

Vermont News 27 February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we begin a new half term, I would like to take this opportunity to say how pleased we are to welcome all of our children back to school. It has been wonderful to see the pupils returning with such positivity and readiness to learn, and even nicer to see the start of some warmer, drier weather as we move towards the spring months.

We are continuing our school improvement journey with clarity and ambition, rooted firmly in our commitment to securing the very best outcomes for every child at Vermont.

Our recent teaching and learning development work focused strongly on inclusive practice and the individual learning journey of every pupil at Vermont. We have reflected carefully on how we adapt our teaching, scaffold learning effectively and ensure that all children, regardless of need or starting point, experience success, challenge and a true sense of belonging in our classrooms.

There is a strong sense of shared purpose across the school, with a continued focus on high expectations, inclusive practice and supporting every child to thrive.

Today marks Mandy Trayhorn's last day working at Vermont School. We would like to express our sincere thanks to Mandy for all the dedication, care and commitment she has shown in her role as Assistant SENCO. She has worked tirelessly to support our pupils and their families, guiding and supporting them throughout their time here at Vermont and making a lasting difference to our school community. Mandy will be truly missed, and we all wish her the very best of luck in her new role. We would like to share that Sian will be stepping into the role of Assistant SENCO, and we look forward to her continuing this important work and support for our pupils and families.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We are excited for the term ahead and the progress we will make together as a school community.

If you have any thoughts, concerns, or ideas, please don't hesitate to share them with us at tellus@vermontschool.co.uk.

With best wishes,

Kelly & The Vermont Team

Reminders

Some key reminders:

- Children should refrain from bringing personal toys into school. This is because we do not want them getting lost or broken as this causes a lot of upset. Thank you.
- Children should bring plastic water bottles only, metal water bottles are not permitted in school. Thank you.
- With the wet weather forecast to continue, could children come into school with a spare change of clothes and a pair of wellington boots, where possible. Thank you.

Attendance



Each week we celebrate attendance. Our target is 90%

Our whole school attendance this week was 91%

Our class smashing attendance targets this week are: Crocs

Attendance HERO (Here Everyday Ready On Time)

Crocs are our HERO class this week! Crocs will enjoy cakes today to celebrate their attendance. Well done!

You will receive an email every **Friday** with your child's **attendance percentage**. This is to help keep you informed and up to date on your child's attendance throughout the school year.

This year, we are placing a strong focus on attendance, as we know how important it is for every child's learning, progress, and wellbeing. Please know that our Attendance Lead, **Sian**, is here to offer support and guidance if you have any questions or concerns about your child's attendance.

Parents Voice

Kellie Bright, best known for her role in EastEnders, has launched 'Post SEND', a new storytelling project that gives voice to real experiences of SEND. The project invites people to share short, honest reflections by post, with no pressure to write perfectly or in detail, and submissions can be made anonymously. By gathering these personal stories, Post SEND aims to build a powerful collective picture of SEND life.

Read the full article to find out more about the project and how to take part.

<https://www.netmums.com/child/child-health/kellie-bright-launches-powerful-send-project-and-wants-families-to-get-involved-so-real-voices-are-heard>

Our Learning

In English this half term, our children are exploring themes of kindness, empathy and understanding difference through the texts *We Are All Wonders* and *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio.

Across these units, learning centers on understanding perspective, recognising emotions, and reflecting on how our actions affect others. Through shared reading, discussion and reflection, children consider the experiences of others and develop their ability to express their thoughts in a respectful and thoughtful way.

This learning supports pupils' understanding of the protected characteristic of Disability and links closely to British Values, particularly mutual respect and individual liberty. Pupils explore the importance of inclusion, celebrating individuality, and standing up for what is right, helping them to build empathy and positive relationships within our school community.

