



Castle Hill News: 05.06.26

Words matter. Why?

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a beautiful week we had for half-term. I hope you enjoyed the sunshine as much as you were able to. Welcome back for the final term of this academic year. There will be so many firsts and lasts as we prepare for transitions to new classes and new schools.

This newsletter is full of a lot of key information, so please do take the time to read this carefully.

RSE

This term we will be covering our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum across the school. The majority of the teaching will focus on the building of positive safe relationships and will reinforce life skills to support this. We will also cover the science topic of life cycles in KS2 and changes during puberty higher up the school. All classes will also have some teaching around personal hygiene. If you have any queries about what will be covered in these lessons, please see the PSHE overview on the curriculum page of our website and our Relationships and Sex Education Policy on our school website.

Pride and Integrity

I was so proud to receive these comments from visitors to our school this week.

The following comment was sent by a teacher from The Crypt school who came to visit one of our Y6 students:

'I very much appreciated the warm reception I received and the opportunity to spend time in the school environment. It was an excellent first impression, and I was particularly struck by the positive atmosphere and the way the school community presents itself.'

Year 6 have also undertaken their bikeability courses this week and one of the instructors took the time to email the school to comment on the pupils' behaviour.

'Good afternoon,

My colleagues and I have just finished four days of Bikeability Level 1 and 2 with your Year Six. We were all extremely impressed with their behaviour and manners.

They listened well, without exception, even in some fairly awful weather. They were engaged, and asked some good questions. They were polite and respectful and we genuinely enjoyed their company.

Year Six proved to be a credit to their parents, their school, and to themselves, and we wish them all the best for their futures at secondary school. We will look forward to seeing some of them again taking Level 3 Bikeability.'

Bravery

Well done to Mimi, Y1, who has danced her way to success after proudly competing in her very first FEIS — an Irish dancing competition — and taking home a trophy. Despite being one of the youngest competitors at the event, and the only dancer representing Gloucester, Mimi stepped onto the stage in front of a packed audience and judge with confidence, enthusiasm, and determination.

Performing her Irish jig beautifully, Mimi impressed everyone with her courage and energy, making her family and supporters incredibly proud. Her hard work and dedication paid off when she was awarded a trophy for her fantastic performance.



Belonging

Cheese Roll 2026

Congratulations to Alex, Y4 for participating in the uphill cheese rolling event on a very hot Bank Holiday Monday and for coming in the top few finishers!

Thank you to Edhveera, Y3, who, during the Cheese Rolling Hill Festival, helped her brother and dad set up a "Free Refill Water Bottle" initiative to reduce plastic water bottle garbage. She also collected donations totalling £25 which were given to the school. A big thank you to you all!



[Staffing news and classes for 2026/2027](#)

[Goodbyes](#)

We are very sad to be saying goodbye to some of our staff at the end of this academic year all of whom have a long standing connection to our school.

Mrs. Howes has been with us for many years as a teaching assistant and has supported many of our Castle Hill children with their learning. She has decided that it is time for her to retire and, whilst we are sad to see her go, we wish her every happiness for the future.

Ms. Banner is also leaving us for pastures new. She has spent many years teaching in Gloucestershire primary schools and has worked at Castle Hill as both SENCO and pastoral lead.

Mrs. Dancey has also made the difficult decision to leave teaching to pursue a new career. She has been a part of our Castle Hill team for many years firstly as a teaching assistant, then pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher. She has made such a valuable contribution to many children's education and will be sorely missed.

We wish you all lots of luck in your new chapters.

Speaking of new chapters

Congratulations to Miss Smith who is expecting her first baby in November! This is truly wonderful news.

[Welcome](#)

We are delighted to welcome two new teachers to our team for September.

Mr. Stagg is joining us as a new permanent member of our teaching staff and Mr. Culberth is joining us initially for the next academic year.

Mr. Stagg is an experienced Key Stage 2 teacher who has previously taught at both Tewkesbury CofE and Leckhampton Primary schools.

Mr. Culberth has taught in the U.S., South Korea and Poland and has spent the last 10 years teaching Key Stage 2 pupils in Kent.

They are both very excited to be joining our team and we are looking forward to making them part of our Castle Hill family.

New classes for 2026-2027

Transition to a new class, or school, in September is always a big step. We are, therefore, excited to announce our staffing for next year.

The children have been made aware in assembly today of who their new teachers are going to be and there will be a whole school transition day on Thursday 9th July. At the end of that day, you will be very welcome to come in to school to your child's new classroom and meet their new teacher.

Please find below the classes and staff team for 2026-2027.

