Stoke Holy Cross Primary School
Long Lane | Stoke Holy Cross | NR14 8LY
E office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk
T 01508 493132

January 2026

I hope you all had a very enjoyable Christmas and New Year.
We are looking forward to another busy and productive term at Stoke Holy Cross with lots of exciting events and activities. Please make sure you check the diary dates on this newsletter.

New staff

Mrs Leeming and Mrs Thorogood are settling in with their new class and enjoying being part of the Stoke team.

Children's Mental Health Week

Children's Mental Health Week will take place from 9th February - 15th February 2026. Look out for further details.

Tuesday singing assembly

Tuesday is singing assembly day at Stoke. Every week, we gather in the hall to learn and sing an eclectic mix of traditional, 'classic' and modern songs. Below is our current list of songs:

Mamma Mia by Abba
Three Little Birds by Bob Marley
One More Step Along the World I Go
Help and Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da by The Beatles
Give Me Oil in My Lamp
Colours of Day

Thank you to Mr Claxton for leading the singing assemblies.

Morning Interventions

Just a reminder for anyone attending the Morning Intervention sessions across the school, that these begin at **8.20am**. We appreciate that it is sometimes difficult to leave the house in the morning for a whole host of reasons, but we have recently had children arriving at 8.30, which means children are not receiving the maximum impact from the sessions.

Suggested reading lists

We often get asked for book recommendations and suggestions for what children could read next, depending on their current year group. To help you navigate through the hundreds of thousands of possibilities next time you visit the library or book shop, here are some year group appropriate links with suggestions.

https://www.thereaderteacher.com/reception
https://www.thereaderteacher.com/year1
https://www.thereaderteacher.com/year2
https://www.thereaderteacher.com/year3
https://www.thereaderteacher.com/year4
https://www.thereaderteacher.com/year5
https://www.thereaderteacher.com/year6

Uniform Policy

Governors have recently reviewed and approved the Uniform Policy 25-26. We have taken a common-sense and fair approach to uniform, for example not insisting on clothing with the school logo and simple PE clothing for Lower School of white T-shirt and black shorts, so we are not adding further stressors to busy family lives. That said, all staff have been asked to monitor the uniform that is worn to school and will contact parents and carers where there are concerns. (We understand there are exceptions and we work with individual families to support uniform needs.)
https://stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/SHCPS-Uniform-Policy-Nov-25.pdf

Inclusion news

The staff at Stoke Holy Cross have recently attended a workshop about Feelings and Wishes. This is when a familiar adult works with a child to find out how they are feeling. It might be that the child has seemed a bit sad or worried or we have noticed a change in how they are getting on at school and we want to identify ways that we can help them. Feelings and Wishes work needs to be child-centred so we use a range of tools including drawing pictures, talking or using playdough. We feel it is really important that children are given the space and time to talk. For those of you who are not familiar with Just One Norfolk, there are lots of really helpful resources on there to support parents. Here are a few of our favourites:

Neurodevelopmental Digital Library https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/nd-digital-library/

https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/emotional-health/parental-emotional-health/parental-wellbeing/

https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/webinars-online-events/ (webinars including supporting your child to manage their anxiety and supporting your child to manage their big feelings)

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School
Long Lane | Stoke Holy Cross | NR14 8LY
E office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk
T 01508 493132

World Book Day (early warning!)

World Book Day 2026 is on Thursday 5th March.

As always, we would like to offer children the chance to dress-up as their favourite book character this year. We are aware that many of our children love to take part in this and will already have their outfit planned. However, this isn't a requirement as we are aware that organising an outfit for World Book Day can often prove to be a significant headache for parents!

Regardless of whether your child comes to school dressed-up or not, there will be lots of other activities which everyone can do in class (and at home) to mark the day.

Look out for more details and information.

Wrapping up warm for the winter weather!

Staff have seen that several children have not brought back their suitable outdoor clothing (warm coats and wellies), since the winter break. Please ensure these items are available, as we only keep a small amount of spare clothing, due to space restrictions.

Wellies

All classes have a' welly rack' so children have a change of footwear for playing on the field at break and lunch time. *Remember, no wellies, no playing on the field.*

Bad Weather

Any school closure will be shown on the Norfolk County Council website, http://schools.norfolk.gov.uk under **Emergency School Closures**.