History

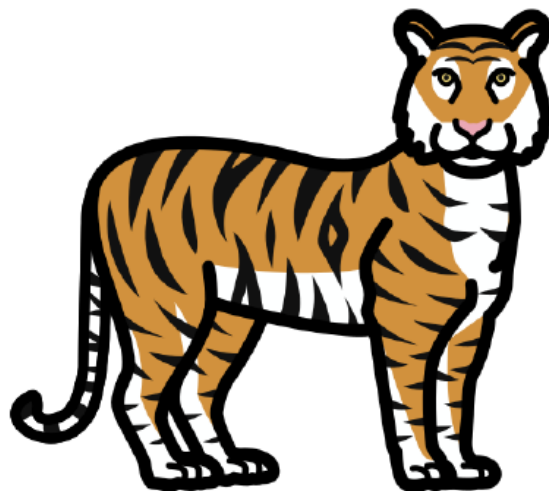
In Spring 2, our Humanities focus is on World War II. In History, we will be learning about the causes of the war, the key events that took place between 1939 and 1945, and the impact it had on Britain and the wider world. Pupils will explore important events such as the outbreak of war, the Blitz, evacuation, and the role of key leaders. We will also look at how the war changed everyday life for people at home and on the front line. Through discussions, source analysis, and project work, children will develop their understanding of how World War II shaped the modern world.

Enrichment Activities

Enrichment

All children at Vermont take part in Enrichment. This is part of our core curriculum offer. We rotate the enrichment activities every half term so that classes get a wide a varied curriculum offer. Enrichment is part of the normal school day and are carefully planned to help children build confidence, manage emotions, develop communication skills, and engage with learning. These activities also help meet the support set out in a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Tigers



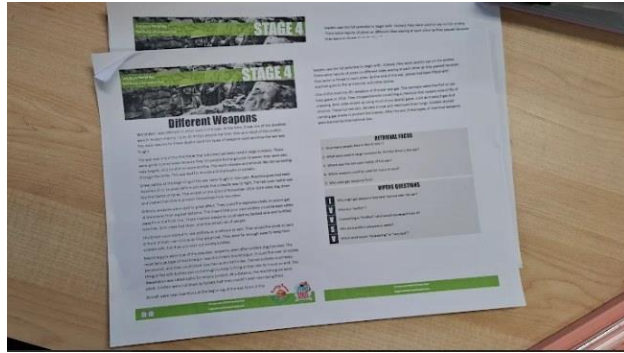
This week in Tiger Class, we have been busy starting some exciting new learning. In Maths, we began our new topic on fractions, where the children have started to explore what fractions

represent and how to identify equal parts. We will be building our understanding over the coming weeks through practical activities and problem-solving tasks.

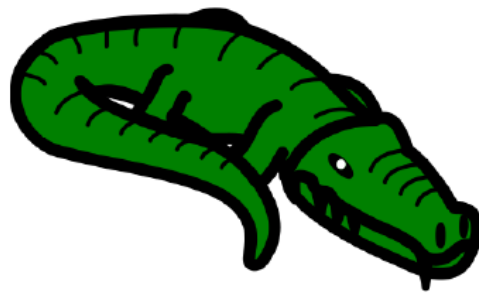
In English, we introduced our new class book, *We're All Wonders* by R. J. Palacio. The children have enjoyed discussing the themes of kindness, inclusion and celebrating differences. We are looking forward to using the story as inspiration for our reading, writing and class discussions.







Crocs



Crocs have had a big week with the transition of class teacher from Mr Ewan to Miss Callen. They have shown wonderful resilience and maturity as they've embraced this change, and we are so proud of how positively they have adapted. This week also marked our very first trip to QE2, with both Mr Ewan and Miss Callen joining the children. On arrival, the children were given a choice of activities and, working together, they chose rock climbing. A few children felt a little nervous at first, but after watching their peers and cheering one another on, every single child gave it a go! It was a fantastic team-building afternoon filled with reassurance, encouragement and plenty of fun. Well done, Crocs! Both Mr Ewan and Miss Callen are incredibly proud of you this week.









