

# Vermont News 24 April 2026

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

This week, the children have done exceptionally well in embedding the new timetable across the school. It has been a pleasure to see how quickly they have adapted and embraced the changes with such positivity. The quality of learning taking place throughout the school continues to be fantastic, and I am incredibly proud of the work the children have been sharing, as well as the pride they take in their achievements.

We have also enjoyed celebrating St George's Day this week. The children were enthusiastic about learning who St George was and why this day is celebrated, making it a meaningful and engaging experience for all.

As the weather becomes warmer, please ensure your child has suncream applied before school and brings a hat with them each day to stay safe in the sun.

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

**With best wishes,**

Kelly & The Vermont Team



April 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

### Permanent change to the school day

We are writing to let you know that the early finish, Monday at 1:45pm will now be a permanent change to our school day. We initially trialled this change for a year.

Recently, we held a consultation where we asked families, pupils, staff, and other colleagues to share their view.

After such a positive impact, we have now made this change permanent.

#### Feedback

The feedback from all stakeholders of our school has been hugely positive.

- 81% of parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the school day being shorter on a Monday
- 83% of children were in favour of keeping the shorter Monday

Children have adapted well to the change and we in school have seen a huge positive impact to their learning. This change means teachers have more time to plan good lessons and give pupils the help they need. This helps make learning better for every child.

Our teachers have been able to use the non-contact time to develop their teaching practice and collaboratively work together on strategies to embed learning across the school.

#### Why are we making this change?

Last year, some classes had to close because we didn't have enough staff, which disrupted pupils' learning. This year we haven't had to close any classes, so pupils have had steady, uninterrupted learning. We've also seen that pupils' behaviour has been more settled because routines have been more stable. We are delighted to celebrate that we have not had to close any classes this year due to staffing.

#### School transport

School transport will continue to collect children from school at 1:45pm on a Monday.

If you have any worries or questions, please contact us. We are always happy to help. Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully,

Hannah Craggs  
Interim Chair of Governors

Kelly Moss  
Interim Head of School



## Reminders

### Some key reminders:

- Children's clothes should all be clearly labeled with their name so they can be returned to the right child if removed
- 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.

## Attendance



Each week we celebrate attendance. Our target is 93%

Our whole school attendance this week was 88%

Our class smashing attendance targets this week are: Orangutans

### **Attendance HERO (Here Everyday Ready On Time)**

Orangutans are our HERO class this week! Turtles 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.

## Headteacher's Award



**Oscar G** - Pandas - A fantastic attitude towards learning, and self motivation to improve your handwriting. Well done we are so proud of you!

## Headteacher's Special Mention

**Jai W** - Elephants - Working really well in class all week. Well done we are so proud of you!

## St George's Day

Next week at Vermont, we'll be getting into the spirit of St George's Day with a fun and engaging range of activities! The children will be learning all about who St George was and why he is remembered, alongside exploring exciting dragon stories that spark imagination and discussion.

We'll also be getting creative with themed arts and crafts, giving pupils the chance to express themselves while celebrating this special day. It's set to be a lively, colourful week full of storytelling, creativity, and discovery!

## SATs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-stage-2-national-curriculum-tests-and-results-information-for-parents/2025-key-stage-2-national-curriculum-tests-information-for-parents>

Date	Test
Monday 11 May 2026	English grammar, punctuation and spelling papers 1 and 2
Tuesday 12 May 2026	English reading
Wednesday 13 May 2026	Maths papers 1 and 2
Thursday 14 May 2026	Maths paper 3

## Important dates September 2026 -July 2027

### INSET days

- 1st September 2026
- 22nd January 2027
- 25th June 2027
- 19th, 20th and 21st July 2027

### Structured conversation days

- 2nd and 3rd September 2026
- 12th April 2027

## 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.

## 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).

## Pandas



This week in Pandas Class, the children have begun an exciting new focus in English, writing persuasive speeches about kindness inspired by our class book, *Wonder*. They have shared incredible ideas about why kindness is so important and the positive impact it has on others. It has been wonderful to see the children experimenting with new writing techniques, including using conjunctions and adverbs to expand their ideas and opinions, rhetorical questions to engage the reader, and powerful emotive language to strengthen their arguments.

In Maths, we are in the final few weeks before SATs for some of our children, with a strong focus on ensuring they feel secure and confident in the knowledge needed for their arithmetic and reading papers.

Meanwhile, other children in the class have been consolidating their understanding of multiplication and division, as well as developing their learning around height and length. In Geography, we have started our new topic, *Parks, Gardens and Nature in My Area*. The children have been comparing Southampton to the Amazon Rainforest and were fascinated to discover there are more similarities than you might think!

