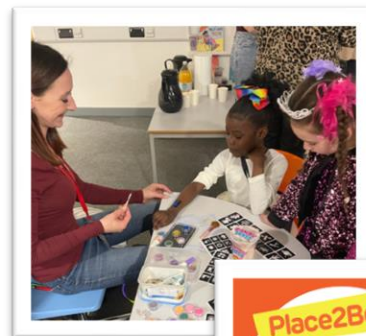


# Nerrols' Newsletter

9<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Dear Parents, Carers and Children,

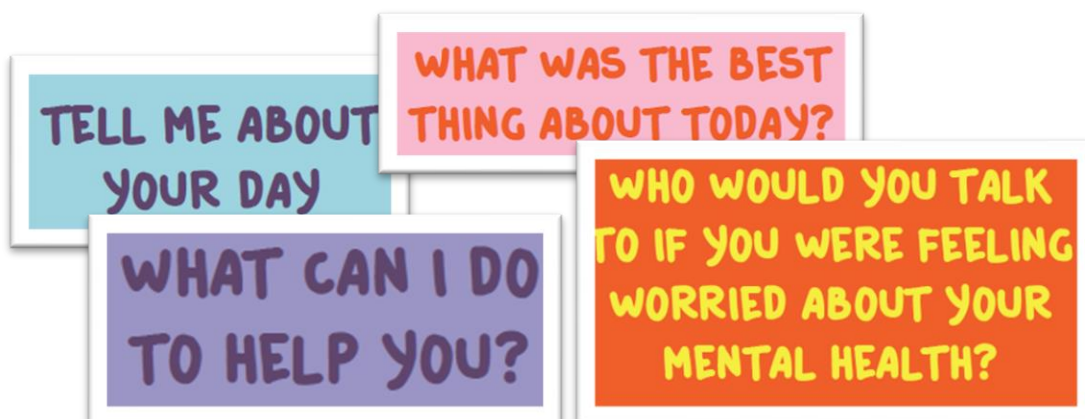
It's been a busy final few days of the half-term here at Nerrols, and one in which we celebrated Children's Mental Health Week. We started with our Friends of Nerrols' 'Love Yourself' School Discos last Friday, which were very well attended again and enjoyed by all the children! A big 'Thank you' to everybody who made it such an enjoyable occasion, and particularly to our Friends of Nerrols team.



This Children's Mental Health Week we want all our children to be able to say – and believe – “My Voice Matters”. Here's some of the things that children and young people have spoken about when it comes to what they need from us as adults:

1. *“We don't need to have 'one-off conversations about our mental health' – sometimes a chat on a journey or at bedtime is enough.”*
2. *“Please listen to me carefully and acknowledge how I am feeling – it might seem silly to you but what I am going through is important to me.”*
3. *“Sometimes I don't want to talk. Please trust that I will come to you (or another grown-up or someone my own age) when I'm ready. Sometimes it's easier for me to talk to someone nearer my own age – my siblings, cousins, friends, younger teachers at school - because they 'get it'.”*
4. *“Don't compare my experiences to your own when you were a child.”*
5. *“Please don't worry about trying to fix things for me – I often just need to know you are there for me and understand what I am going through.”*

Some ways to start a conversation with your child about mental health could be:



If you have any concerns about your child's mental health, please do not hesitate to talk to us.



## Nerrols is the most popular primary school in Somerset!

You may have seen in this week's local press that figures released by the Department for Education (DfE) show that Nerrols Primary School tops the list as being the most oversubscribed school in Somerset, with the number of first-choice applications received nearly double the number of places offered in 2023/24. You can read more about this news here: [Taunton primary school most oversubscribed in Somerset | Chard & Ilminster News \(chardandilminsternews.co.uk\)](https://www.chardandilminsternews.co.uk/taunton-primary-school-most-oversubscribed-in-somerset/)

We are very proud to have such a sought after and popular school, and attribute this to the hard work and high standards of our staff, children and wider community. We are working with the local authority to open up more spaces so that even more local children can benefit from what we do at Nerrols.

We also know that we have already received over 120 applications, and more first-choice applications from parents and carers than last year, for admission to our school for this coming September! I am sure you will join me in feeling an enormous sense of pride and appreciation for making Nerrols such a great place to learn!

## Parents' Evening

It was lovely to see so many parents, carers and children in attendance this week at our spring term Parents' Evenings and making the most of this important opportunity to discuss the children's learning and development. Unfortunately, we did have quite a few appointments missed without letting us know, which can cause delays and missed opportunities to discuss things. We know that things happen from time-to-time and that life is busy for us all, but politely request that if any parents and carers are not able to make an appointment, they simply let us know.

## Parents' Forum

I have spoken regularly about how important it is for us all to work together to help ensure the very best for our children. One of the ways I would like to continue this commitment is to try again to set up a Parents' Forum – a partnership between parents and carers and Nerrols Primary School and Nursery. I believe this could be a valuable way to share ideas, views, concerns and make suggestions for improvement. It will give parents and carers the opportunity to get together on a regular basis (probably half-termly) with other parents and carers – as well as myself and other members of staff depending on the agenda items and what we feel we would like to share, such as new initiatives – to have a say on what Nerrols is doing well and suggest ideas of how things could be improved. The meetings would be informal but minutes would be taken so that others know what is being discussed. It is, however, not the forum to discuss concerns or complaints involving individual children, families or members of staff.

