DAYS LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER

Friday 16 October 2026

HEADTEACHER UPDATE

As we approach the October half-term break, I would like to take a moment to thank our children, staff and families for what has been a wonderfully positive start to the academic year. Our pupils have shown resilience, responsibility and enthusiasm in their learning this half term. From the youngest children settling into school life to our older children taking on leadership responsibilities, there is so much to be proud of.

Children marked Black History Month, celebrating the achievements, contributions and experiences of Black individuals throughout history and in modern society. Through assemblies, classroom learning and discussions, children have had the opportunity to broaden their understanding, challenge stereotypes and appreciate the rich diversity that strengthens our communities. This culminated in marking Show Racism the Red Card Day, where children have taken part in a range of age-appropriate activities exploring equality, respect and inclusion, whilst wearing something red. It was encouraging to see the thoughtful discussions that took place across the school and the maturity with which our children embraced the message that everyone deserves to be treated with kindness, dignity and respect.

As a school founded on compassion and community, we were delighted by the generosity shown through our annual Harvest Foodbank Collection. Thank you to all the families who donated food and essential items. Your kindness will make a real difference to local families who may be facing challenges this autumn. It is wonderful to see our school values being lived out through such acts of generosity and care for others.

As we begin the half-term break, I hope all our families enjoy the break and some quality time together. We look forward to welcoming everyone back refreshed and ready for another exciting half term on Tuesday 3 November. A reminder that Monday 2 November is an INSET DAY and the school will be closed to children.

Kind regards,
Mrs Trusty

















SAFEGUARDING





As we approach the half term, we would like to remind all families that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We encourage parents and carers to continue talking with children about staying safe at home, online and in the community.

With Halloween approaching, many children will be looking forward to dressing up, trick-or-treating and spending time with friends. We hope everyone has a fun-filled evening, but we would also like to remind families about some simple ways to stay safe.

- Children should always be accompanied by a trusted adult or remain with a group of friends agreed by parents or carers.
- Plan a safe route and agree a time to return home.
- Wear bright or reflective clothing where possible so that children can be easily seen in the dark.
- Remind children to cross roads safely and stay aware of traffic, particularly when wearing masks or costumes that may affect visibility.
- Encourage children to only visit houses displaying Halloween decorations or those where they know they will be welcome.
- Ensure children know what to do and who to contact if they become separated from their group.
- As always, remind children that if something doesn't feel right, they should seek help from a trusted adult immediately.

Halloween can be a wonderful opportunity for children to have fun with family and friends, enjoy their community and create happy memories. By taking a few sensible precautions, everyone can enjoy a safe and enjoyable celebration.

Safeguarding Reminder: If your family needs support during the holidays, or if you have any concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a child, please contact Children's Services MASH on 020 3045 5440, or 020 8303 7777/020 8303 7171 outside office hours. If a child is at immediate risk of harm, call 999.

PARENT AND TRAVEL TO SCHOOL REMINDER

We would like to remind everyone about how to keep children safe at the beginning and end of the school day. Please remember to park considerately when dropping off or collecting your child.
This includes:

- Not parking on double or single yellow lines.
- Not stopping or parking across residents' driveways.
- Avoiding blocking pavements, junctions or access points.
- Being respectful of our neighbours and the local community at all times.



Unsafe or inconsiderate parking can create hazards for children and families, reduce visibility for pedestrians and make it difficult for local residents to access their homes. Where possible, we encourage families to walk, scoot or cycle to school. Even walking part of the journey can make a real difference.
Walking to school helps children:

- Arrive ready to learn and concentrate.
- Be more physically active and support their health and wellbeing.
- Develop independence and road safety awareness.
- Reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality around the school gates.



By working together, we can help make the journey to and from school safer, healthier and more pleasant for everyone.





ATTENDANCE

Attendance Matters: Every Day Counts

Good attendance is one of the most important ways we can help children succeed – both in their learning and in their friendships. Pupils with 95–100% attendance at Key Stage 2 are 1.3 times more likely to meet expected standards in Reading, Writing, and Maths compared with those with 90–95% attendance.

