

**We LEARN with PRIDE**

Priory Junior School, Priory Road, Gedling, Nottingham, NG4 3LE
Head Teacher: Mr. J. Cross

Newsletter – 6.3.26**Key Dates – Spring Term**

Friday 20th March: Rock Steady Concert

Friday 20th March: Non-uniform day (see flyer below)

Friday 27th March: Easter Egg Raffle

Monday 9th March: Assessment Week (Yrs 3-5)

Monday 16th March: Assessment Week (Yrs 3-5)

Tuesday 24th March – Thursday 26th March: Parents' Evening (Please look out for information about this next week)

Additional dates for Year 6 (Sorry Year 6!)

Year 6 Assessment Week: Week Beginning 23.03.2026

Year 6 Mock SATs week: Week Beginning 27.04.2026

A couple of weeks since our last newsletter... and so much to say! In the time since our last newsletter there has been a residential, a trip, an art award win... Just so much amazing stuff! Please enjoy this week's newsletter.

Year 4 Rand Farm Residential:

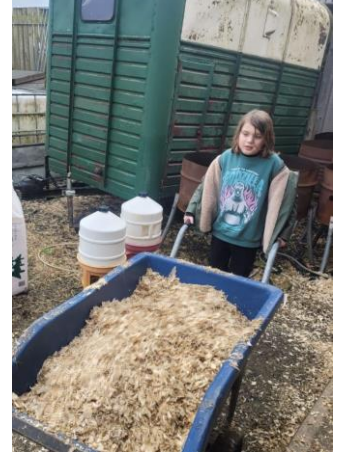
Year 4 had a brilliant residential visit to Rand Farm Park, where they got a real taste of life on a working farm and learned more about where our food comes from. Highlights included helping with jobs around the farm, feeding the animals, making pizzas and even bottle-feeding lambs— a busy, hands-on experience that had everyone smiling (and talking about it non-stop upon their return). The number of children who told me “Mr. Cross, that was the best residential ever!” made me incredibly jealous to have missed it.

There was time for relaxing, too. The children enjoyed playing on the playground areas and racing around the indoor soft play, before taking on activities like archery. A huge thank you to all staff who supported the trip — you did a fantastic job. Most importantly, the children were a credit to our school, showing great teamwork, kindness, and brilliant behaviour throughout.



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Year 5 Cinema Trip

The children in 5G enjoyed a special trip to the cinema, awarded to the class with the most improved attendance. It was a brilliant way to celebrate their hard work and commitment — and they loved sharing popcorn, laughs, and a great film together.

Regular attendance really matters because every school day counts. Being in class daily helps children keep up with learning, practise key skills like reading and maths, and feel confident as lessons build from one day to the next. It also supports friendships, routines, and wellbeing. Even a few missed days can make it harder to catch up, so we're encouraging all families to keep aiming for the best attendance possible — thank you for your continued support.





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OPAL Updates



Our OPAL lunchtimes have been full of energy, teamwork, and wonderfully muddy fun! Pupils have been sweeping up muddy areas using our new brushes and mops, taking real pride in looking after the playground and keeping it safe for everyone. There's also been some brilliant den building using loose parts — including old and broken school chairs — with children planning together, problem-solving, and turning “junk” into something imaginative. We've loved seeing pupils having fun with wheelbarrows, scooters, and even wheelchairs as part of their play, as well as creating a muddy slide for the ultimate mucky adventure!

The photos this week show how OPAL is all about giving children the chance to explore different play types — like imaginative play, physical play, creative play, social play, and “risky” play (where children challenge themselves sensibly and safely). This kind of varied play is really important for wellbeing: it helps children build confidence, manage feelings, practise friendships, and develop resilience. When pupils can choose how they play, they feel more independent and included — and they come back into class happier, calmer, and more ready to learn.

OPAL Donations needed

Building Materials

- Wooden pallets, Planks or offcuts of wood, Cable reels, Milk crates or bread crates, Large cardboard tubes, large barrels, old spades.

Role Play Items

- Old suitcases, Handbags or backpacks, Hats, costumes, Old phones or keyboards

Outdoor / Physical Play

- Tyres (clean, no metal wires showing), Guttering and pipes, Rope, Tarpaulins or large sheets

Small World Play



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- Toy cars, Toy animals, Small dolls or action figures



A huge thank you also goes to our Playteam staff, who work incredibly hard every day to make playtimes safe, welcoming, and full of opportunities for fun. They're outside with the children in all weathers.

We're also really pleased to share that our Playteam now have brand new all-weather coats, so they can stay warm and dry while supporting the children outdoors. This helps us keep play going all year round, because fresh air and active play are so important — and it means both children and staff can enjoy being outside whatever the weather brings!

Amazing Artwork

Zackary (Y6) has created a stunning oil painting portrait of his mum (our Lovely Miss Ellis) which took him four days to complete, and it has now been submitted to the 2026 Royal Academy of Arts Young Artists' Summer Show. The judging and decisions will take place in May, so we're all keeping our fingers crossed that his piece is selected. If chosen, Zackary's artwork will be exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in London — what an incredible opportunity! Absolutely fantastic work, Zackary — we are all so proud of you.



