

# ST BURYAN ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

Friday 28th March 2025

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## Key Dates

Please check the school calendar through our website regularly - more dates will be added as the term goes on

Please check the key dates below for upcoming events. New dates may be added across the term so please check our lines of communication when notified.

**Congratulations!**

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO ATTENDED OUR SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR.**

Together we have raised... **£190!!!**  
for our school to spend on **FREE BOOKS**

**SCHOLASTIC**

### In this edition...

- Welcome
- Recent photos
- Catherine Barr book orders
- 2025/25 Term Dates
- Yearly Dates
- 20 is plenty reading tips
- Staying safe using Roblox
- Using technology to support reading

### INSET DAYS 24/25

Sept 3rd and 4th 2024

June 6th 2025

July 21st, 22nd, 23rd 2025

Welcome to our newsletter!

As always, it has been an incredibly busy and productive few weeks here at St Buryan.

In our last newsletter we shared how Mrs Pascoe and Mrs Semmens had dropped off tooth hygiene kits for all of our children, including nursery. Children have now received these and we hope that they have helped promote positive teeth hygiene with your children. You may have seen that the government released information on dental hygiene and rolling toothbrushing support in some schools, so it is great that we have had St Buryan WI supporting us with this already! 1 in 5 children aged 5 have already experienced tooth decay due to poor diet and poor hygiene, with that becoming 1 in 3 children in more deprived areas. It is really important that our children are supported with this to ensure that they are healthy and do not face problems with teeth hygiene now, or as they get older. For more information on tooth hygiene you can visit this helpful page on the Boots website: <https://www.boots.com/healthhub/oral-health-advice/childrens-teeth-cleaning-advice>

We have had a real focus on our reading over the past couple of weeks, tying in with World Book Day and then our own 'St Buryan Book Day'. We had a wonderful time dressing up as our favourite characters, as a word or in comfy reading clothes! On the day we worked collaboratively to complete a book character scavenger hunt in teams with everyone getting a prize! Well done to Ada, Rosezena, Rex, Morgan, Harvey, Ella and Lettie who won the book cover bunting competition for their year groups - each earned a voucher to spend at our Scholastic Book Fair which was held that week and run by our Friends of School. Everyone had the chance to buy some great books of various genres and the money raised has helped us buy £190 worth of books for the school. Thank you to our Friends of School for organising the event and to all those who supported the fair.

Staying on the reading and book theme, this week we were lucky enough to be visited by the author, Catherine Barr and her team. She is completing a tour of Britain and we were lucky enough to be one of her first stops along the way. She shared some of her amazing books, inspired by wildlife, and we carried out some wonderful activities linked to her books. Each child has been sent home with an order form to purchase signed copies of her books - we have extended the deadline to purchase these to Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March. If you have misplaced the form, there is one attached to the newsletter.

We have had lots of sporting success over the last couple of weeks too. Our year 5 and 6 swim teams competed extremely well at the recent gala, with Lettie picking up a silver medal. Our year 1s have taken part in a cricket festival, KS2 have competed in hockey fixtures and we have had Cross Country County Finalists! Well done to both Lettie and Lily G who were selected to compete at the county finals in Newquay. Unfortunately Lettie picked up an injury and couldn't compete, but Lily achieved a really impressive 21<sup>st</sup> place finish!

Have a great weekend, Mr McDonald and all at St Buryan Academy







# ST BURYAN ACADEMY

## Key dates

# 2024

### September

- 5th – First Day back!
- 20th – Fitness Day
- 25th – Outdoor Learning Day

### October

- Black History Month
- 4th – World Animal Day
- 9th – Stay Safe Workshop
- 10th – World Mental Health Day
- 21st-25th – Parent Meetings
- 22nd – Healthy Cornwall Workshops
- 28th-1st Nov Half Term
- 29th-3rd Nov – Diwali

### November

- Diwali
- 11th – Armistice Day
- 13th-17th Anti Bullying Week
- 14th – Open Afternoon/Learning together

### December

- 16th – Christmas performances dress rehearsal
- 17th – Christmas Dinner
- 18th – Morning Christmas Show
- 19th – Evening Christmas Show
- 20th – Christmas Paryy and last day of term (1:30pm finish)

### January

- 6th – Back to school
- 13th – Year 6 SATs meeting

### February

- 3rd-10th – Children’s Mental Health Week
- 7th – NSPCC Number Day
- 17th-21st – Half Term

### March

- Women’s History Month
- 4th – Open afternoon/learning together
- 6th – World Book Day
- 12th – Outdoor Learning Day
- 14th & 15th – Holi
- 21st – World Poetry Day
- 24th-28th – Parent Meetings