Every lesson builds on the one before it. When children miss days at school, it's harder for them to keep up and gaps in learning can quickly grow. Regular attendance means children stay on track, build knowledge step by step, and develop the skills they need with confidence.

Future Opportunities

Good attendance at primary school sets strong habits for the future. Children who attend regularly are more likely to achieve well academically and develop the resilience and self-discipline they need as they grow. These habits lay the foundations for success at secondary school, in further education, and later in the workplace.

Spotlight on Punctuality

Did you know? Being just 10 minutes late each day adds up to over 33 hours of lost learning a year – almost a whole school week! Arriving on time means children can start the day calmly, take part in the first learning activities, and feel confident and ready to succeed. Every minute really does make a difference.

Top Tips for Great Attendance

🛏️ Set routines – Regular bedtimes and calm mornings make school days easier.

🎒 Be ready – Clothes, bags, and lunches prepared the night before save stress.

📅 Every day counts – Even a few missed days each term add up to lost learning.

🤒 Only if unwell – Keep children home for genuine illness (fever, vomiting, contagious bugs).

⏰ Plan appointments – Try to book doctors and dentists outside school hours.

💬 Talk positively – Encourage your child and celebrate small successes.

🤝 Work with us – If mornings are tricky or your child is worried, let us know.





WAKE AND SHAKE

We're delighted to announce that Wake & Shake is coming to Days Lane Primary School from Wednesday 4th November! This exciting new morning club is a fantastic way for children to start the school day. Through fun, energetic activities, children will have the opportunity to get active, build confidence, improve coordination and arrive in class feeling focused, refreshed and ready to learn.

What to Expect Each session includes a variety of engaging activities, including:

- Fun obstacle courses
- Ball, hoop and coordination challenges
- Skipping activities and movement games

Places can be booked using the link below:
https://www.sportconfidence.uk/booking-calendar/wake-and-shake-breakfast-club-autumn-26-1?referral=service_list_widget

We hope many of our children will take advantage of this fun and healthy start to the school day!

BLACK HISTORY MONTH











As part of our Black History Month celebrations, Year 3 were delighted to welcome Mr Hamzat, a football coach for Skills Academy, into school to share his experiences with the children. Linking to this year's theme, Celebrating Our Communities, the visit provided a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn about the contributions people make to our community and the importance of hard work, teamwork and perseverance. The children listened attentively, asked questions and showed great interest throughout the visit. A small group also had the exciting opportunity to take part in a football session, where they developed their skills, worked together and encouraged one another. The session was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone involved. Throughout the experience, the children demonstrated our school value of respect by listening carefully, appreciating the experiences of others and showing kindness towards their peers. The visit also reinforced the British Value of mutual respect and tolerance, encouraging children to celebrate the different people, talents and experiences that make our community special.

"I really enjoyed the football session because we got to practise our skills and learn some new things. It was so much fun!"- Scarlett 3V

"I felt really proud that my dad came into school to talk to everyone. It was special having him visit our class." - Noah 3S

NATIONAL POETRY DAY







The whole school enjoyed celebrating National Poetry Day. Children explored the work of various poets and discovered how poets use language, rhythm and imagination to bring their ideas to life. Inspired by the author's unique style, pupils created their own poems, experimenting with vocabulary, imagery and poetic techniques. They also had the opportunity to develop their confidence and performance skills by learning and performing a poem for their classmates. These are available on Google Classroom for parents/carers to see. It was wonderful to see the children's creativity shine through their writing and hear their expressive performances. We are very proud of the enthusiasm and talent they showed throughout our National Poetry Day celebrations!

"I enjoyed making up actions to help us learn the poem. My favourite party was the bit about the ladybird" – Jessica 2S

"On National Poetry Day, I liked when we made up a poem about our future school. We wanted flying teachers and robot dogs!" – Lilah 4S

"I really enjoyed National Poetry Day because we learnt about nature and composing our own poem based on the example. It was fun to perform it and for our parents to see our actions." Shlok 5R

SEND







We would like to extend our thanks to all the parents who attended our recent SEND Coffee Morning. It was a pleasure to welcome the Schools Mental Health Support Team (MHST), with Michael Buckland, our Team Lead, providing a highly informative presentation about the support available to children and families.