Parents' Evening

A reminder that these will take place, face to face, on Wednesday 15th April within the hours of 3.30-7.30pm and Thursday 16th April within the hours of 3.30-6.30pm.

The general consultations will be 10 minutes. Where children have a Learning Conversation document to support their special needs, the paperwork for the Learning Conversations will be sent to you prior to the meeting so you can respond, devise questions etc., that can be discussed and recorded in the 15-minute consultation.

We appreciate the opportunity to see all parents and carers across these two evenings. Please endeavour to sign up to one of the two consultations, as these evenings are allocated as part of

the teachers' directed working time. Rearranging or offering appointments at other times can be difficult to organise.

If you need to speak to a teacher at other times, please email office@ to book an appointment.

Lower School have yellow communication books for quick messages, and these can be posted in the red post box in the entrance, to save you time waiting to speak to a member of staff in the office.

Teachers will phone, email or arrange in-school meetings. We are trying not to have confidential discussions at the gate (KS2) or on the ramp (Lower School), as staff are supervising the receiving or departing of children.

A reminder, that when parents/carers are on the school site or in-school for meetings, cafes, assemblies (or anything else), we expect them to adhere to our Parent/carer and visitor behaviour policy which can be found here:

https://stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/SHC-Parent-Carer-and-Visitor-Behaviour-Policy-2025-2028.pdf

Hobart Swimming Gala – 10th December, 2025

Excitedly, we boarded the fancy minibus, LED lights, Christmas songs, friendly driver, all setting the mood for the swimming gala at Hobart. The foot warmers were a highlight!
When we arrived, there were many other others schools taking part, nonetheless our own expectations were not lowered.
The Hobart Sports Leaders were very supportive and friendly, making sure we got to the pool safely.
The pool felt safe, as there were so many sports leaders to make sure we didn't drown. ('Good we didn't drown, or we wouldn't be able to write the report!' Maggie.)
There were freestyle, breast stroke, butterfly and back stroke races. Maggie was a step-in for someone ill so had no choice but to do butterfly! With a bit of coaching from George, Maggie put in a sterling effort.
Towards the end of the gala, we had to choose 6 swimmers from each year group, for the team relay.
We can't forget the final activity – the floaty relay race – you had to be there to understand! It required a leap of faith and was a great finale to the event.

Y4,5,6 competitors	Medal for first place		
Y4 Henry	Front crawl	Back stroke	The final result was Stoke Holy Cross – 2nd place.
Y4 Otto	Breast stroke		
Y5 Ella	TBC		
Y6 Lewis	Breast stroke		
Y6 George	Front crawl		
Well done to all the competitors, who pushed their personal boundaries and swimming strength to make this event one to remember. What a team! Y4 – Fern, Poppy, Henry, Otto Y5 – Ella, Elodie, Frank, George Y6 – Catherine, Maggie, Lewis, George			

Sports reporters: Maggie Y6 and George Y6

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School
Long Lane | Stoke Holy Cross | NR14 8LY
E office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk
T 01508 493132

Swimming

Weekly swimming sessions take place on Tuesday mornings at Hethersett Primary School throughout the Autumn and Spring terms, for groups of children in KS2. If your child is currently attending school swimming lessons, please ensure they come to school with swim wear under their uniform, a towel, a swimming hat, **underwear** and all earrings removed. Being able to swim to the KS2 standards is a statutory requirement so it is important that all children attend their lessons and come fully equipped to take part. Thank you for your co-operation.

(Thank you to Mrs Mahoney and Miss Colbeck-Rowe for supporting the children during their swimming lessons.)

MSA vacancy

We currently have a vacancy for a Midday Supervisory Assistant and/or relief assistants for Ad Hoc days. If you are interested, please contact the school office for an application form.

Illnesses and reporting an absence

We are hopefully coming to the end of the season of coughs, colds and illness, but just a reminder that if your child is unwell, please report their absence by 8.30am each morning on the automated absence line. Please give their name, class and full details of the illness, we will contact you to ask for more information if the message left is under the weather/feeling poorly!

Parking outside school

Although the pavilion car park has reopened, we have continued to receive concerns and complaints about the parking actions of our parents and carers.

