The EPICentre of Learning

Epic Wraparound Clubs: booking is now available for Early Epic and Epic Eve sessions for Autumn 2 (Nov – Dec). This can be found under Wrap Around Care on MCAS. Please ensure sessions are paid for at the time of booking and send in a screen shot of proof if paying by voucher so we can apply this to your account.

Flu vaccinations: Please ensure you have either opted in or out of the flu vaccination by 9am on the 19th October. The NHS flu vaccinations team will be visiting school on the **20th October 2026**. Please confirm or decline your consent through the following link: https://www.kernowimmunisations.co.uk/Forms/Flu?schoolcode=DV113201

School photographs: On the Tuesday 22 September Fraser Portraits will be coming to take individual and family photographs. Please ensure that children are dressed appropriately in their school uniform. If it is your child's PE day please dress them in their school polo top alongside their PE bottoms. There will be a further date for any children absent on the day (including those on the Year 4 residential) to have their photos taken. This date will be communicated nearer the time.

Friday 18th September 2026

Future Dates

Monday 21st Sept – Deadline for ordering school lunches w/c 28 Sept

Tuesday 22nd Sept – School Photographs

Wednesday 30th Sept – ESA meeting Royal Oak 7pm

Thursday 15th Oct – Family Learning Conference in person 4 – 7pm

Monday 19th Oct – Family Learning Conference in person – 4 – 7pm

Tuesday 20th Oct – Flu vaccinations



Back to the 90's and 00's – Our first ever 'grown up' school disco.

When: Saturday 26th September, 7.30 – 10pm

Where: Victory Hall, Exminster

Tickets are £10 via MCAS in the store/shop or £12 on the door. Tickets are available until 3pm on Friday 25th September.

Expect classic 90s and 00s hits and dance floor favourites. There will also be a bar and tuck shop favourites.

Help make this disco a hit and raise funds for the school.

Get your ticket before they sell out!

School Census Day- Census Day will take place on **Thursday 1st October**. This is an important day for the school. On this day, data is collected from the school which is used to calculate some of our funding for the next financial year. As well as recording the number of children on roll it also records our uptake of Free School Meals (FSM) and Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) on that particular day. This then informs our funding to run the kitchen for the next year. We do not make any money from the kitchen and school does need to use other funds in order to run it however we do get some grant funding that supports this.

It is for this reason that we are asking for your support to ensure that we maximise meal numbers on that day. As far as possible, we would like every child who is entitled to a Free School Meal or a Universal Infant Free School Meal (all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children) to have a school lunch. If they normally have a packed lunch and would like to try a dinner on this day, they can do this and still bring in their packed lunch in case they do not like it.

School Update: *How we are making our school even better:*

Every year we have a key focus within school that we work on improving together – children and staff. This year's School Development Plan is all about 'Oracy' — the art of spoken communication, active listening, and constructive discussion. At Exminster, our Rainbow Values—Enjoyment, Potential, Inclusion, Community, Motivation, Engagement, and Thinking—guide everything we do. We believe that placing Oracy at the heart of our curriculum is a powerful way to empower every child to reach their full potential, express their individuality, and connect meaningfully with the world around them.

What is Oracy? Learning TO Talk and Learning THROUGH Talk: *While reading and writing are universally recognised cornerstones of primary education, spoken language is the foundation upon which all learning rests. Oracy is not simply 'talking'—it is about explicitly teaching children how to communicate effectively, and using talk as a tool to deepen learning across every subject.*

In our classrooms, Oracy is split into two complementary dimensions:

- ***Learning TO Talk****: Developing the skills needed to speak with clarity, confidence, tone, and poise. This includes learning how to structure an argument, adapt spoken language for different audiences, and use rich, ambitious vocabulary.*
- ***Learning THROUGH Talk****: Using talk as an instrument for thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, clarifying, summarizing and collaborating. Through high-quality classroom discussion, pupils explore new concepts, challenge assumptions, build on each other's ideas, and refine their understanding.*