During the session, parents learned more about the MHST service, how referrals can be made through school, and the self-referral options available to families. The information shared was extremely valuable, and as a result, we have already been able to support a number of families by making appropriate referrals to access additional help.

We are grateful for the continued support and engagement of our families and look forward to working closely with the MHST throughout this academic year to ensure the best possible outcomes for our children and their wellbeing.

MHST Webinar
The next online online webinar run by MHST aims to support parents/carers to understand and gain strategies to support children with emotion regulation. This is a free online event on Wednesday 21 October, 6 PM - 7 PM and will cover an Introduction to emotion regulation, naming feelings, reflective listening, understanding meltdowns and shutdowns and emotion regulation strategies

Tickets can be booked via https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mhst-webinar-emotion-regulation-tickets-2003288481776

WELCOME LUNA









We now have our third therapy dog joining us from Tuesday 3rd November. Luna will be joining Daisy and Willow supporting the emotional wellbeing of some of our pupils. She is a 6 Year old Cocker Spaniel and will be coming to Days Lane on Tuesday mornings with her owner Michelle.

Please ensure you have given consent on Arbor for your child to be able to spend time with any of our dogs.

We look forward to welcoming her to the pack!

ENRICHMENT CLUBS

Our enrichment clubs continue after half term and the timetable can be seen below. A reminder that Choir will now be held on Tuesdays, and football will finish on 16th October due to darker evenings and wetter weather. This has been replaced with KS2 dodgeball and KS1 multisports and bookings are now available for these clubs on the link below:

https://kinetickidsacademy.classforkids.io/

Days Lane Primary Club Timetable Autumn 2026

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Years R – 6 Stem Club *Click here to book* 14 Sept – 30 Nov (10 weeks) 3.30pm – 4.30pm Laurianne's Stem Club The Ark Collection School Office	Years R – 6 Judo *Book via* *relentless-judo@outlook.com* 15 Sept- 8 Dec (11 weeks) 3.15pm – 4.25pm Relentless Judo Gym Collection Crossover Gate	Year 3 - 6 Netball *Book via Arbor* 16 Sept – 9 Dec (11 weeks) 3.30pm – 4.30pm Mr Simonds Quad Collection Crossover gate	Years R – 6 Spanish Club *Click here to book* 10 Sept- 10 Dec (12 weeks) 3.30pm – 4.30pm Ole Spanish Ark Collection from School Office	Years R, 1 and 2 Laser Tag *Click here to book* 18 Sept – 11 Dec (11 weeks) 3.15pm – 4.15pm Kinetic Kids Junior Hall Collection Year 5 Exit
Year R- 6 Gymnastics with Cheer *Click here to book* 14 Sept – 7 Dec (11 weeks) 3.30pm-4.30pm Wave Gymnastics Infant Hall Collection Year 5 Exit	Year R, 1 & 2 Multisport *Booking available from half term* 3 Nov – 8 Dec (6 weeks) 3.15pm – 4.15pm Kinetic Kids Crossover/Gym Collection Crossover Gate	Years 3 -6 Art Club *Click here to book* 16 Sept - 9 Dec (11 weeks) 3.30pm – 4.30pm The Creation Station Ark Collection School Office	Year 3 – 6 Laser Tag *Click here to book* 17 Sept - 10 Dec (11 weeks) 3.30pm – 4.30pm Kinetic Kids Junior Hall Collection Year 5 Exit	
Year R, 1 and 2 Art Club *Click here to book* 14 Sept – 7 Dec (11 weeks) 3.15pm-4.15pm The Creation Station Junior Hall Collection School Office	KS1 Gymnastics with Cheer *Click here to book* 14 Sept – 7 Dec (11 weeks) 3.30pm-4.30pm Wave Gymnastics Infant Hall Collection Year 5 Exit		Year 3 - 6 Girls Football *Book via Arbor* 17 Sept – 15 Oct (5 weeks) 3.30pm – 4.30pm Mr Simonds Field Collection Crossover gate	
Year 3 – 6 Dodgeball *Booking available from half term* 2 Nov – 7 Dec (6 weeks) 3.30pm – 4.30pm Kinetic Kids Crossover/Gym Collection Crossover Gate	Year 3, 4,5 and 6 Choir *Book via Arbor* 16 Sept – 9 Dec (11 weeks) 3.30pm-4.30pm Mrs Bailey Junior Hall Collection Year 5 exit			