We are looking to select 1 parent or carer from each year group to be a representative for that year group at the Parents' Forum. Any parent or carer of children currently at Nerrols Primary School is welcome to put themselves forward to become a class representative. We will make sure we hold the meetings at different times to try to enable as many representatives to attend as possible. If you would like to put yourself forward as the representative for your child's year group, please let us know by emailing [office@nr.huish.education](mailto:office@nr.huish.education) by 3pm on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March. I look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for your support.

## Academic Calendar 2024/2025

Please find attached to this Newsletter a copy of our term dates for the 2024/2-25 academic year. The new academic year will start for children on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and end on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025. You can also find a copy of our Academic Calendar on our website: [School Term Dates - Nerrols Primary School](#)

## Library books

Please can we ask all parents, carers and children to check at home for any school library books that may have accidentally not yet been returned. Our children love using our School Library regularly and we always want to promote their enthusiasm for reading by providing them with a wide range of books to read. Any book that belongs to Nerrols should have a small sticker of our school logo on the inside front cover of the book. Please could all books that belong to the School and Nursery be returned once they are finished with. Our stock of non-fiction and picture books is looking particularly low at the moment.

## World Book Day – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March

We will once again be joining in with World Book Day celebrations, which this will be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. We are challenging all the children to create a **'Book in a Jar'** to join in with this special day. Any clear jar can be used (for example, a coffee jar, jam jar or other). The children should then put in carefully selected items to represent a book of their choice. Please make sure your child's **'Book in a Jar'** is clearly labelled with the name of the book and their first name and is carefully brought into class on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March. A winner will then be chosen from each class. Parents are warmly invited to view the display in the library at 3.15pm. We have included a few ideas below for inspiration, and you can find plenty more by searching online. Good luck!



## Parking

A reminder to any drivers that use the smaller road that leads to the car park entrance to our School to ensure that they drive and park respectfully and lawfully.

## Staying Safe at Nerrols

Parents and carers are asked to make sure that they have familiarised themselves with the information we sent out earlier this week regarding stopping the spread of coughs, colds and other infections. This important information also informed parents and carers that we are likely to see cases of measles in the South West in the coming months. The best form of defence against measles (and against rubella and mumps) is to make sure your children are up to date with the MMR vaccination.

We remind parents and carers that if your child has a high temperature they should be kept off school until it goes away, and that they should be kept off school for 48 hours after any last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea. This is so that they can make a full recovery before returning to school and so that such illnesses do not spread and impact more children's attendance and learning or result in avoidable staff absences. If you do decide to keep your child at home, it's important to let us know on the first and every subsequent day of illness. Please do make use of our absence voicemail service to let us know your child's name, class and reason for absence by ringing 01823 792655.

We know it can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school or nursery when they are unwell, and there are government guidelines about managing specific diseases which you can find out more about here: [Health protection in children and young people settings, including education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk). If your child has a common cold or minor cough, **it is fine to send them to school**. Please help us to encourage good hygiene practice by reminding the children to throw away any used tissues and to wash their hands regularly. If you think that your child is well enough to go to school or nursery but has an infection that could be passed on, such as a cold sore or head lice, please let their teacher know.

## Online Safety – Mobile Phones

As the age of our oldest children goes up here at Nerrols, we are seeing an increase in the number of children who are bringing a mobile phone to school. We understand that more children are walking to and from school without a parent or carer in preparation for secondary school, and that having a mobile phone on them can help to keep them safe. Our approach at Nerrols is that if children do need to bring a mobile phone into school, it is switched off and handed in at the start of the day to our Main Office and collected at the end of the day. We ask parents and carers to remind their children of our expectations where necessary.

## Holiday requests

We are unable to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, and holiday requests do not fall into this category and will rarely be approved as an authorised absence. In law, parents and carers are committing an offence if they fail to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their children at school. Therefore, any unauthorised absence, such as taking holidays in term time, can result in a Fixed Term Penalty Notice. Failure to pay a Fixed Term Penalty Notice may result in a criminal conviction and a fine in the Magistrates Court of up to £1000. If, after carefully considering all of the above, you still wish to request permission for your child to be absent from school, please complete a leave of absence request form (available from the School Office) and submit the application with any supporting documents. Please note that your



application must be submitted before your child is absent from school, regardless of whether or not it is likely to be unauthorised.

## Office Update

We are delighted that MCAS is now being rolled out for all school parents and can see that lots of families have managed to successfully access their accounts. We will be starting to migrate over to MCAS for bookings and parent communication in readiness for switching off ParentMail. If you have not already done so, we encourage you to download the app and familiarise yourself with it as soon as possible to ensure you do not miss any important information and updates.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you of our school uniform expectations. Details of our uniform requirements can be found on our website ([School Uniform - Nerrols Primary School](#)) Please ensure your child comes to school wearing the appropriate uniform, including their school tie, and brings their P.E. kit as usual.

## Dates for the diary

Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> February	INSET Day – School closed (Nursery remains open)
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> February	First day of Spring 2
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> - Friday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February	Oak Class Residential visit to Charterhouse
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	Deadline for Parents' Forum interest
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day – 'Book in a Jar'
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	Red Nose Day (more information to follow soon)

I wish you all an enjoyable half-term break and will see you when school resumes on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February. Our Nursery, however, remains open next week.



Matt Kerton  
Headteacher