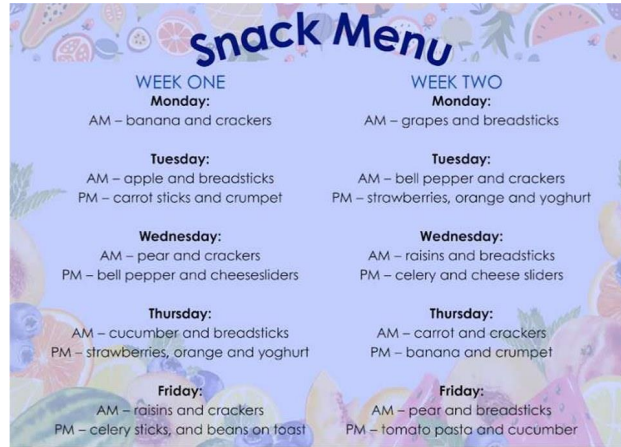






Health and Wellbeing

We have introduced a new snack menu in-line with our mission to be a Healthy High 5 School. These are the snacks we will provide to all children every day.



snack Menu	
WEEK ONE	WEEK TWO
Monday: AM – banana and crackers	Monday: AM – grapes and breadsticks
Tuesday: AM – apple and breadsticks PM – carrot sticks and crumpet	Tuesday: AM – bell pepper and crackers PM – strawberries, orange and yoghurt
Wednesday: AM – pear and crackers PM – bell pepper and cheesesliders	Wednesday: AM – raisins and breadsticks PM – celery and cheese sliders
Thursday: AM – cucumber and breadsticks PM – strawberries, orange and yoghurt	Thursday: AM – carrot and crackers PM – banana and crumpet
Friday: AM – raisins and crackers PM – celery sticks, and beans on toast	Friday: AM – pear and breadsticks PM – tomato pasta and cucumber



The dates and contacts bit

The best way to speak to us about your child:

If you would like to talk about your child's learning please use the home school communication book. Our phone lines are open from 08:30 to 16:00 Monday to Thursday and until 15:30 on a Friday and we commit to responding to your calls and emails within 2 working days.

If you have any concerns, thoughts, ideas, please share them with us at tellus@vermontschool.co.uk.

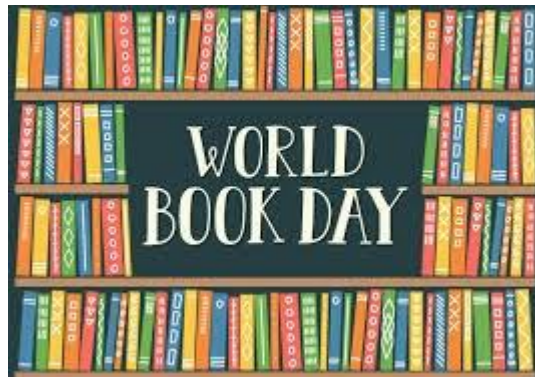
INSET and key dates for this year

- 13th April 2026 - Structured conversation day
- 1st June 2026 - INSET day
- 20th, 21st and 22nd July 2026 - INSET days

Upcoming Dates

- Cultural Day - 26th March
- World Book Day - 5th March

World Book Day



Next week we are excited to celebrate World Book Day in school!

Reading is very important to us, and World Book Day is a fantastic opportunity to celebrate stories, imagination and the joy of books. Although the official day is Thursday 5th March, classes will be enjoying reading activities across the week. Spreading activities out helps us keep children's routines calm and predictable while still making the celebration special.

Each class will be taking part in fun reading-based activities. Children might create their own class book, write a shared story, take a favourite character on an adventure around school, paint and write their own story, or recommend a book to others. There is no expectation for children to dress up, the focus is simply on enjoying books together.

We will also be creating a whole-school reading display to showcase the wonderful work happening in every classroom. Keep an eye out in the next newsletter for photos of our pupils celebrating reading in creative and exciting ways!

We look forward to a week full of stories, creativity and reading for pleasure!

Polygon Transition

Handel Terrace
Southampton
Hampshire SO15 2FH
Tel: 023 80 636776
Email: info@polygon.southampton.sch.uk



Headteacher: Mr Ben Penfold

Year 6-7 Transition Information

24th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

My name is Lisa Bufton and I am the Transition Lead at The Polygon School. I am very pleased to introduce myself as one of the members of staff who will be supporting your child as they move from Year 6 into Year 7.

We understand that transition to secondary school can feel both exciting and worrying for young people and their families, particularly within an SEMH setting. Our aim is to make this process as supportive, gradual and positive as possible. To help your child become familiar with the school, staff and routines, we have planned a number of transition activities across the year.