### April

- 4th – Last day of term (1:30pm finish)
- 22nd – Back to School

### Key contacts

- Mr. Josh McDonald  
Head of School
- Designated Safeguarding Lead  
head@stburyanacademy.org
- Mrs. Care  
Business and Administration  
Parent Liaison Officer  
secretary@stburyanacademy.org
- Mrs. Joanna Kwiatkowska  
SENCo
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead  
joanck@stburyanacademy.org

All other contacts are available on our website



### May

- 12th – Year 6 SATs week
- 19th – Year 5/6 London Trip (proposed date)

### June

- 2nd – Multiplication Check week
- 6th – INSET day
- 9th – Phonics Screening Check period begins
- 19th – Outdoor learning day
- 23rd – Year 1-4 residential week (proposed dates)

### July

- 4th – Sports’ Day and fete
- 11th – Reports out
- 15th – Year 6 Leavers’ Service
- 18th – Last day (1:30pm finish)!

### Key Information

Please note that dates are subject to change and more may be added across the course of the year.

PE every Tuesday

Swimming every Thursday morning (children may come to school in PE kits these days)



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## 2025/26 INSETS:

- Monday 1st September 2025
- Monday 20th October, Tuesday 21st October, Wednesday 22nd October, Thursday 23rd October, Friday 24th October 2025
- Monday 26th January 2026
- Friday 24th July 2026

September 2025						
Mon		1	8	15	22	29
Tue		2	9	16	23	30
Wed		3	10	17	24	
Thurs		4	11	18	25	
Fri		5	12	19	26	
Sat		6	13	20	27	
Sun		7	14	21	28	

October 2025						
Mon		6	13	20	27	
Tue		7	14	21	28	
Wed	1	8	15	22	29	
Thurs	2	9	16	23	30	
Fri	3	10	17	24	31	
Sat	4	11	18	25		
Sun	5	12	19	26		

November 2025						
Mon		3	10	17	24	
Tue		4	11	18	25	
Wed		5	12	19	26	
Thurs		6	13	20	27	
Fri		7	14	21	28	
Sat	1	8	15	22	29	
Sun	2	9	16	23	30	

December 2025						
Mon		1	8	15	22	29
Tue		2	9	16	23	30
Wed		3	10	17	24	31
Thurs		4	11	18	25	
Fri		5	12	19	26	
Sat		6	13	20	27	
Sun		7	14	21	28	

January 2026						
Mon		5	12	19	26	
Tue		6	13	20	27	
Wed		7	14	21	28	
Thurs	1	8	15	22	29	
Fri	2	9	16	23	30	
Sat	3	10	17	24	31	
Sun	4	11	18	25		

February 2026						
Mon		2	9	16	23	
Tue		3	10	17	24	
Wed		4	11	18	25	
Thurs		5	12	19	26	
Fri		6	13	20	27	
Sat		7	14	21	28	
Sun	1	8	15	22		

March 2026						
Mon		2	9	16	23	30
Tue		3	10	17	24	31
Wed		4	11	18	25	
Thurs		5	12	19	26	
Fri		6	13	20	27	
Sat		7	14	21	28	
Sun	1	8	15	22	29	

April 2026						
Mon		6	13	20	27	
Tue		7	14	21	28	
Wed	1	8	15	22	29	
Thurs	2	9	16	23	30	
Fri	3	10	17	24		
Sat	4	11	18	25		
Sun	5	12	19	26		

May 2026						
Mon		4	11	18	25	
Tue		5	12	19	26	
Wed		6	13	20	27	
Thurs		7	14	21	28	
Fri	1	8	15	22	29	
Sat	2	9	16	23	30	
Sun	3	10	17	24	31	

June 2026						
Mon		1	8	15	22	29
Tue		2	9	16	23	30
Wed		3	10	17	24	
Thurs		4	11	18	25	
Fri		5	12	19	26	
Sat		6	13	20	27	
Sun		7	14	21	28	

July 2026						
Mon		6	13	20	27	
Tue		7	14	21	28	
Wed	1	8	15	22	29	
Thurs	2	9	16	23	30	
Fri	3	10	17	24	31	
Sat	4	11	18	25		
Sun	5	12	19	26		

August 2026						
Mon		3	10	17	24	31
Tue		4	11	18	25	
Wed		5	12	19	26	
Thurs		6	13	20	27	
Fri		7	14	21	28	
Sat	1	8	15	22	29	
Sun	2	9	16	23	30	

- 2025/26 INSET DAYS
- FIRST DAY OF 2025/26 SCHOOL YEAR

# 20 is plenty!

Children who read for **20 minutes** a day will...