The class has shown excellent teamwork, focus, and perseverance this week while completing their Mickey Mouse puzzle. They approached the challenge with enthusiasm and collaborated thoughtfully, supporting one another to ensure the task was completed successfully within the week. It was particularly pleasing to see the children take shared responsibility, communicate effectively, and celebrate their progress together.

In our classroom, we always have a puzzle on the go, providing a continuous opportunity for children to develop problem-solving skills, patience, and cooperation. These shared tasks encourage collaboration and give the children a sense of achievement as they work towards a common goal. We have also been revisiting the difference between physical and human features and identifying examples we can find in Southampton.

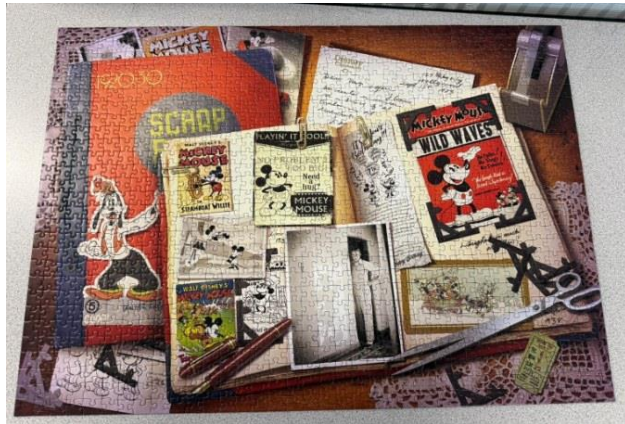
The children have also enjoyed new experiences in PE and outdoor learning. This week, the class took part in a game of rounders, and it was fantastic to see such strong communication and teamwork throughout the lesson.

Finally, the children have begun their new enrichment activity, Sports 2 Aspire. This week they took part in a range of activities and had the best time! It has been a joy to see their enthusiasm, resilience and teamwork shining through across so many areas of learning.

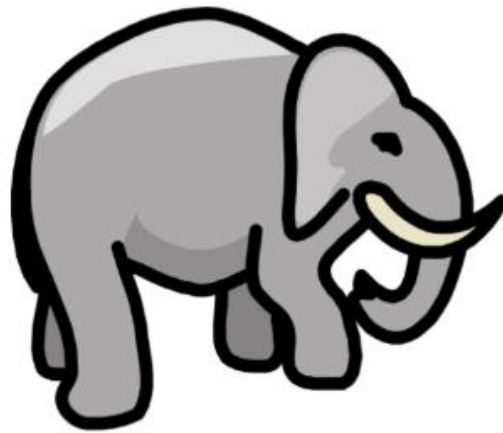








## Elephants



This week has been full of exciting activities and sunshine!

We had a fantastic trip to QE2 where the children took part in canoeing. Everyone showed great teamwork, confidence, and enthusiasm while out on the water—it was wonderful to see them trying something new and supporting each other.

Back at school, we've been getting our hands dirty in the best way by planting sunflower seeds with Miss Shelley. The class is looking forward to watching them grow over the coming weeks and learning more about plants and how they develop.

To top it all off, we've been making the most of the recent change in weather by spending time sunbathing and relaxing on the playground. The children have really enjoyed being outdoors and soaking up the sunshine.

It's been a joyful, active, and memorable week for everyone!





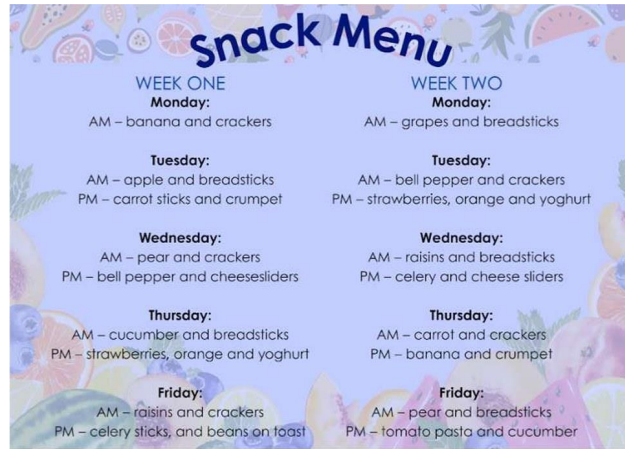
## City Catering

Please click the link below to view the City Catering Newsletter - April 2026

<https://sway.cloud.microsoft/SOGkSKCBSwyJMr2z?ref=email>

## 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.



### **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](mailto:tellus@vermontschool.co.uk).

## INSET and key dates for this year

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

## 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.

## Online gaming and You Tube

We would like to draw parents' and carers' attention to some recent online trends that may appear child-friendly at first glance but contain themes that are not suitable for younger audiences.