YEAR 2 - GREAT FIRE OF LONDON






Year 2 ended their history topic on the Great Fire of London with a fantastic workshop led by the Freshwater Theatre Company. Through drama and role play, the children brought history to life, acting out how the fire began, why it spread so quickly, and how Londoners eventually stopped it. The children enjoyed dressing up as famous figures such as King Charles II and Samuel Pepys, while also discovering how London was rebuilt after the fire. The workshop was an engaging and memorable experience that reinforced and deepened all of their learning.

"My favourite part was holding the ribbons to show the flames getting bigger." - Tyler 2S

"That was so fun! I got to dress up as Christopher Wren!" - Teddy 2R

"I liked when we pretended to be shop keepers. We each sang songs to show how noisy the noisy the streets of London were." - Nicoletta 2V

YEAR 3 - AGES OF MAN





Year 3 children enhanced their history learning by time travelling back to prehistoric Britain. They created a 20-foot timeline and jumped back to different points in history to develop their understanding of chronology and the vast passage of time. Through exciting drama activities, the children stepped into the shoes of prehistoric people, exploring what daily life may have been like thousands of years ago. They also investigated Bronze Age metal-making techniques, discovering how the introduction of metal transformed tools, weapons and life in prehistoric communities.

"I learned how Stone Age people made fire and weapons" – Lonnie, 3R

"I liked travelling back to put the different objects in the right times." - Isabella, 3S

"I enjoyed travelling back to the stone age and returning lost artefacts"- Alayana, 3V

YEAR 4 - ROMAN DAY






Year 4 children ended their Roman history topic with a fun-filled Roman Day! The children brought their learning to life through a range of hands-on activities that everyone really enjoyed. The children made their own Roman shields, laurel wreaths and planned a Roman banquet menu, discovering that while the Romans enjoyed some foods we still eat today, they also ate some very unusual dishes! It was great to see so many children dressed up for the occasion, helping to bring the topic to life. The day was a fun way to celebrate all that the children have learned about the Romans this term.

"I dressed up as a Roman gladiator and wore a helmet. I had protection like swords and armour. On the day, we made laurel wreaths and I liked that. I also liked making a shield and learning about what the Romans used to it. It was very interesting!" - Jody 4S

YEAR 5 - VIKING DAY







Year 5 had a fantastic Viking Day and fully immersed themselves in Viking culture. Dressed in impressive Viking costumes, the children stepped back in time to explore the fascinating world of the Vikings. Throughout the day, they learned about Viking gods and myths, took part in traditional games, and even experienced what it was like to form a Viking shield wall. The children also enjoyed handling and investigating a range of Viking artefacts, helping them to develop a deeper understanding of life during the Viking era. It was a fun, engaging day filled with hands-on learning and memorable experiences!