Improve  
focus and  
concentration

Have a world of  
imagination and  
creativity  
opened to them

Have  
stronger  
writing skills

Improve and  
strengthen  
memory

Be exposed to  
**1.8 million**  
words a year

Have a  
broad  
vocabulary

Have better  
general  
knowledge

Improve  
test results

Improve  
communication  
skills

Encourage  
a love for  
learning

Learn how to  
develop  
empathy

Improve  
critical  
thinking skills

Have  
reduced  
stress levels



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# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING TECHNOLOGY TO BOOST READING SKILLS

The way we engage with text has changed dramatically over the years. Whether reading captions on social media, instructions in a video game or an e-book on a digital device, technology plays a major role in modern literacy. While traditional books remain invaluable, digital tools can enhance reading skills by making text more accessible, interactive and engaging.

## 1 CHOOSING THE RIGHT TYPE OF TEXT

Before integrating technology, consider the types of text that a child engages with. If they need help on occasion, digital reading pens can assist by scanning and reciting words or sentences. These tools are especially useful for students with reading difficulties, and can even be used in exams if they're part of their routine learning process. Proper training and practice are required, but they can be a great help when tackling printed text.

## 2 READING ON SCREEN

Many devices now allow users to customise text for better readability. Adjusting font type, size and background colour can significantly enhance comprehension. For many readers, white text on a black background is the easiest to see, whereas other styles – such as dyslexia-friendly fonts – are designed to help those who are struggling. Teaching children how to personalise text settings on their devices empowers them to read more comfortably and with greater confidence.

## 3 ACCESSIBILITY TOOLS

Most modern devices include built-in tools designed to support readers. These features can be found in Settings under Accessibility and may include text-to-speech, speech-to-text and screen magnification functions. Enabling these tools can make digital reading more user friendly, especially for children with learning difficulties or visual impairments, who might have an easier time with spoken language than the written word, or who might simply require a closer look at the text.

## 4 INTERACTIVE READING PROGRAMMES

Many digital reading devices, such as Kindle and other e-readers, offer features like word highlighting, adjustable text speed and built-in dictionaries. These tools help learners to break down complex words and phrases while maintaining an appropriate reading pace. Some programmes even allow users to track their progress, making reading a more structured and motivating experience.

## 5 VIDEO GAMES AND READING SKILLS

Many video games require players to read instructions, character dialogues and mission objectives, making them an unexpected but effective literacy tool. Games that involve storytelling, puzzles or problem-solving often include large amounts of text – encouraging children to read these texts aloud or discuss them can improve their comprehension and vocabulary in a fun, engaging way.

## 6 SUBTITLES AND CLOSED CAPTIONS

Watching videos with subtitles or closed captions is an effective way to enhance reading skills. As children watch their favourite shows or online videos, they can follow along with the text, gaining a better understanding of how written words sound when spoken aloud. This is particularly beneficial for reluctant readers, as it exposes them to words in a familiar, engaging context. Repeatedly watching content with subtitles reinforces word recognition and comprehension.

## 7 USING AUDIOBOOKS

Audiobooks are an excellent way to develop listening and reading skills simultaneously. Children can follow along with the text while listening to a narrator, reinforcing word recognition and fluency. For struggling readers, listening to an audiobook before attempting to read the text independently can boost their confidence and comprehension.

## 9 TEXT-TO-VOICE TECHNOLOGY

Text-to-voice software reads digital text aloud, making it easier for learners to follow along. Most smartphones, tablets and computers come with this function built in. When enabled, users can highlight a passage or sentence and press Play to hear it read aloud. This tool is particularly helpful for auditory learners and those who struggle with decoding written words.

## 8 VOICE-TO-TEXT FOR WRITING AND READING

Voice-to-text tools allow users to dictate words, which are then transcribed into text. This feature helps children see the connection between spoken and written language. By using text-to-voice to have their dictated words read back to them, learners can identify mistakes and improve their reading and writing skills simultaneously.

## 10 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

While social media provides opportunities for reading, most platforms have age restrictions of 13–16 years old, making parental guidance essential. Many social media videos include captions and comments that can encourage reading. However, it's important to use the platform's parental controls (such as time limits and content filters) to create a safe and educational online environment for children. Encouraging responsible social media use can ensure a balanced and productive approach to digital literacy.

