)

# Familyhub

TORBAY



## Services and support for you and your family

We want to meet families in places where they feel comfortable so our Start for Life and Family Hubs support will be available in different places across the community and online. We hope that you will always find a way to join in that suits you and your family. Here's some of the services, and support you can access at Torbay family Hub. Full details about each are on our virtual family hub [www.torbayfamilyhub.org.uk](http://www.torbayfamilyhub.org.uk)

### Start for life

We are building on our current services to increase the support we can offer with;

- Perinatal Mental Health
- Parent -Infant relationships
- [Infant Feeding](#)
- Parenting and family support
- Speech, Language & Communication
- Child Development



### Pregnancy

- Midwife appointments
- [Online antenatal course](#)
- Antenatal classes
- Breastfeeding masterclasses
- Support for dads



### Babies and toddlers

- [Register your baby's birth at one of the Hubs](#)
- [Infant Feeding support](#)
- [Clinics run by the Health visiting team](#)
- Baby Massage
- Parenting and family support
- Language and Communication support
- [Portage groups](#)
- Child Development groups and support
- Emotional wellbeing
- Support for dads



### Primary aged children

- Getting ready for school
- School nurse drop ins and support
- National childhood measurement programme
- Sleep workshops

### Secondary age children

- Youth Service
- Care experience support
- Young carers
- Youth homelessness prevention
- Phoenix group for young people with a disability or extra support needs

### For parents and carers

- Emotional wellbeing
- Parenting courses
- Course for parents of teenagers
- Cost of living drop ins
- Housing support drop in
- Supporting parental relationships
- Family group conferencing

## PTA Easter Bingo

On **Friday 27th March**, 3:30–5:00pm, the PTA are arranging their fantastic *Easter Bingo*. As always, we will be holding a non-uniform day for all children on this date, and kindly ask that you donate an Easter egg of any size in support of the event.



All eggs can be brought into school on Thursday 26th March in advance, or on the morning of Friday 27th March, to enable the PTA some time to organise the prize hampers in readiness for the big event after school. More information will follow next week.



Wishing everyone a sun-filled weekend ahead, with plenty of moments to relax, recharge, and enjoy special time with friends and loved ones. Thank you for all you bring to our school community each week. Take good care and enjoy the sunshine!

With warmest wishes,

Mrs Nikki O'Dwyer



# PRE-LOVED UNIFORM

PAY WHAT YOU CAN  
TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

Pre-loved uniform is always available from the  
PTA.

Please send us a message via our Facebook  
page and we can make arrangements for  
collection



# Diary Dates

23rd March 2026	Rowan Class Swimming
24th March 2026	09.00—12.00 Y5 Rowan Class Reach Outdoors (Archery & Indoor Climbing) 15.30—18.20 Parent Teacher Consultations (Spring Term)
26th March 2026	15.30—18.20 Parent Teacher Consultations (Spring Term)
30th March 2026	Y6 Leavers Hoodies worn from today Cherry Class Swimming
31st March 2026—2nd April 2026	Skern Lodge Residential Y6 (2 Nights)
Friday 3rd April 2026	No School—Start of Easter Spring Term Holiday
3rd April 2026—19th April 2026	Easter Holidays
20th April 2026	Start of Summer Term Cherry Class Swimming
21st April 2026	Birch Class Kayaking—Goodrington
22nd April 2026	Animal Visit for Year 5
23rd April 2026	Author Visit Rob Holmes
28th April 2026	Year 5 Rowan Class—Kayaking
30th April 2026	13.00—14.00 KS1 Multi-Skills and Colour Run

ACTIVE THINKING

RESILIENCE



MOTIVATION



Ash	Donny	Donny showed great curiosity when exploring dinosaur artefacts and confidently shared facts about his favourite dinosaurs. Donny used his super phonics knowledge to sound out words and explain his ideas clearly in his writing. Mrs Harrison is very proud of you . Well done!
Elm	Ella	This week's star of the week is Ella! Ella has been a fantastic role model to her friends this week, as she has continued to try her best to show the aspiration school value.
Beech	Phoebe	Awarded for fantastic listening and truly impressive writing. Your focus, creativity, and effort have really stood out. Keep up the brilliant work!
Pine	Frankie	Frankie is our star of the week for always trying so hard. Even when things get tough, he never gives up. He especially impressed Mrs Chivers with his writing this week. Well done Frankie.
Apple	Alice	Alice has been a true superstar this week. She has been listening and joining in with our class learning so much. She has followed adult instructions and tried hard to be in the right place at the right time all week! What a star - well done Alice!
Oak	Ollie	Ollie is our star for building his confidence in class. We have seen his hand up much more and he is joining in with our class discussions. Well done Ollie we are really proud of you!
Willow	Arthur	Willow's STAR of the week is Arthur. For always being determined in his work and wanting to do his best. For developing greater confidence in sharing his wonderful ideas more with the rest of the class. It is great to you thriving Arthur!
Holly	Isaac	Holly's star of the week is Isaac. I have been so impressed with his responsibility for his learning this week. He has challenged himself to get star and it is well deserved! Keep up the hard work Isaac!
Cherry	Albie	For your fantastic illustration of a 'Sustainable Village' you included everything you have learned about sustainability showing your fantastic understanding of the subject. A big well done!
Hazel	Olivia W	Hazel's star this week is Olivia W. Olivia has been incredibly aspirational with her Maths learning this week. She makes fractions look easy! Even when she has found it tricky, she has been very resilient and we are very impressed. Well done, Liv! We are super proud of you!
Rowan	Ivy	Ivy is the star of the week in Rowan class because she has impressed us with how well she has settled into a new school. She is very conscientious and always tries her best in all of her learning. She makes great contributions in class and demonstrates respect and kindness in everything she does. Well done Ivy- you have quickly become an indispensable member of Rowan class.
Birch	Isaac	Isaac is our star this week. He always shows amazing levels of aspiration in his learning and has produced some amazing facts based on our book, The Darkest Dark, in writing. Well done Isaac, we are all super proud of you!
Hawthorn	Harry	Harry - for fantastic active learning in class. He consistently contributes answers and his ideas in lessons, which shows great motivation to do his best. Well done, Harry!
Maple	Theon	Theon is our star this week. He has been trying his hardest to be focussed and ready to learn, showing great responsibility for his learning. He has impressed us with his science knowledge this week, and he is always keen to participate and contribute in class discussions. On top of this, he is always a kind friend. Well done, Theon