THE TOPSHAM SCHOOL

A love of learning and commitment to the success of every child at the heart of all we do.

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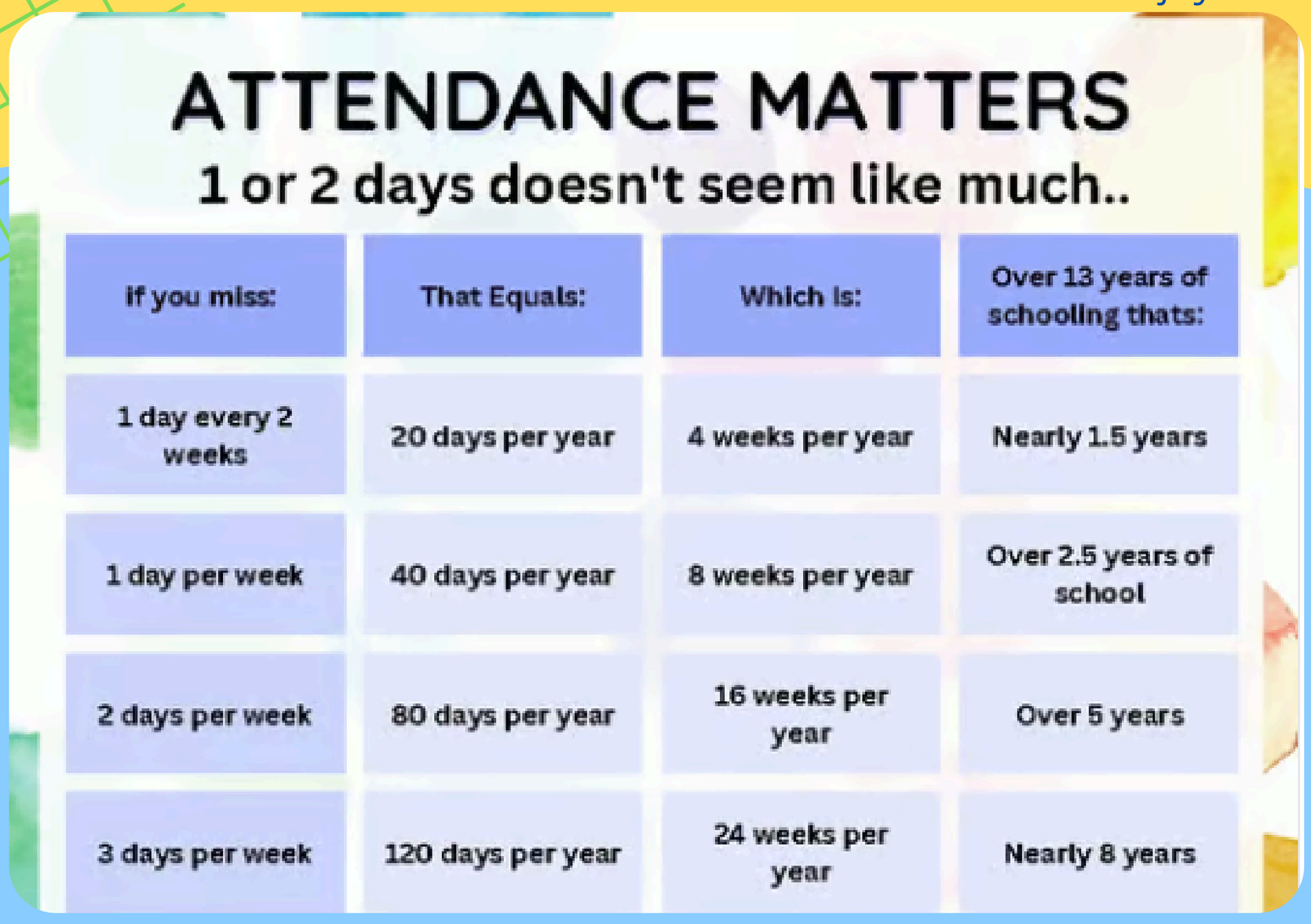
Newsletter

November 2025

Head's Message

The children have been busy since their return to school and I can't believe we are already in the third week of the half term! There is plenty still coming up this month. We are looking forward to welcoming you in to school for parents' evening at the end of the month. The children have been really proud to share their learning with me over the last couple of weeks and we think you will be really proud of their progress when you look at their books at parents' evening too.

This will be a busy week as we also have our Christmas pantomime on 25th for Little Acorns up to Year 6. Last year the performance was totally brilliant, so we can't wait for this year. Does this mean Christmas starts early....? A huge thank you to the PTA for a large contribution towards the cost of this magical event.