The Royal Mint Short Story Competition

Do you have a budding author aged 7–11 at home who is always scribbling stories, filling notebooks with imaginative ideas, or dreaming up magical worlds? This exciting short story competition from The Royal Mint Museum is a wonderful chance for young writers to let their creativity shine. Writing to a real brief can build confidence, develop imagination and give children a powerful sense of achievement — and with fantastic prizes on offer, there's even more reason to take part. Whether your child already loves storytelling or simply needs a little encouragement to get started, this could be the perfect opportunity to inspire them, nurture their talent and show them that their words truly matter. More information can be found here: <https://www.royalmintmuseum.org.uk/learning/short-story-competition>





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Y5 Swimming

Year 5 made a great start to their swimming lessons this week. During their first session, all pupils were assessed and placed into groups so they can build their skills with confidence. Swimming is an important part of the primary PE curriculum and, as well as being great exercise, it is a vital life skill that helps children stay safe in and around water. We are excited to see how Year 5 progress over the coming weeks — and who knows, maybe we are looking at a future Priory Junior School Olympian for the Olympics in Australia 2032!

Online Safety

WHATSAPP IS JUST FOR TEXTING

And what parents need to know **13+**

- "They only chat with friends."**
Anyone with their number can add them to groups with hundreds of strangers. You must restrict this in settings.
- "I can check their phone later."**
Messages can vanish in 24 hours. 'View Once' photos disappear instantly. Bullying is easy to hide.
- "They only get real texts."**
Scams and hijacked accounts are common. 'Hi Mum/Dad' texts and malicious links happen daily.
- "It's a private app."**
The 'Channels' feature lets strangers and brands broadcast content. Kids can easily follow unmoderated public feeds.
- "It doesn't track them."**
Users can share their 'Live Location' for up to 8 hours. Strangers in large group chats can see exactly where they are.
- Profiles are tied to a real phone number.**
Unlike gaming usernames, WhatsApp is linked directly to their phone. Strict privacy settings (Profile Photo, 'Last Seen') are essential.

INSTAGRAM TEEN ACCOUNTS IS JUST FOR SAFETY

And what parents need to know **13+**

- "It's set to private, so they're safe."**
Private only stops strangers seeing posts. Anyone can still send a follow request and teens can approve them. Test teen accounts were algorithmically recommended reels featuring children as young as 6 years old. (Source: Molly Rose Foundation, 2025)
- "I'll see everything they send."**
'View Once' photos vanish instantly after opening, even on Teen Accounts. Parents cannot see these, even with Parental Supervision turned on.
- "They only see age-appropriate content."**
47 of Instagram's own safety tools were tested. Only 17% worked as Meta claimed, 19% partially worked, and 64% were ineffective or no longer exist. Nearly 3 in 5 teens aged 13-15 (58%) were still exposed to unsafe content after Teen Accounts launched. (Source: Molly Rose Foundation, 2025; Next Initiative, 2025)
- Parental controls are automatic."**
They are not. You must set up the Parental Supervision tool separately at family.meta.com. Without it, you will not receive the new-search alerts rolling out in the UK now.
- Strangers cannot contact my teen."**
Test teen accounts could still send and receive offensive messages. Adults were still actively suggested as follow recommendations by Instagram's own algorithm. (Source: Molly Rose Foundation, 2025)
- Their age is verified."**
Any teen can create a second account with a fake adult birthday, bypassing every restriction instantly. Instagram has no real age verification in

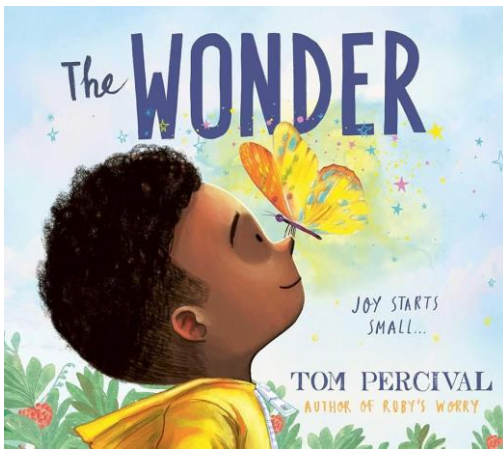
"Teen Accounts are a PR-driven performative stunt rather than a clear and concerted attempt to fix long-running safety risks on Instagram" Molly Rose Foundation

We'd like to remind families that primary-aged pupils should not be using social media platforms like WhatsApp or Instagram, as these platforms are designed for older users. That said, we also understand that some parents choose to allow access for family communication or social reasons.

If your child is using any sort of online platform, please be extra cautious. WhatsApp group chats can create pressure to reply, expose children to inappropriate language or content, and make it easier for unwanted contacts to reach them, even if privacy settings are locked down. Instagram Teen Accounts add helpful protections (like private-by-default accounts and stricter messaging controls), but they're not perfect and still need active adult oversight due to the risks identified above. We strongly encourage parents to check privacy settings, keep accounts private, supervise who children can contact and follow, talk regularly about online behaviour, and monitor use and screen time to help keep your child safe.

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What I'm reading this week: The Wonder – Tom Percival

The Wonder by Tom Percival is a warm, uplifting story about a boy called Daniel who's having a truly miserable, rainy day—everything feels grey and nothing seems to help. But then he hears a little bit of music through the rain, and it's like a switch flips: Daniel starts noticing tiny “sparks” of joy all around him, even when the day isn't perfect, and he realises wonder can be found in small moments if we slow down and look for it.

This links beautifully to our Year of Reading, because books can do the same thing Daniel experiences: they can change our mood, help us see things differently, and remind us that there's hope—even on tough days. Every time we open a story, we're practising noticing, imagining, and feeling along with someone else... and that's a kind of wonder too. Tom Percival is well worth a read if you don't know him.

Many thanks,

Mr. Cross



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PRIORY JUNIOR SCHOOL

**EASTER
EGG RAFFLE**

FRIDAY 27TH MARCH
£1 PER TICKET

Tickets on sale now via school money before Wednesday 25th March. Tickets will be given to the children on the morning of the raffle

For more information contact:
pta@priory-jun.notts.sch.uk