



ST MARGARETS ACADEMY

Autumn Newsletter #16
23th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I can hardly believe we are already approaching the end of January! The start of the year has flown by, and school has been a hive of activity. Our children and staff have thrown themselves into new learning with enthusiasm, curiosity and determination.

We've also taken time to celebrate the many achievements - big and small - that make our community so special. It's been wonderful to see pupils thriving, trying new things and supporting one another along the way.

In addition, we've been busy developing new partnerships across Devon. These collaborations are already helping us enhance our provision and ensure we continue to meet the needs of all our children. Strong relationships beyond our school strengthen everything we do, and we're excited for the opportunities these partnerships will bring.

As we move into the rest of the term, thank you for your continued support. Together, we're creating an inspiring, nurturing environment where every child can flourish

Little Works, Big Difference—Arts Competition Winners!

We are so proud of all the children who took part in this fabulous celebration of creativity. It's wonderful to see so many of our pupils getting involved - and even better to hear that their talent and hard work have been recognised!

<https://daisi.org.uk/2026/01/19/little-works-winners/>



A huge WELL DONE to all our amazing young artists! You continue to inspire us every day.



ACTIVE THINKING



RESILIENCE



MOTIVATION

Strengthening Inclusion in Torbay Schools Through Collaboration

We are delighted to share the collaborative work we are currently undertaking with the Special Partnership Trust (SPT). This partnership is supporting our school to strengthen practice and provision, helping us to create truly inclusive environments where every child feels they belong and is able to achieve and thrive.

The outreach programme, known as Belonging by Design, focuses on supporting schools to further develop their inclusive approaches, with a particular emphasis on meeting the needs of neurodiverse children. Its aim is to ensure that staff have the confidence, knowledge and practical tools needed to support pupils effectively.

Through this programme, schools receive tailored and practical support which may include:

Coaching and mentoring to build staff confidence and expertise

Targeted training sessions on strategies for supporting children with SEND

Joint planning and reflective practice to ensure improvements are sustainable and embedded

We are proud to be one of the 12 schools already engaged in this valuable support. The partnership work is taking place across the spring and summer terms, and we look forward to keeping you informed as this collaboration continues to develop.

Year 1 Sensory Learning

In Year 1, we have been learning all about our five senses: hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste. The children explored their surroundings by taking part in an exciting *senses scavenger hunt* around the school. We talked about our snacks and favourite foods, played games to investigate our sense of touch, identified strong and interesting smells, and learned what happens when you visit an optician. It has been a fun and engaging topic, with lots of hands-on learning!



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Play Torbay Autism Clubs—Now Running Again

We're pleased to share that Torbay Council has secured funding to keep Play Torbay's autism clubs running until the end of 2026.

The clubs are open to autistic children and young people (diagnosed or not) and are free to attend, though booking is essential.

Weekly sessions are available at:

ASRUS (Brixham)

Mayfield School (Torquay)

Indigos Forest School (Brixham) – for electively home-educated young people

Activities are tailored to neurodiverse needs and include outdoor play, crafts, music, sports, and forest school experiences in safe, inclusive environments.

Families can book ASRUS and Mayfield sessions here: [Link to Autism Clubs](#)

Help Needed—Woodchip for the Orchard

We're on the hunt for a lot of woodchips to help us "un-bog" the orchard after the wet weather. If anyone knows (or is!) a tree surgeon who might be able to donate or supply woodchip deliveries, we would be incredibly grateful. Please get in touch with the school office if you can help or pass this on to someone who might. Thank you for supporting our outdoor spaces!



Wishing you all a wonderful, restful weekend ahead. Thank you for everything you do, and we look forward to another great week together.

Mrs Nikki O'Dwyer
Headteacher



Useful Reminders and Sign-posting

FREE DROP-IN SUPPORT

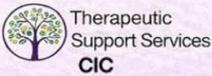
Supporting parents, carers & guardians of children aged 8+ who are struggling with mental health.



THURSDAYS · 1:30–3:00PM
ACORN CENTRE, TORQUAY

- Create a self-care toolkit
- Talk through any concerns about your child's wellbeing
- Receive support and advice

● **Specialist session on self-harm**
last Thursday of the month



Home Education Community Drop-In

Come along to our drop-in session for advice, guidance and information

Who you can meet

- SEND Case Worker
- Education Officer
- SENDIASS officer

Location Torquay Library
Date 2nd February 2026
Time 9:30am-11:30am

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MENTORING WITH LIFE CHANCE TRUST

Are you a young person 16-25 who is struggling with education, anxiety, employment, or something else? Do you feel like you just need some extra support?

Life Chance Trust offer a FREE 12 week mentoring programme with a mentor who is specifically matched to YOU.

“Without the support of my mentor, I wouldn't have had the confidence to apply for jobs, build a relationship with my support network and reach out to old friends”.
M, 20



SCAN THE QR
CODE TO GET IN
TOUCH AND FIND
OUT MORE

lifechancetrust.org.uk

Torbay School Nursing Team



School Nursing Service Parent and Carer Drop in

A member of the school nurse team will be attending your child's school on:

Date: Friday 13th February 2026

Time: 1.30pm - 2.30pm

We will be able to offer support and advice for:

- Bowel and bladder
- Diet and nutrition
- Sleep
- Emotional wellbeing
- Behaviour (if there is an associated health need)

**No booking needed,
just turn up!**

Contact Us

T: 0300 333 5352 (Monday - Friday 9am to 5pm)

E: tsdft.0to19torbay@nhs.net

A: 0 to 19 Torbay, St. Edmunds, Victoria Park Rd, Torquay TQ1 3QH

W: torbayfamilyhub.org.uk

Chat via the Torbay Family Hub App



Torbay and South Devon

Piano, Violin and Singing lessons now available.