The Importance of School Attendance

Why is it so important to attend every day?

Learning is a progressive activity; each day's lessons build upon those of the previous day(s).

Reading the material and completing work independently does not compensate for direct interaction with the teacher.

Many classes use discussions, demonstrations, experiments and participation as part of the daily learning activities, and these cannot be made up by those who are absent.

Are there other benefits to my child?

Pupils with good attendance records generally feel more confident and positive being in school.

Having a good education will help to give your child the best possible start in life and regular school attendance patterns encourage the development of other responsible patterns of behaviour.

What are the risks of frequent absences?

A child who does not attend school regularly will be unlikely to keep up with the work. This can often lead to them wanting to come to school less; their confidence and enjoyment in school is impacted.

What can parents do to help?

Parents can model the value of education, including the importance of regular attendance. Making sure that your child goes to school regularly and arrives on time, will establish a good habit that they will carry through life. Come and talk to school and we can work with you on this.

If your child is ill or must miss school for some other reason, contact school first thing in the morning.

Key Dates

Tuesday 25th November - Pantomime
Tuesday 25th November - Parents' Evening
Thursday 27th November - Parents' Evening
Friday 28th November - Year 6 caving session pm
Friday 28th November - Year 4 Parents' Evening
Tuesday 2nd December - Running Club Santa Run
Friday 5th December - Christmas craft day (wear Christmas jumpers)
Friday 5th December - Year 6 climbing session pm
Friday 5th December - PTA Christmas Fayre
Wednesday 10th December - Christmas Dinner
Thursday 11th December - Christmas carols on the playground 3.30pm - please note change of date
Tuesday 16th December - Reception/KS1 Nativity am (more details and exact timings to follow)
Wednesday 17th December - Reception/KS1 Nativity pm (more details and exact timings to follow)
Thursday 18th December - KS2 Christmas Carols in the Church 2.00pm and 6.00pm
Friday 19th December - Break up for Christmas Holiday (2.30pm finish and Twiglets finishes at 4.30pm)
Monday 5th January - Non-Pupil Day
Tuesday 6th January - Children return to school after Christmas Holiday

NOTE: There are no Christmas Class Parties this year. Instead each class will celebrate with a Cosy Class Christmas, during the week of Monday 15th -Thursday 18th: Details will come out closer to the time.

Breaktime Snack and Packed Lunches:

We encourage families to ensure that their child's snack and/or packed lunch provides a healthy, balanced diet. SWEETS, CHOCOLATE BARS OR FIZZY DRINKS ARE NOT PERMITTED. Guidance on a healthy lunchbox can be found on the Change 4 Life website.
https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/

Exeter Foodbank
Together with Trussell

The Exeter Foodbank would like to thank everyone at Topsham School for the generous donations for the harvest collection.

We managed to collect an incredible 68.4kg of food for this great cause.

CHILDREN IN NEED

The children really enjoyed breaking some of our rules for the day! We saw some fabulous outfits, hairstyles and tattoos!

Thank you for your generous donations both online and in cash. If anyone still wishes to donate, you can do so by using the link below which will remain open until 5th December.

https://app.parentpay.com/ParentPayShop/Foc/Default.aspx?shopid=20280

Strum into something new!

Mr Webster, an experienced and friendly guitar teacher who has taught pupils at Topsham School for many years, has some spaces available to take on extra pupils for guitar lessons.

Book your first session today or find out about lessons for other instruments by contacting Music Devon .

Contact Music Devon

www.musicdevon.com
admin@musicdevon.com
Tel: 01392 466390
Mon – Fri 09:30 – 15:30 during term-time

Aiming Higher, Achieving More, Together!

United in *SEND*

news, guidance & signposting for USF families

In each issue, we will share helpful advice, school updates, and trusted resources to support children with SEND.

Whether you're looking for guidance, local services, or simply some reassurance, United in SEND is here to help you feel informed, connected, and supported.

Together, we are united in supporting every child to thrive.

Signposting & Services

DIAS: https://devonias.org.uk/

Devon Local Offer: https://www.devon.gov.uk/children-families-education/send-local-offer/

Early Help: https://www.devonscp.org.uk/early-help/

Health for Under 5s: https://healthforunder5s.co.uk/devon/services/specialist-support/family-hubs/

Jargon Buster

Article 23- if you have any kind of disability, you should have special care, support and education so that you can lead a full and independent life and participate in the community to the best of your ability.