Year group/class	Teacher	Teaching assistants
Reception	Mrs. Houlston (M-W) Mrs. Warren (Th/F)	Mrs. Boulter Mrs. Hending Miss Newell
Year 1	Mr. Bowers	Mrs. Boulter Mrs. Hending Mrs Ward (PPA cover) Mrs. Esson
Year 2	Mrs. Richards (M-Th.) Miss Baldwin (F)	Miss Newell Mrs. Gibbs
Year 3	Mr. Telford	Mrs. Esson Mr. Enon Miss Ward
Year 4	Mr. Culberth	Ms. Taylor Mr. Enon Mrs. Cole (PPA cover)
Year 5	Mr. Stagg	Miss Ward Mrs. Cole Mrs. Ward Miss Smith (PPA cover Autumn 1; Mrs. Hending PPA cover Autumn 2 onwards)
Year 6	Mrs. Davidson	Mrs. Cole Mrs. Ward (PPA cover)

[School dinner debt – message from Mrs. Mabbut](#)

Gentle reminder to all parents that Pupil school dinner accounts (those not entitled to free school meals) should be kept at a credit or zero balance at all times. If your child's account is not in credit and they order a school meal, please do not be offended if a member of the admin team call and ask you to bring a packed lunch up. We cannot allow dinner accounts to go into debt as we pay our supplier Caterlink daily for the meals.

[KS2 outdoor quiet area](#)

As you will be aware, with the help of Friends of Castle Hill, we were able to create a new quiet zone area within the Key Stage 2 playground. This has given us a valuable outdoor learning resource and provides a quiet area during play times. Our school council were key in gauging pupil voice in what was needed for that outdoor area.

We now have all the tables needed but need to create resource boxes that support quiet time during playtimes. We have just ordered the storage units and boxes for the area and wondered if you could help fill those?

Huge thanks to the families that have already selected items from our Amazon list.

We wondered whether any other families could help by buying play items from our Amazon wishlist:

<https://amzn.eu/0hhAT241>

[Sports Day – Tuesday 16th June](#)

As you know from the term dates provided at the beginning of the academic year, Sports Day this year is on Tuesday 16th June.

Like in previous years, families are warmly invited to picnic with their children on the school field from 12pm. Please be aware there is no shade and you may need to bring your own parasols/hats/plenty of suncream.

Races will start at approximately 1.15pm and a digital programme will be sent to you in advance. More details will follow soon. We look forward to seeing you weather permitting! In the unfortunate event of Sports Day having to be cancelled, there will be no reserve day for parents, but we will undertake a Sports Day for the children at some point in the half-term when we are able to.

[Year 6 residential](#)

Next week, I will be sending an email with the final details and answers to all your questions from the meeting.

[Castle Hill Fest – Friday 3rd July from 4pm](#)



📣 CASTLE HILL FEST TOMBOLA RAFFLE 📣

Can you help us make this year's Tombola Raffle a fantastic success?

We are looking for donations of new items that can be used as prizes for our raffle at Castle Hill Fest on Friday 3rd July.

Ideas include:

- 🎁 Small toys
- 🍫 Chocolates and sweets
- 🧸 Teddy bears
- 🛁 Toiletries and gift sets
- 🎨 Crafts and stationery
- 🧩 Games and puzzles
- ✨ Any new, unused items suitable as prizes

🏆 Class Challenge! 🏆

The class that collects the most donated items will win either:

- 🎈 Bouncy Castle Tokens OR 🍦 Free Ice Cream!

Every donation, big or small, helps us raise funds and make the event even more special for our children. We will be putting boxes outside each classroom to collect your donations.

If you would like to be a stallholder, please email the FRIENDS for a booking form:

FRIENDSofcastlehill@gmail.com

Have a good weekend.

Mrs. Ettrick

Key upcoming dates for Summer Term 2026

JUNE

Week beginning: Monday 8th June – Phonics Screening Check – Y1

Week beginning: Monday 8th June – Multiplication Tables Check – Y4

Wednesday 10th June – Class photos and Y6 leavers' photos

Tuesday 16th June – Sports Day (family picnic on the field from 12pm – races start at approximately 1.15pm)

Friday 19th June – Y1/Y2 trip to Cotswold Country Park and Beach @ South Cerney

Wednesday 24th – Friday 26th June – Y6 residential – The Pioneer Centre nr. Kidderminster

Thursday 25th June – Y5 camping trip

JULY

Wednesday 1st July – 3.15pm – Packtypes and PAWS event for parents

Friday 3rd July – Y6 theatre trip

Friday 3rd July – Castle Hill Fest (community event)

Thursday 9th July – TRANSITION DAY – all pupils spend the day in their new class

Thursday 9th July – New Reception visits – 'Stay and Play' sessions

Tuesday 14th July – House Team Day (in school pupil event)

Wednesday 15th July – Year 6 Leavers' Party – 3.15 – 5pm (pupils only)

Thursday 16th July – 9am – Y6 Leavers' Assembly

Friday 17th July – TERM ENDS 2pm