Lessons take place during the school day and are charged at:

One to one:
30 minutes £20
20 minutes £13.50

Groups:
from £7

for more details contact:
Laura @ Blossomsmusic.co.uk
07515 805 812

Blossoms
Music @
St Margaret's

Lumi-Nova—What's it all about?

You may have seen reports on BBC Spotlight recently about a new app called Lumi Nova.

Lumi Nova supports children to build confidence and learn lifelong skills to manage their fears and worries through an intergalactic adventure game.

It's been used by more than 1,100 children in Devon and more than 90% saw their condition reliably improve or stabilise after using it.

Lumi Nova is available to families in partnership with Children and Family Health Devon (CFHD).

Powered by science and backed by the NHS, Lumi Nova is:

- Designed for children aged 7-12 years
- Suitable for children with mild to moderate fears and worries
- Safe and secure
- Recommended by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

In particular, children with SEND have seen significant improvements after using the service – 97% experienced reliable improvement or saw their condition stabilise.

Digital therapy enabling children to self manage their worries.

- ✓ For ages 7-12 yrs
- ✓ Suitable for children with mild - moderate anxiety*
- ✓ NICE recommended

Get free Access

luminova.app/get-access

*Not recommended for use with children who have severe anxiety, are at risk, have suicidal thoughts or are at risk of self-harm without clinical supervision. See instructions for use: 043300000000



Diary Dates

26th January 2026	Birch Class Swimming Lesson Girl's Football (Y5/6) at Home
29th January 2026	13.00—15.00 Y3/4 Multi-Games Festival @STCM
2nd February 2026	Birch Class Swimming Lesson
3rd February 2026	Space Dome for Y5
6th February 2026	NSPCC Number Day
9th - 13th February 2026	Children's Mental Health Week
9th February 2026	Birch Class Swimming Lesson Year 2 Dental Workshop
10th February 2026	PTA Disco Afterschool—Details to Follow Safer Internet Day
12th February 2026	Spring Link Trustee Day
13th February 2026	Whole School Non-Uniform Day for Children's Mental Health 13.30—14.30 School Nurse Drop in Session for Families
16th February 2026— 22nd February 2026	Half Term
17th February 2026	Pancake Day—Shrove Tuesday
23rd February 2026	First Day Back for Children 5.30—15.40 Y1 Parent Phonics Meeting PSC Focus

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Ash	Rex	Clear understanding of the school values
Elm	Violet	Always showing great respect and sharing with others
Beech	Grace. C	This week's Star of the Week is awarded to Grace.C for always being respectful to everyone she speaks to, listening carefully to adults, and doing an amazing job with her phonics. Well done!
Pine	Eve	Eve is our star for her continued enthusiasm and motivation towards everything that she does. She loves learning and always wants to work with an adult.
Apple	Myles	Myles is our star in Apple Class for his aspirational attitude. He has become so focused the past couple of weeks and it has really paid off because he has produced great work in both Maths and writing. Keep up the hard work Myles!
Oak	Kinsley	Kinsley is our star for his enthusiastic, positive and aspirational attitude in lessons. He has also put great effort into including all of the learning in his own writing and he has been keen to explore TTRockstars to support his times table knowledge. Super effort Kinsley- you are a star!
Willow	Chase	Willow's star of the week is Chase. He has worked incredibly hard this week and the last few weeks to show greater responsibility. He has given his best across all subjects, often trying to go above and beyond, including wanting to take maths learning home. Keep up the fantastic effort Chase!!
Holly	Harper	Harper is our star this week! She works her socks off every single week and it does not go unnoticed! She shows all the schools values every day and it is a joy to have her in our classroom team - keep up the great work!
Cherry	Rinat	For the fantastic letter you wrote this week - using very rich vocabulary to describe the disaster of Mount Vesuvius. Fantastic work - Keep it up!
Hazel	Liam	Liam has been a star in the classroom this week. He has showcased his excellent learning behaviours, being resilient with challenges, compromising calmly with the adults and really working on his independence with his written work. We will also add that Liam's scientific knowledge has been a huge bonus this half term, helping to explain clearly scientific concepts such as conductor and insulator. Well done, Liam. We are immensely proud of you and your achievements this week. Keep up the good work!
Rowan	Shahriyar	The star of the week in Rowan class is Shahriyar for his wonderful work in maths. He demonstrates great focus in every maths lesson and works hard to complete fluency, reasoning and problem solving questions. He can also explain to others how he has completed questions. Well done Shahriyar.
Birch	Arya B	This Week I have seen some improvement in maths work. Arya has shown great development in her dividing skills. She has been successfully dividing 4-digit numbers by 1-digit numbers with remainders this week, which is a huge improvement from when we first started division.
Hawthorn	Rory	Rory we have been super impressed with your attitude towards your learning this week. We have noticed your hand up more and we have seen you trying to complete more work during our lessons. Well done- what super responsibility!
Maple	Henry	Henry is our star of the week. He is showing great aspiration and maturity in his learning, and really focussing on the work set. Well done Henry, keep it up!