One example is The Amazing Digital Circus, a popular animated series currently circulating on platforms such as YouTube. While its bright visuals and cartoon style may appeal to children, the content includes darker psychological themes, unsettling imagery, and moments of distress that are more appropriate for older viewers. It is not specifically designed for young children, and unsupervised viewing may lead to confusion or anxiety.

In addition, a new trend within the game Minecraft has emerged, often referred to as "Chinese water torture." Despite the name sounding abstract or historical, this trend involves players creating scenarios intended to simulate distress or discomfort. These themes can be inappropriate and may expose children to ideas or situations that are not age-appropriate.

We encourage all parents and carers to remain vigilant about the content children are accessing online. Many platforms use algorithms that may recommend videos or trends without considering a child's age or sensitivity. Taking time to review, discuss, and guide children's digital experiences can help ensure they are engaging with safe and appropriate material.

If you have any concerns, consider exploring parental controls, setting viewing boundaries, and having open conversations with children about what they encounter online.

## 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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



## News from around the city



### This Week at Re:Minds 20-24<sup>th</sup> April

To book in for an advice clinic, please email [info@reminds.org.uk](mailto:info@reminds.org.uk)

With thanks to:



### CAMHS Advice Clinic

10am Thursday 23rd April

#### About the Clinic

Book a private, 10-minute virtual appointment to speak with a clinician about any issues covered by CAMHS.

This clinic is led by the Southampton Specialist CAMHS service and is open to all Re:Minds members seeking general advice.

To book your advice slot, please email:

[info@reminds.org.uk](mailto:info@reminds.org.uk)





NHS  
Hampshire and Isle of Wight

No booking needed.  
No cost. Just drop in

# Sholing Support Group

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



**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 Community Hub,  
Valentine Primary School,  
Valentine Ave, Sholing,  
Southampton SO19 0EP

Access via the entrance to the  
community room to the left of the  
main entrance, near Botley Road.



For dates and details, visit:  
[www.reminds.org.uk](http://www.reminds.org.uk) or scan  
the QR code

SOUTHERN  
**Daily Echo**

## Help Your Local School **WIN EQUIPMENT!**

Get ready to participate in our exciting  
token collect competition and help your  
school stand a chance to win amazing prizes.

# Collecting Tokens Here

Drop your tokens to reception!

Collect tokens printed in the Southern Daily Echo from  
Monday 11th May until Friday 3rd July 2026.



**Terms and Conditions:** Newsquest terms and conditions apply. Visit Newsquest Prize Competition Rules and Newsquest Privacy Policy for more information. No Photocopies Accepted: Only original tokens will be counted. Only registered schools can enter, and no two schools can combine their token collections. Prizes are non-transferable and no cash alternative is available.

Scarlett's Smiles  
**SPOTLIGHT UK**  
Creating positive memories

£7 tickets per person

## High Score Arcade Southampton



Saturday 2nd May  
2.30pm-3.30pm

103 East St, Southampton SO14 3HH

Bookings must be in advance please email  
[activities@spotlightuk.org](mailto:activities@spotlightuk.org)  
[www.spotlightuk.org](http://www.spotlightuk.org) Reg Charity 1129258



## ROCK UP WHITELEY

Wednesday 6th May  
5.30pm-7pm

Children aged 4-16 years £6.50 - Adults £7

Whiteley Shopping Centre, Whiteley Wy, Whiteley,  
Fareham PO15 7PD



Please book at [book.spotlightuk.org](http://book.spotlightuk.org)  
[www.spotlightuk.org](http://www.spotlightuk.org) Reg Charity 1129258



4 years and over  
£8 per person

## NINJA WARRIOR



SATURDAY 2ND MAY  
6-7pm

Antelope Park, Bursledon Rd, Thornhill,  
Southampton SO19 8NE

THIS IS AN EXCLUSIVE BOOKING FOR SPOTLIGHT UK  
Bookings must be made in advance to  
[activities@spotlightuk.org](mailto:activities@spotlightuk.org)  
[www.spotlightuk.org](http://www.spotlightuk.org) Reg Charity 1129258



# FAMILY ICE SKATING

**Saturday 25th April 3-4pm**

£8 including skate hire

Planet Ice, Gosport



Please book via email - [activities@spotlightuk.org](mailto:activities@spotlightuk.org)  
For more information visit the events calendar on our website  
[www.spotlightuk.org](http://www.spotlightuk.org) Reg Charity 1129258