Please find the key dates and information below:

Wednesday 11th March – Target Review Day

Tours of the school for parents/carers at 10:00am and 2pm.
This is an opportunity to meet staff and look around the school.

Tuesday 19th May (11:00am–12:20pm) Engagement sessions at Polygon School, supported by feeder school staff. Transport provided by feeder schools.

Tuesday 9th June (1:00pm–2:25pm)

Engagement sessions at Polygon School, supported by feeder school staff. Feeder schools will drop off and [parents/carers collect](#).

Tuesday 16th June (1:50pm–3:15pm) – Engagement Sessions

Engagement sessions at Polygon School, supported by feeder school staff. Feeder schools will drop off and [parents/carers collect](#).

Wednesday 1st July (11:40am–1:00pm)

Lunch provided at Polygon. Parents/carers to drop off and collect children.

These sessions are designed to help pupils build confidence, meet key adults, experience different subjects and begin forming friendships before September.

If you have any questions, concerns or information that would help us support your child's transition, please do not hesitate to contact me.

We look forward to welcoming you and your child to The Polygon School and working together to ensure a smooth and successful start to Year 7.

Kind regards,

Lisa Bufton



Year 6-7 Transition Reply Slip

Please complete and return this form to The Polygon School as soon as possible.

Pupil name: _____

Parent/Carer name(s): _____

Contact telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Letter acknowledgement

I confirm that I have read and understood the Year 6-7 transition information letter.

School Tour – Wednesday 11th March

I/We will be attending the school tour:

10 am

2pm

Unable to attend

Number of adults attending: _____

Collection arrangements

I/We understand that parents/carers are required to collect our child on the following dates:

Tuesday 9th June (2:25pm collection)

Tuesday 16th June (3:15pm collection)

Wednesday 1st July (Drop off 11:40 and collect at 1:00pm)

I/We confirm that we are able to collect our child at these times



Handel Terrace
Southampton
Hampshire SO15 2FH
Tel: 023 80 636776
Email: info@polygon-southampton.sch.uk



Headteacher: Mr Ben Penfold

Invitation to Visit [The Polygon School](#) – Wednesday 11th March

24th February 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

As part of our transition programme, we would like to invite parents and carers of pupils currently in Year 5 to visit The Polygon School. This will be an opportunity to learn more about our school, meet key members of staff, and see our facilities in action.

Tours will be led by our Headteacher Mr Ben Penfold, or Deputy Headteacher Mrs Sarah Kinder, on Wednesday 11th March. Two sessions will be available:

- 10 am
- 2 pm

Each tour will last approximately 45 minutes and will include time for questions and discussion about how we support pupils' transition into Year 7.

If you would like to attend, please complete and return the reply slip below by Friday 6th March, to confirm your preferred time.

We look forward to meeting you and sharing more about the opportunities our school offers.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Penfold
Headteacher
Polygon School



Reply Slip – Visit to Polygon School on Wednesday 11th March

Child's Name: _____

Current School: _____

I would like to attend the school tour at:

10 am 2pm

Number of adults attending: _____

Parent/Carer Name: _____

Signature: _____

Contact Number / Email: _____

Please return this slip to The Polygon School by Friday 6th March

|



Road Safety

We would like to kindly remind everyone to please drive slowly and carefully in the school car park and on the surrounding roads. The speed limit is 5mph.

These areas can become very busy with children, families, and staff moving about, and taking a little extra care helps keep everyone safe. We appreciate your patience, awareness, and cooperation in following speed limits and being mindful of pedestrians at all times.

Thank you for helping us maintain a safe environment for our whole school community.

Mobile Phone Safety

Mobile phones are becoming an everyday part of children and young people's lives, bringing many benefits for learning, communication, and staying connected. However, it's important that phones are set up safely and appropriately for a child's age and stage of development.

Parental and adult controls are a key tool in helping to keep children safe online. These controls allow adults to:

- Limit access to age-inappropriate websites, apps, and content
- Set screen-time limits and downtime
- Approve app downloads and in-app purchases
- Monitor or restrict contact with unknown users

Most smartphones and tablets include built-in parental control settings, and mobile network providers also offer filters that can block adult or unsuitable content. Taking time to set these up when a child first gets a phone can make a big difference.