"I really enjoyed our Viking Day because we did lots of fun activities such pretending we were rowing in a Viking longboat to reach Britain." - Max G 5R

"It was amazing because we were allowed to pass around different artefacts used during Viking times. We were able to find out what they were and how they were used." Lila 5S

"It was really enjoyable because we got to see the weapons they had and that they aren't like anything we have seen such as swords, spears, axes and daggers." Nyla 5V

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI COMPANIONS

Powered by generative AI models like ChatGPT and Google Gemini, AI companion apps and virtual chatbots such as Character.ai, Snapchat My AI, Replika and Talkie, allow users to create, customise, and chat to synthetic avatars around the clock. While many young people use them for harmless entertainment, creative writing or homework help, these tools are designed to simulate genuine human empathy, emotional bonding and deep friendship.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

AI companions are programmed to be endlessly agreeable, attentive, and available 24/7. Unlike human friendships, an AI companion never disagrees, sets personal boundaries, or gets tired. Young people (especially those experiencing loneliness, social anxiety, or low self-esteem) can quickly develop an unhealthy emotional attachment, viewing synthetic software as their 'best friend' or a surrogate romantic partner.

DISTORTED SOCIAL SKILLS

Navigating real-world friendships can be messy, involving dealing with conflict, compromise, boredom, and awkwardness. If a teenager spends hours interacting with an AI that is tailored specifically to validate and flatter them, they may become impatient with real-world relationships. Over time, this can lead to social withdrawal, heightened anxiety in peer groups, and isolation: a vicious circle of growing online dependency coupled with a heightened sense that relationships in the 'real world' are too challenging to maintain.

DANGEROUS MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

AI chatbots possess no genuine empathy, professional clinical knowledge, or moral reasoning. While developers state these tools are not therapists, vulnerable teenagers often turn to them in crisis. Chatbots have previously hallucinated unsafe medical guidance, validated depressive spirals, and failed to safely escalate disclosures of self-harm or suicidal ideation to real-world protective services.

INAPPROPRIATE OR EXPLICIT CONTENT

CENSORED

While most mainstream platforms feature safety filters and guardrails, young people frequently discover 'jailbreak' prompts to bypass them. Some companion platforms subtly nudge users towards mature themes, romantic roleplay, or sexually suggestive conversations. In worse cases, third-party apps with weak safety checks have been found to generate sexually explicit text or intimate images.

DATA HARVESTING & OVERSHARING

Because conversational bots simulate warmth and understanding, children often lower their guard and treat the chatbot as a trusted friend. They may disclose sensitive personal information, including full names, school details, private family problems, or secrets, unaware that their conversations are being logged, may be analysed by third parties (including advertisers), or used to train future AI models.

"FREEMIUM" UPSELLS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many companion platforms operate on a freemium model. While basic chat is free, features like voice calls, uncensored responses, custom avatars, or 'deeper bonding' tiers are locked behind expensive monthly recurring subscriptions or in-app token purchases. This can lead to significant hidden costs and pressure on young people to spend money to maintain the 'friendship'.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK OPENLY ABOUT FAKE RELATIONSHIPS

Demystify how these tools work. Explain to young people that an AI companion has no feelings, memories, or consciousness; it is simply calculating the next most mathematically probable word based on its training data. It is helpful to explain to them the mechanics of large language models so that they understand how they are trained and how they are designed to always flatter and be helpful.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTION

Ensure technology habits do not replace face-to-face peer socialisation, sports, hobbies, and family time. Create healthy boundaries at home (such as keeping phones and tablets out of bedrooms overnight) to prevent late-night, unmonitored attachment loops with conversational chatbots when young people are at their most vulnerable.

AUDIT PRIVACY SETTINGS & AGE LIMITS

18 CENSORED

Check which companion apps are installed on your child's phone or tablet. Many dedicated companion apps carry an App Store rating of 17+, while platforms like Character.ai set a minimum age of 13+ (or 16+ in the UK/EU). Review the privacy settings together: turn off data-sharing toggles, disable model training where possible, and ensure location permissions are blocked.

REINFORCE WHERE TO GET REAL HELP

Make sure young people know that a machine can never replace professional pastoral or mental health care. Remind them of the trusted adults they can turn to at school – such as their Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – as well as dedicated youth support services like Childline (0800 1111) or Shout (text 85258).

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is the Founder and Executive Director of Kompass Education, a consultancy specialising in supporting educators, students and parents in making wise choices with AI. His book Ethical AI and Education, co-authored with Clara Hawking, will be released later in 2026 by Taylor and Francis.



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See full reference list on our website

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