Petherton Park School Newsletter

September 2026

School Leadership Message

As we begin a new term at Petherton Park School, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our pupils, families and team. We have really enjoyed hearing all about the wonderful activities and sunshine enjoyed by our pupils - although is feels such a long time ago now!

A special welcome goes to all of our new pupils and families who are joining the Petherton Park community this term. Starting at a new school can bring a mixture of excitement and uncertainty, but please be assured that our dedicated team is here to help every child feel safe, supported and valued. We look forward to getting to know you, celebrating your strengths and helping you settle into school life with confidence.

To those pupils who have moved into their final year with us, congratulations on reaching this important milestone. This year marks the beginning of an exciting chapter as you prepare for the next stage of your journey. We encourage you to embrace every opportunity, continue to challenge yourselves and take pride in the progress you make throughout the year. We are very proud of all that you have achieved so far and look forward to supporting you as you prepare for the future.

I am also delighted to share some wonderful news regarding our leadership team. Please join me in congratulating **Victoria Person** on her appointment as **Head of School**. Victoria brings a wealth of experience, dedication and passion for improving outcomes for children and young people. We are excited to see her lead the school forward and continue to strengthen our nurturing, therapeutic and ambitious approach for all pupils.

We look forward to another successful term filled with learning, growth and achievement. Thank you for your continued support and partnership as we work together to ensure every child can thrive.
Warm regards,
Zoey Shelley, Executive Headteacher

October - Key Dates

1-31	Black History Month
5-11	Dyslexia Awareness Week
22 & 23	INSET – school closed
25	Clocks Go Back 1 hr
26-30	HALF TERM HOLIDAY

Safeguarding

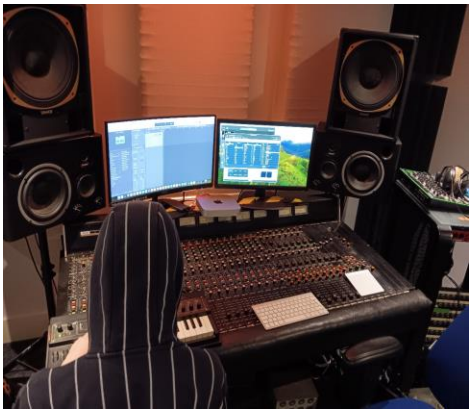
~ Is everyone's responsibility ~

If you have any safeguarding concerns about any child (not just a child within our setting), please contact our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL):

Zoey Shelley 07725 406993
zshelley@phoenixschools.org.uk
or
Victoria Person 0330 1358 200
victoria.person@phoenixschools.org.uk

Alternatively, contact our Operations Director responsible for Safeguarding Governance:
Darren Jackson
djackson@plcl.org.uk

Pupils' Gallery

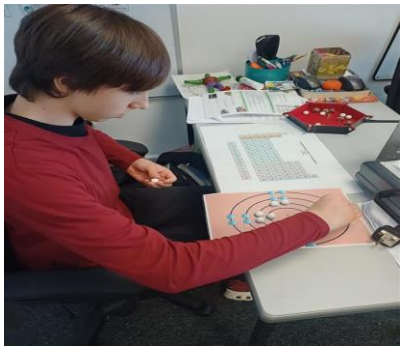


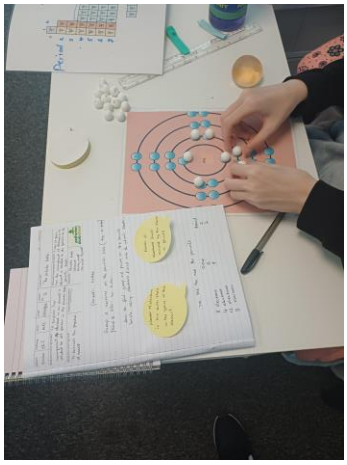


Some of our pupils visited a professional recording studio recently. They learnt about different types of microphones, how to add beats to a piece of music, and about using audio interface – which acts as a bridge between instruments or microphones and a computer to produce high quality recordings and playbacks. A really inspiring and interesting visit!

Our older pupils began their college courses this month. It's been brilliant for them to get to use professional kitchen equipment and learn some new culinary skills.







In science, pupils have been practicing the filling of electrons into atomic shells as part of their learning about atomic structure/ electron configuration.