Locking down phones to age-appropriate content doesn't mean removing independence, it's about creating a safe digital environment. Controls can be gradually adjusted as children grow older, helping them learn to manage technology responsibly while still having appropriate safeguards in place.

Alongside technical settings, open conversations are just as important. Encourage children to talk about what they see online, who they communicate with, and to ask for help if something makes them feel uncomfortable. Reminding them not to share personal information and to think carefully before posting or messaging can help build good digital habits.

By combining parental controls, age-appropriate settings, and regular conversations, we can help children enjoy the benefits of mobile technology while staying safe and supported.

Roblox

We have been informed of a pop-up message appearing within Roblox that encourages children to download an external app called Pollybuzz (sometimes shown as Pollyfuzz). Although the app appears harmless at first—asking simple questions and creating an AI “friend”—it has been reported that, after initial use, it begins to display extremely inappropriate and unsafe content, including references to suicide, self-harm, and pornography.

We advise that conversations with your child regarding:

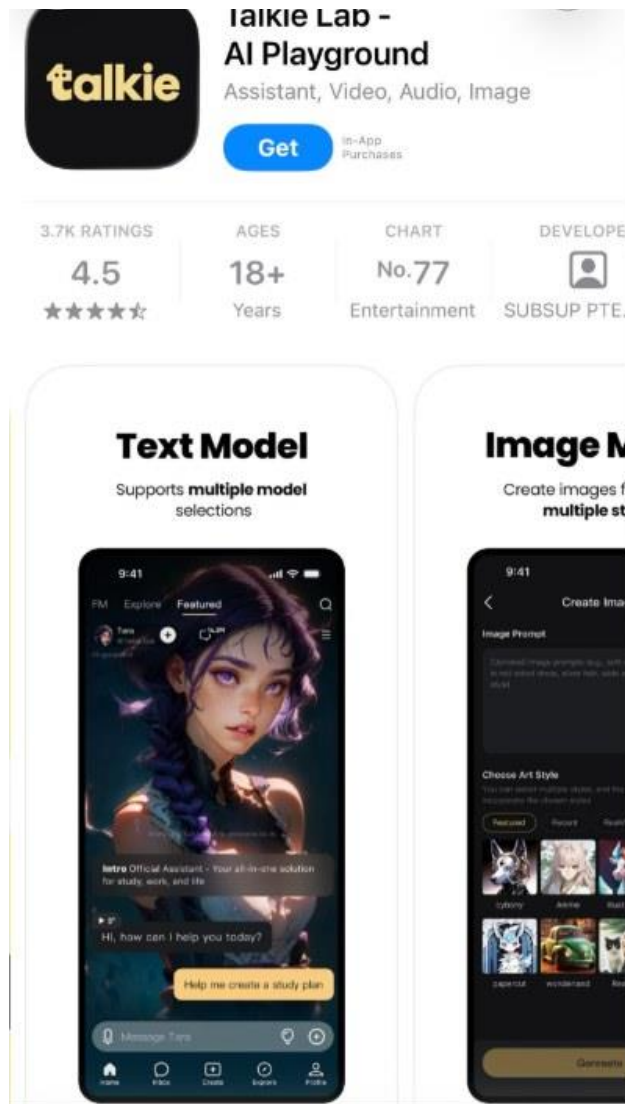
- Not to click on pop-ups or download anything that appears while they are playing games.
- To tell a trusted adult immediately if they see or experience anything online that makes them feel worried, confused, or uncomfortable.

Roblox does offer a range of parental control settings, which can help reduce risks. Guidance on how to set these controls can be found on the Roblox Support page under Parental

Controls <https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/30428310121620-Parental-Controls-Overview>

The Talkie app

Talkie is not appropriate for children to access. The app allows unrestricted conversations with AI characters that may include mature themes, suggestive language, emotional manipulation, or content that is not age-appropriate. Due to limited safeguards and the potential for exposure to adult topics, Talkie is better suited for older users and should not be used by children without strict parental supervision.