The main issues are people parking directly opposite the school/just beyond the zig-zags and also parking over the solid white line outside the field gate.

Although there is nothing 'legal' to stop people doing this, we feel it is a moral duty to park safely around school – we have all seen the issues that poor parking results in with traffic jams along Long Lane at the start/end of the day, making it a dangerous place to cross safely.

Here are some reminders so that we can make sure everyone stays safe:

! Please do not park opposite the zig zags, as this causes an obstruction to traffic, people and children crossing the road.

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School
Long Lane | Stoke Holy Cross | NR14 8LY
E office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk
T 01508 493132

- Please do not park close to junctions.
- Please do not turn in the school car park entrance or use the staff car park (unless given specific permission from the school).
- Please do not park or wait in front of the entrance to the car park, this must be kept clear at all times.

If any of our parents/carers have concerns about the parking they witness around school, please contact 101 to report your worries.

Allergies: we are a nut and sesame free school

Please remember that we have a number of children with food allergies and so ask that no products containing nuts are brought into school or in lunch boxes (this includes seeded bread or rolls with sandwiches). Please check ingredients lists on anything you may be uncertain about.

Break Time Snack

Thank you to everyone who is sending children in with a vegetable or fresh fruit break time snack. Free fruit is available to Lower School children. Also, please remember to pack a bottle of water (please speak to your child's class teacher if your child will not drink water).

School attendance

6th January 2026 – 16th January 2026

Year	Attendance	Absence	Minutes Late
Year R	99.54%	0.46%	12
Year 1	97.92%	2.08%	70
Year 2	98.78%	1.22%	65
Year 3	97.31%	2.69%	105
Year 4	96.18%	3.82%	28
Year 5	95.98%	4.02%	77
Year 6	96.15%	3.85%	59
Overall	97.34%	2.66%	416

If you need to request a leave of absence for your child (e.g. medical appointments) forms, where possible, must be completed prior to the absence. Forms are available on the website at

https://stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Leave_of_Absence_Request_2025-26-1.pdf

or you can pick up a paper copy from the school office.

School Dinners

We ask that you order all meals for the following week, on a Friday before 9am. Upper School parents must have credit on their account to be able to make the order. You are still able to be flexible about the days you choose.

Please note, that when Parents and Carers book after the deadline, your meals will not be included in the order because required meal numbers go to Norse Caterers on Fridays.

Lost Property

Lost, unnamed property is kept on a rail in the foyer. **If items are named, we always try to return to their owner.**

What's on the horizon…?
Diary dates: -

Wednesday 28th January – Reception – Maths Learn Together
Thursday 29th January – Year 6 Sports Hall Athletics – Framingham Earl High School
Monday 2nd February – Year 3 Egyptian Day
Tuesday 3rd February – Year 6 – Writing Learn Together
Wednesday 4th February – Year 6 WW2 Day
Monday 9th – Sunday 15th February – Children's mental health week – theme to follow
Wednesday 11th February – Reception – Phonics lesson drop in
Thursday 12th February – Year 4 – Ancient Greek Day
Friday 13th February – School Closes for half term
Monday 23rd February – School reopens
Thursday 26th February – Year 1 - Maths Learn Together
Monday 2nd March – Year 1 & 2 Dance Festival – Hobart High School
Friday 6th March – Year 2 – Maths Learn Together
Wednesday 11th March – Year 4 – Writing Learn Together
Friday 20th March – Year 5 – Writing Learn Together
Wednesday 25th March – Year 3 – Writing Learn Together
Friday 27th March – School closes for Easter
Tuesday 14th April – School reopens

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School
Long Lane | Stoke Holy Cross | NR14 8LY
E office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk
T 01508 493132

Further details to follow…

Community Notices:

Norwich Swan Swimming Club provides high quality Learn to Swim lessons for children aged 4 years + in the Norwich area 7 days a week.

The Club operates the Swim England Learn to Swim Programme which is the leading national teaching syllabus for delivering safe, inclusive and effective swimming lessons for all ages.

The structured and progressive content aims to develop confident and able swimmers with a focus on having fun and enjoying being in the water.

The Programme provides motivation and support for children at every level, from their first splash to gaining their enhanced aquatic skills.