Our younger pupils have been enjoying learning through play outside in the September sunshine!



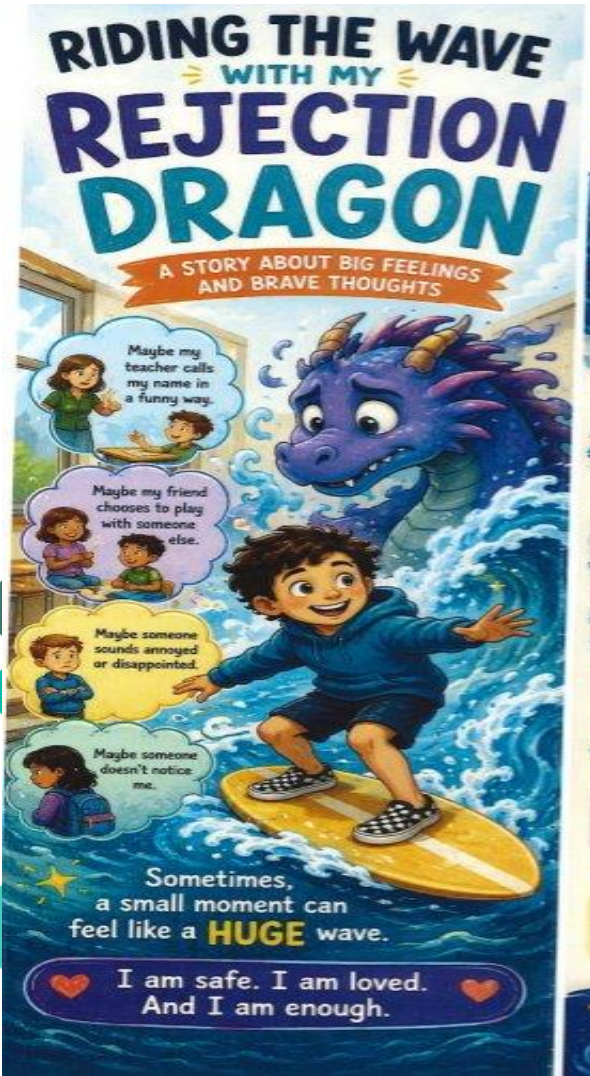
School Messages

We are collecting for our annual Harvest Foodbank donations for the local community. Thank you to those parents/carers who have already donated. Please bring your donation of dried or tinned foods, toiletries or pet food to school by Friday 9th October.



Pupil Voice

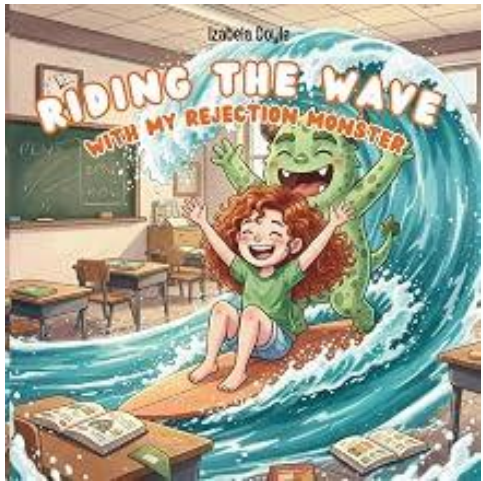
- 100% of pupils asked know how they are doing in their maths lessons.
- 100% of pupils said that their teacher explains maths concepts clearly
- All pupils said they wanted to do well in their maths lessons





Book recommendation: Riding the Wave with My Rejection Monster: Helping ADHD children navigate big emotions by Izabela Doyle.

Also by Izabela Doyle, Riding the Wave with My Rejection Monster: Helping ADHD Girls navigate big emotions.



Therapies Team

We thought we'd share a bit about **PACE** and why Pheonix uses this approach across all their settings. At Phoenix, relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We know that children learn best when they feel safe, understood, and valued. That's why we use **PACE**, an approach developed by clinical psychologist Dan Hughes, to guide the way we connect with our pupils. It's a therapeutic approach designed to build trust, strengthen relationships, and support emotional growth in children.

What does PACE stand for?