Thrive


The children at Vermont School are here because they have an education health and care plan which has social emotional and mental health as one of their primary areas of need. The Thrive approach is about having an understanding of neuroscience (brain development), children development and attachment theory.

We identify possible gaps in development and help to fill those gaps using a creative and playful approach. Thrive is preventative, reparative, pragmatic and easy to use.

Thrive Practice

Each and every one of our children will benefit from Thrive practice and we currently have two Thrive Licensed Practitioners in training at the school: Miss Louisa and Miss Alana. The changes that Thrive has brought about can already be seen in the language used with children and also in the activities that children take part in as all our pupils are already making fantastic progress.

Please take a look at our website - under curriculum for full details of what Thrive looks like at school. If you would like to find out any more about Thrive, please let us know at tellus@vermontschool.co.uk.



Embracing Thrive: a parent and carers guide

The Thrive Approach®
For over 25 years, Thrive has been working with schools, settings and organisations to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Thrive equips educators with training, resources and an award-winning online tool, so they can better understand children and young people's needs and provide targeted, effective support.

With its focus on building secure relationships and providing positive experiences, Thrive helps young people to feel safe, supported and ready to learn.

Building positive relationships
The connections children and young people have with the adults around them are key to their social and emotional development. Thrive activities focus on providing positive experiences and building trusting relationships. This helps young people to:

- Feel good about themselves and know that they matter
- Feel safe and secure in school
- Improve their emotional wellbeing
- Improve their capacity to be creative and curious
- Build their self-esteem and confidence to learn
- Recognise and manage their feelings
- Think before behaving in a certain way...and much more!

thrive
Removing barriers to learning

How does it work?

Thrive equips educators with strategies and activities to help build young people's social and emotional skills, as well as develop their ability to manage stress and take on life's ups and downs.

The Approach is underpinned by neuroscience, attachment theory and child development research and is suitable for children and young people aged 0-25 years.

What difference does Thrive make?

Schools that have adopted the Thrive Approach have reported many benefits. These include calmer classrooms with fewer disruptions, improved attendance, reduced exclusions and higher achievements. To hear first-hand from settings already using Thrive, visit mythrive.uk/case_studies.

How will my child be involved in Thrive?

Your child will be profiled using Thrive-Online, an award-winning tool used to measure and monitor social and emotional development. Thrive-Online has behaviour and skills surveys that help staff to see where young people are in their development and identify any pupils who could benefit from additional support.

Thrive-Online profiling will be led by school practitioners who will:

- Assess classes, groups and individuals to see where they are in their social and emotional development
- Create targeted action plans to help pupils to manage their behaviour, build emotional resilience and become more open to learning
- Measure and report on progress over time

Find out more

There is lots more information on the Thrive website: thriveapproach.com.

"Thrive has helped my son tremendously. It has given him more confidence and also it has helped him to calm down in difficult situations. I can see a huge difference in him. He looks forward to his Thrive time."

Parent

thrive
Removing barriers to learning



News from around the city

Scarlett's Smiles
SPOTLIGHT UK
Creating positive memories

Easter Fun



28th March - Ninja Warrior Southampton - 6pm - £6.50
1st April - Oceans of Play Havant - 2pm-3.45pm - £3
2nd April - Bowling in Eastleigh - 2pm - £3.50
3rd April - Ninja Warrior Southampton - 1pm - £6.50
3rd April - High Score Southampton - 1pm - £6.50
4th April - Bowling in Eastleigh - 6pm - £3.50
4th April - Ice Skating Gosport - 3pm - £5
6th April - Air Extreme Havant - 1pm - £5
6th April - Monkey Bizness Southampton -
6.15pm-8.15pm - £2.50

For more details please email activities@spotlightuk.org

Southampton Parent Carer Forum invites you to...

SEND Family Fun Day 2026

Tuesday 31st March - 10am to 2pm

For Children and Young People:
Bouncy Castles, face painters
Unicorn, bubbles and lots more ...