The Research: Why Spoken Language Matters So Much*: Our focus on Oracy is grounded in key educational research, particularly from 'Transform Teaching and Learning through Talk' (Amy Gaunt & Alice Stott). Research highlights that spoken language competence is one of the strongest predictors of a child's educational success, emotional well-being, and future life chances.*

Our School Development Plan: What This Looks Like in Practice*: We want our school to be a buzzing hub of purposeful talk. To make this vision a reality, our School Development Plan sets out practical steps to embed Oracy across every year group and subject area:*

- ***Explicit Oracy Teaching:*** *Just as we teach phonics or maths steps, we explicitly teach oracy within a progressive framework.*
- ***Talk-Rich Classrooms:*** *From Early Years to Year 6, children regularly work in partners, small group discussions, and formal presentation tasks, using structured 'sentence stems' to help shape their thinking.*
- ***Vocabulary Building:*** *Every topic introduces ambitious 'tier 2 and 3' vocabulary, empowering children to choose exact, expressive words when communicating.*
- ***Inclusive Participation:*** *We structure discussions so that every single child—regardless of initial confidence level—has a valued platform and time to share their ideas.*

Exminster Oracy Guidelines & Core Mantras*: To guide our pupils in becoming effective speakers and thoughtful listeners, we have established our five core pupil Oracy guidelines ('Oracy Matters'):*

Guideline	What it Means in Our School
1. Speak Up	Share your thoughts with a clear voice and confidence.
2. Listen In	Actively listen to others with respect, kindness, and empathy.
3. Think Deep	Use brilliant, ambitious words to explain your ideas.
4. Build Together	Ask great questions and build on each other's thoughts.
5. Understand	Make sure everyone understands and can summarise the discussion.

***How Parents & Families Can Develop Oracy at Home**: Developing powerful spoken language skills happens throughout children's lives at home and at school. Here are five simple, fun ways you can nurture Oracy during daily routines at home:*

***1. Ditch 'How was school?' for Big Questions**: Instead of questions that yield one-word answers, try 'Think' questions or open starters: 'If animals could talk, which one would be the most interesting?', 'What was something surprising that happened today?', or 'Would you rather live in the ocean or on Mars? Why?'*

***2. Use the 'Tell Me More...' Nudge**: When your child shares an idea or opinion, encourage them to elaborate. Ask: 'What makes you think that?', 'Can you give me an example?', or 'How did that feel?' This directly develops their ability to justify and expand on thoughts.*

***3. Model & Celebrate Ambitious Words**: Introduce 'juicy' words into household chatter! If your child says a dog is 'big', suggest 'colossal' or 'enormous'. Praise them when they use interesting vocabulary they learned at school or in books.*

***4. Practice 'Build Together' at the Dinner Table**: Play family conversation games where each person adds to the previous person's thought using sentence openers like: 'I agree with that because...', 'Building on what you said...', or 'That's interesting, but have you considered...'*

***5. Celebrate Mind-Changing Moments**: Remind your children that changing your mind when presented with new ideas is a sign of great thinking! Talk out loud about times when you changed your mind: 'I used to think X, but after listening to Y, I now think Z.'*

***Looking Ahead Together**: By giving our children the confidence to speak up, the empathy to listen in, and the vocabulary to think deep, we are empowering them not only for primary school, but for secondary school, university, apprenticeships, and their adult lives. We look forward to sharing our Oracy journey with the whole community throughout the year. Thank you for your continued support as we help every child at Exminster Primary find and flourish in their own voice!*

National Online Safety Guides: This week we have a guide on Managing Digital Boundaries for Under 5s.

Mental Health Weekly Update: Please see attached this week a Parent Wellbeing and Mental Health newsletter for some helpful tips on the transition back to school.

Exeter Food Action Festival: Please see attached leaflet for more information on this event taking place on Sunday.

Premier Education Holiday Clubs: Please see the attached leaflets.