PACE stands for **Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity,** and **Empathy**. These four qualities shape how adults interact with children, helping them feel secure and supported as they grow both academically and emotionally.

Playfulness brings joy and lightness into the classroom, making learning fun and reducing anxiety. Play is often a child's prefer way to connect and can help a relationship feel safe.

Acceptance means we value each child for who they are, even when they are experiencing big feelings.

Curiosity allows us to wonder together about feelings and choices, encouraging reflection without judgment.

Empathy ensures that children feel heard and understood, building trust and resilience.

Why It Matters in Pheonix

- Creating safety: PACE helps children feel secure, valued, and understood — essential for learning.
- Supporting emotional regulation: It gives team members tools to respond calmly and compassionately to our pupils' feelings.
- Building resilience: Children learn to trust adults and other pupils, which fosters confidence and independence.
- Promoting inclusion: Every child's voice and experience is respected, reducing feelings of isolation.

We hope that you find this helpful information – we look forward to sharing more with you in future newsletters.

The Therapies team – Sharon, Megan & Fran

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. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about YOUTUBE

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Almost anyone with an internet connection knows about YouTube. The Google-owned platform allows users to upload and share videos globally, making it a readily accessible resource with free content on almost any topic. However, with over 20 million videos uploaded each day, not all material is suitable for younger audiences.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

YouTube is free and can be accessed across multiple device types, even without an account. While some videos are marked as 'age restricted', this relies on uploader honesty and automated moderation, meaning children and young people may still encounter unsuitable content if these measures aren't taken.

CONNECTING WITH STRANGERS

YouTube includes social features such as comments and direct messaging. This means young users can interact with people they don't know, potentially exposing them to inappropriate language, cyberbullying, or unwanted contact. Young content creators may be especially vulnerable.

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Popular trends and challenges can be entertaining and widely shared. While many are harmless, some can be risky or harmful if copied. For example, the 'salt and ice challenge' has caused injuries when imitated.

SUGGESTED CONTENT

YouTube recommends videos based on what a user has previously watched. While this can enhance the experience, it may also encourage binge-watching and excessive screen time, particularly when Autoplay is enabled. Without an account, users are shown trending videos, which are not always age appropriate.

EXPOSURE TO EXTREME CONTENT

The platform's algorithm often promotes content that attracts high engagement, which can sometimes include videos containing extreme viewpoints, misinformation, or risky behaviour. As children and young people watch more of this content, similar videos are likely to be recommended by YouTube's algorithm, therefore reinforcing the exposure.

SHORT-FORM CONTENT IMPACT

YouTube Shorts – short, fast-paced videos – are designed for continuous viewing. This style of content can be highly engaging but may also contribute to increased screen time and difficulties with maintaining focus over longer periods.

Advice for Parents & Educators

CONSIDER YOUTUBE KIDS

YouTube Kids can help reduce young users' exposure to unsuitable content by filtering videos into age groups, such as preschool, younger, and older children. However, as moderation is automated, it should be used alongside active supervision.

CHECK PRIVACY SETTINGS

If a child in your care uploads content, consider setting videos to Private or Unlisted so they are only shared with trusted viewers. Disabling comments can also help reduce unwanted interaction from strangers.

USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

Google Family Link allows adults to filter content, monitor usage, and manage younger users' screen time. Supervised Accounts offer a gradual step up from YouTube Kids, enabling children to explore the platform with appropriate safeguards.

WATCH TOGETHER

Spending time watching YouTube with the children and young people in your care can help you understand what they enjoy and guide your conversations about content. Tools like Downtime in Family Link can also help limit unsupervised viewing.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist who has written for publications including Wired, TechRadar, Tom's Guide, The Evening Standard and The New Statesman.