Swimming is the only sport to be included within the national curriculum physical education programme of study.

All primary schools must provide swimming and water safety lessons in either Key Stage 1 or 2 and each pupil is required to be able to do the following:

- Perform safe self-rescue in different water based situations
- Swim competently, confidently and proficiently over a distance of at least 25 metres

- Use a range of strokes effectively, for example, front crawl, backstroke and breaststroke.

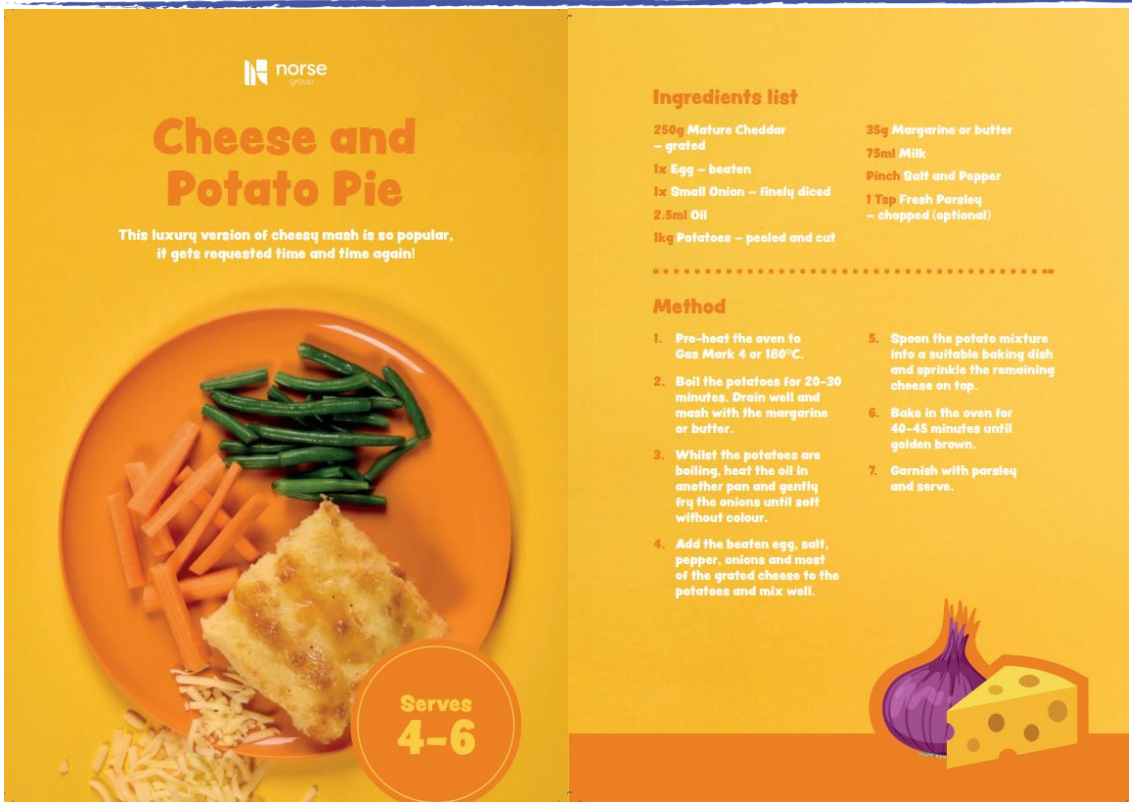
Within our lessons children will be able to achieve these requirements.

We are a not-for-profit club and offer affordable monthly payments for our lessons (rather than requiring termly payments like many other swimming lesson providers)

Our venues include:

- **Broadland High School**
- **Colman Junior School**
- **Drayton Primary**
- **Heartsease Primary Academy**
- **Hethersett Junior**
- **Sprowston High**
- **Thorpe St Andrews High**
- **Town Close prep**

All the information and a booking enquiry form can be found here:
https://uk.gomotionapp.com/team/reczznssc/page/learn-to-swim/learn-to-swim

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School
Long Lane | Stoke Holy Cross | NR14 8LY
E office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk
T 01508 493132

Stoke Holy Cross Primary School
Long Lane | Stoke Holy Cross | NR14 8LY
E office@stokeholycross.norfolk.sch.uk
T 01508 493132