## Meet Our Expert

Catrina Lowri is a qualified special needs teacher and experienced SENCO. She recently launched her own site, Neuroteachers, which offers a library of short, 'how-to' and explanation videos for educators. Catrina also writes and delivers online training and events for multi-academy trusts, businesses, schools and training organisations.



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# What Parents & Educators Need to Know about

# ROBLOX



Roblox is one of the most popular video games among children. In 2020, the game's developers claimed that more than half of the USA's children had played it. As a 'sandbox' title, the game lets players create their own gaming experiences with Roblox Studio to build custom levels, which can then be shared online.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### ONLINE PLAY RISKS

Because Roblox connects random players across the world, it can put younger players into an environment with anonymous users who could use the platform for nefarious reasons. For example, some role-play games are used for online dates and mature role play, which could expose youngsters to inappropriate messages in the public chat box.

### MATURE CONTENT

Content is difficult to moderate throughout Roblox, due to the number of games available. This is particularly notable on smaller games and experiences, but in summary, some of the games and experiences offered on the platform contain age-inappropriate content that could easily be seen by young players.

### IN-GAME SPENDING

The majority of games within Roblox have extensive monetisation options, usually through season passes or microtransactions. Purchases can range in value from a few pennies up to much larger sums of money. While some games offer a lot of content via purchases, others can offer very little for real world money, causing younger players to end up out of pocket.

### ANONYMOUS PLAYERS

The anonymity of users can leave players vulnerable to bullying, harassment, and predatory behaviour. Without the right parental controls or monitoring, users can connect with each other via personal messages or friend requests, and it is very difficult to know who's behind a username in this vast online world.

### RISK OF ADDICTION

Roblox games can feature rewarding or satisfying mechanics that keep players coming back – or persuade them to stay logged-in for much longer. Like most games, they focus on interactivity, with constant rewards via in-game unlocks and currencies, which can sometimes lead to an addictive need to remain online for long periods of time.

### SCAMS

Many of the games on Roblox feature collectible items, pets, or characters. These objects, while digital, are worth a lot of real money on certain online markets. Scammers will attempt to trade with younger users in the hopes of getting rare items that can be sold for real money, manipulating the child into handing them over, usually via misleading information.

## Advice for Parents & Educators

### MONITOR THE CONTENT

While Roblox does implement plenty of moderation tools and parental controls, it's up to parents and guardians to monitor the types of games a child or impressionable player is experiencing. If a youngster wants to play Roblox, be sure to check out which specific games they want to play within it, and get a good idea of their content.

### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF TOOLS

Use the parental controls within the game itself and teach youngsters how to report and block other players. Knowing the powers within their reach will make Roblox a safer, happier experience. You can set age ranges for who's allowed to contact you, close public chat boxes, block spending, and even make your Roblox profile completely private. All these options are helpful in cutting off bad actors from engaging with children.

### PLAY TOGETHER

Consider playing Roblox with the children in your care. There are few more effective ways to see how monetisation works, gauge whether the game could lead to addictive behaviours, or even witness how interaction between players works, than sitting down and trying the game for yourself. This should help you figure out whether it's suitable for particular children.

### TEACH ONLINE BEHAVIOURS

Have an open conversation about the risks of online play and how to spend money wisely. By being honest and giving tips on how a younger user can protect themselves, you can empower them to not only take care of themselves, but others too. Any user can be reported to Roblox moderators by other players for behaving inappropriately. With this knowledge, younger players can be aware of what to look for and help prevent it.

### Meet Our Expert

Dan Lipscombe is a videogame journalist and author of over 20 books on gaming, including books on Minecraft, Fortnite, Roblox, and more. For 15 years he has been writing about his passion for gaming. When he's not playing games, he's talking about them at GAMINGbible.

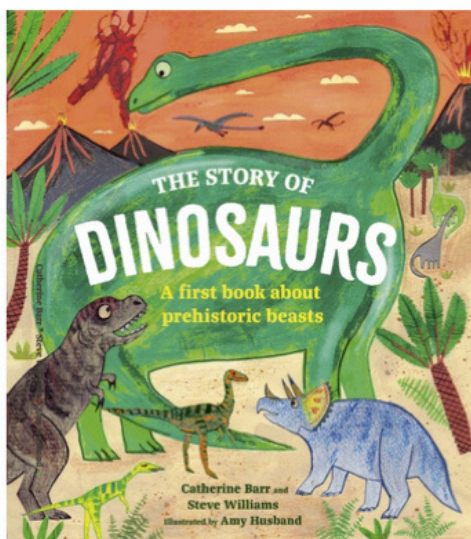


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Class: .....

Amount paid: £.....