#WakeUpWednesday®

The National College®

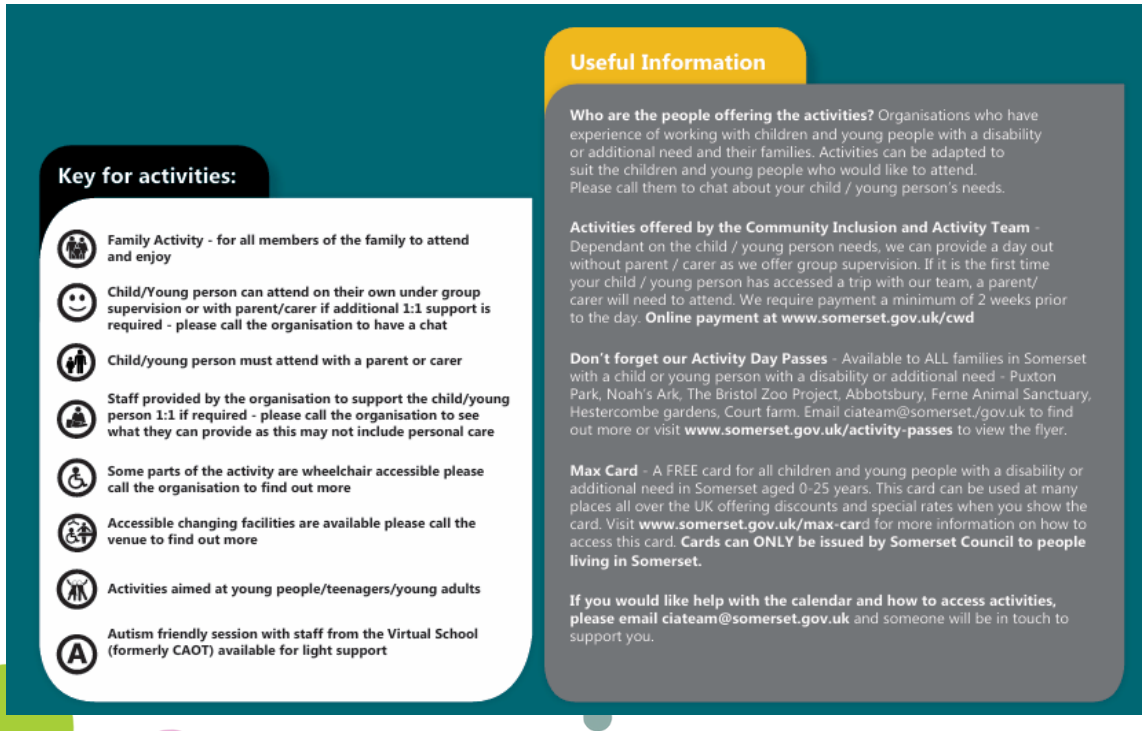
See full reference list on our website

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 22.04.2026

Inclusive Activities Calendar for the Autumn Half Term from the Somerset CIA Team

Here is the CIA team's inclusive activities calendar for October Half Term attached, which is full of fun activities for children and young people who have a disability and/or additional need. Activities include Halloween storytelling, tabletop games, pumpkin carving, sensory bouldering and many more! The Community Inclusion Activity team are going to deliver a trip to Flip Out & Crealy – please see the calendar for more information. The calendar, and more information about the Community Inclusion Activity Team, can be found under the Local Offer at Activities for families (somerset.gov.uk).





Monday 26

Brookside Academy KS1
Brooks Road, Street, BA16 0PR
A variety of indoor and outdoor activities, arts & crafts, cooking, messy and sensory play, sports & more. Different activities each day. 9am-3pm with wraparound available 4-11yrs £27 per person

To book, email Tom Ball Extendedschool@brookside academy.co.uk 01458 443340



Rainbow Roots
Dove Barn, Manor Farm, Silver St, Barton St David, TA11 6DB
The Colour of Leaves: Notice & Explore. Notice autumn colours and textures, enjoy a colour hunt, create nature-inspired art using natural materials. 9.30am-12pm. 8-12yrs £7.50 per child.

To book, email events@rainbowroots.uk or call Lou Stockley 07432 384287

Activity Packs

Step4ward-in2growth
October themed activity packs tailor made to each child's interests. All ages £4 per pack

TO ORDER email step4ward-in2growth@mail.com or call 07737 331174

Tuesday 27

Nova Sports
Harry's Hydro, Nunney Road, Frome, BA11 4LB
Family swim sessions in warm water during the holidays. Free play with toys and floats provided, or bring your own! 10am-1pm. All ages £5 per person.