A child or young person has **SEN** if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for **special educational provision** to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she: has a **significantly greater difficulty** in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a **disability which prevents or hinders** him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Advice Corner

Provision Maps (PMs) are a way for the class teacher to document what extra support a child or group of children are receiving. These, like ILPs, are reviewed regularly. They help the teacher to plan, track progress, and make sure children get the right help.

Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are created for some pupils identified as having additional needs. ILPs are designed for children who require something **additional to or different from** the ordinarily available inclusive provision. The purpose of the ILP is to set SMART targets (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) over a termly period. They are completed by the class teacher with support from the SEND Team and your child's ILP will be shared with you at the start of each new target cycle.

Please do remember:

Any discussions, questions or concerns around your child should always be addressed to their class teacher first and foremost. They are the staff member who works most closely with your child each day.

Our teachers plan and adapt all parts of the day to support our children with SEND.

If the teacher feels they need to involve the SEND team, then this is the next step.

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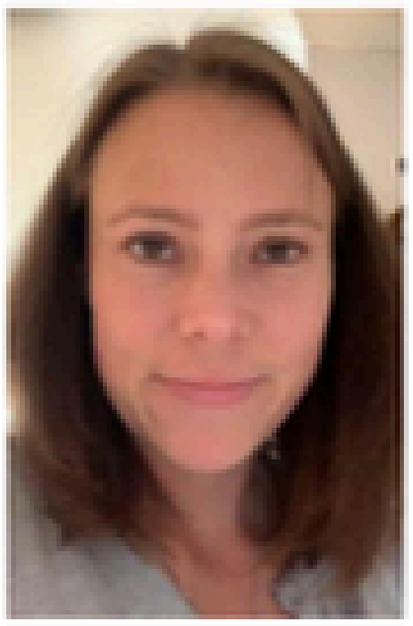
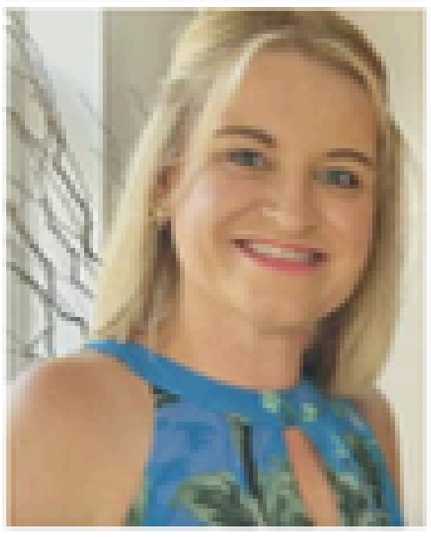


Lizzie Hurford – SENDCo

Usual working days at Topsham – Wednesdays.



Charlotte Williams – Assistant SENDCo

Usual working days at Topsham – Wednesdays.

To contact the SEND Team, please email admin@topsham.devon.sch.uk and this will be forwarded onto us.

Applying for a primary school place for September 2026

Applications for places will open on 15th November for admission into Primary School in September 2026 and you can apply online at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline.

You can apply for a place if your child was born between 1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022.

Applications must be in by 15th January 2026 or they will be considered as late and you may not get a place for your child in a school of your choice.

Please make sure you apply for 3 schools of your choice. If you only apply for one school and do not get a place, your child will be placed in a school where there is a space, which may not be a school you would choose.

Mental Health Matters

Separation Anxiety - A Normal Part of Growing Up

It's completely normal and very common for children to feel worried or upset when saying goodbye to a parent or carer, especially during times of change, like starting school, moving up a year group or returning to school after a holiday. Separation anxiety happens because children feel safest when close to their loved ones, and it can take time to build confidence and trust in their own abilities.

You can help by keeping goodbyes calm and consistent, praising your child's bravery, and talking about what you'll do together later. Short, positive routines can make all the difference.

For more helpful tips, watch this short video from children's mental health charity Place2Be: https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/article/help-your-child-manage-separations-and-goodbyes

COMMUNITY NEWS*

*Please be aware that clicking on links/following web addresses in this section may take you to sites that require payment for the activities advertised. The Topsham School does not endorse any products or events in this section.

MONDAY EVENINGS

KARATE CLASSES

Nancy Potter House
Topsham EX3 0DX
Monday Evenings
6pm-7.30pm

For info & bookings, please email Sensei Dan Curtis
KawaguchiSKC@gmail.com

WE OFFER –

- Self-defense skills
- Discipline & focus
- Physical fitness
- Fun, safe environment
- Classes for ages 6-99
- £5 per child
- Family Discount