For Parent Carers:
Range of **Local offer Service providers** for
advice, ideas and support

Refreshments for all (drinks, fruit, biscuits and ice
cream are all free, there will be a food van with
food for sale)

To register



Oasis Academy Mayfield, Ashley Crescent,
SO19 9NA - Free Parking

 For more information
follow us on Facebook



Influencing
Positive
Changes

Easter Fun






7th April - Bowling in Southampton - 6pm - £3.50
 7th April - Bowling in Portsmouth - 6pm - £3.50
 8th April - Flip Out Portsmouth - 2pm - £6.50
 8th April - Rock Up Whiteley - 6pm - £5
 9th April - Ninja Warrior Southampton - 1pm - £6.50
 9th April - High Score Southampton - 2.30pm - £6.50
 9th April - Bowling in Eastleigh - 6pm - £3.50
 9th April - Bowling in Fareham - 6pm - £3.50
 9th April - Monkey Bizness Gosport - 6.15pm - £2.50

10th April - Ice Skating Gosport - 3pm - £5
 11th April - Family Swim Romsey - 1pm - £3.50

For more details please email activities@spotlightuk.org



No booking needed.
No cost. Just drop in

This Week at Re:Minds


23-27th of February

No need to book for a support group, just pop in and stay as long as you want

Weston Support Group


For parents and carers of children who are neurodivergent and/or have mental health needs

10am
Monday, 23rd of February






A safe, welcoming space to connect with other parents and carers who share similar experiences.



Meet others who understand, and get advice and support from our trained staff with lived experience. You can also find out more about the wider support and projects we run across the city.



The Hope Centre, Drayton Close, Weston, SO19 9JN
Onsite parking available & fully accessible.

With thanks to:



Next Week at Re:Minds

2nd-6th of March

No need to book for a support group, just check the events section of our Facebook group or email us to receive the link to join

With thanks to:



No booking needed.
No cost. Just drop in

Virtual Support Group

For parents and carers of children who are neurodivergent and/or have mental health needs

6:30pm
Monday
2nd March



This is a chance to get advice, support and meet others who understand what you are going through from the comfort of your own home.

If you would like some individual advice we can use a breakout room to speak to you during the meeting.

The zoom link will be shared in the events section of our Facebook group, or emailed on request.



JOIN US
CELEBRATE
**WE ARE
TURNING**
17

15th APRIL 2026
JOIN US IN A
DISNEY DRESS
DOWN DAY TO
RAISE MONEY FOR
LOCAL CHILDREN

Scarlett's Smiles
SPOTLIGHT UK
Creating positive memories

SOUTHAMPTON EL CONFERENCE



ELSA: 25 Years of Making a Difference

**KEYNOTE
CONFIRMED!**

Adrian Faupel & Liz Herrick

We are hugely excited to announce Adrian and Liz as our keynote speakers. As key Educational Psychologists involved in the introduction of Emotional Literacy support across our city, we can't wait for them to tell the story of the birth of the ELSA project, helping us consider the context, aims and principles of EL support 25 years ago and contemplate the parallels of our contemporary world.

£150 per person

- 4 for price of 3 for settings, trusts, or clusters booking multiple spaces.
- EP/SEA time can be exchanged for tickets (0 tickets = 2 spaces).
- Lunch and refreshments included!

SPECIAL OFFER!
We're giving you 10% off!

PRICE MATCHED FOR 2026

LUNCH AND REFRESHMENTS INCLUDED

PLUS FREE ON-SITE PARKING

BOOK NOW!
(click or use QR code)



★ 'Think', 'Feel' and 'Do' Workshops

Whether it's learning about the research base behind ELSA, trying out / adapting / developing EL tools and approaches, or focusing on your wellbeing and resilience in work – there will be positive take-aways for all from our 3 workshops.

★ Time to 'Connect and Compare'

With 80-100 delegates, our EL conference provides a great chance to network with fellow ELSAs and wider education colleagues who share our passion for all things EL.

— I really enjoyed all aspects of it...
— I learnt a great deal and came away with lots of ideas and resource ideas to use with my school setting...
— I loved the keynote speech, the baked Potato and the opportunity to meet others...
— A very exciting day full of useful content and time to make connections.

Wednesday 15th April 2026

9:00am - 3:30pm

(Highpoint Conference Centre, Bursledon Road, Southampton, SO19 8BR)

jackie.holgate@southampton.gov.uk
edsayer@southampton.gov.uk



Southampton Psychology Service