To book, email bookings@novasports.org.uk or call 07958 010417

Brookside Academy KS1
Brooks Road, Street, BA16 0PR
A variety of indoor and outdoor activities, arts & crafts, cooking, messy and sensory play, sports & more. Different activities each day. 9am-3pm with wraparound available 4-11yrs £27 per person

To book, email Tom Ball Extendedschool@brookside academy.co.uk 01458 443340



CIAT
Flip Out, Castle Road, Chelston Business Park, Wellington, TA21 9JQ
2 hour jump session at Flip Out Somerset. Socks, drink token and 3 pizza slices included (cheese & tomato or peperoni). 4-6pm. Parents carers to arrive at 3:30pm for registration. 8-18th birthday. £10pp

To book, call 07977 412199 on 6 Oct from 10am. From 7 Oct, email ciateam@somerset.gov.uk

Wednesday 28

Brookside Academy KS1
Brooks Road, Street, BA16 0PR
A variety of indoor and outdoor activities, arts & crafts, cooking, messy and sensory play, sports & more. Different activities each day. 9am-3pm with wraparound available 4-11yrs £27 per person

To book, email Tom Ball Extendedschool@brookside academy.co.uk 01458 443340

Emma Bettridge Projects
Chocolate Books, 9 High Street, Wiveliscombe. TA4 2JX
Spooky Story Club: Share spooky ghost stories, invent your own, read favourites aloud, and enjoy delicious spooky hot chocolate together 10.30-11.30am, 5-12yrs, £3 per child

To book, email elbettridge@outlook.com

Nova Sports
Frome Boulder Rooms, BA11 3EN
Try out the climbing walls at Frome Boulder Rooms. Supported by Nova Sports staff. 10-11am 8-18yrs £10pp.

To book, email bookings@novasports.org.uk or call 07958 010417

Nova Sports
Frome Boulder Rooms, BA11 3EN
Sensory Bouldering: Climb, explore and build confidence in a safe, exclusive environment. Particularly suitable for children with complex needs. 9-10am. 4-11yrs. £10pp

To book, email bookings@novasports.org.uk or call 07958 010417

Thursday 29

Brookside Academy KS1
Brooks Road, Street, BA16 0PR
A variety of indoor and outdoor activities, arts & crafts, cooking, messy and sensory play, sports & more. Different activities each day. 9am-3pm with wraparound available 4-11yrs £27 per person

To book, email Tom Ball Extendedschool@brookside academy.co.uk 01458 443340

The Mendip School
The Mendip School, Prestleigh, Shepton Mallet, BA4 4FZ
Join us for a magical morning of magic tricks, balloon making and plenty of smiles with Malcolm the Magician. 10am-12pm. 6-12yrs £5 per adult & one child. £3 per person thereafter.

To book, email Joanne Teare jteare@themendpschool.com

CIAT
Crealy Theme Park, Sidmouth Rd, Clyst St Mary, Exeter EX5 1DR
Family adventure park with over 60 rides and attractions, including live shows and animals. Park open from 10am-5pm. Staff on site for support from 10am-3pm. All ages. £10 per person.

To book, call 07977 412199 on 6 Oct from 10am. From 7 Oct, email ciateam@somerset.gov.uk

Rainbow Roots
Dove Barn, Manor Farm, Silver St, Barton St David, TA11 6DB
Around the Table: Experiment & Create. Explore beautiful materials and techniques, including mixed media, textiles, printing and collage. 9.30am-12pm. 8-12yrs. £7.50 per child

To book, email events@rainbowroots.uk or call Lou Stockley 07432 384287

Friday 30

Emma Bettridge Projects
Chocolate Books, 9 High Street, Wiveliscombe. TA4 2JX
Spooky Stories in the Wilds: Join author Emma and dog Nell for Halloween storytelling in a local graveyard, recorded in notebooks and dictaphones. 10-11.30am & 1-2.30pm. 5-12yr, £3 per child

To book, email elbettridge@outlook.com

Brookside Academy KS1
Brooks Road, Street, BA16 0PR
A variety of indoor and outdoor activities, arts & crafts, cooking, messy and sensory play, sports & more. Different activities each day. 9am-3pm with wraparound available 4-11yrs £27 per person

To book, email Tom Ball Extendedschool@brookside academy.co.uk 01458 443340

Green Goblins
Riverside Church, The Exchange, Hamilton Road, Taunton, TA1 2EQ
Tabletop games every Friday, including Pokemon Trading Card Game, Board Games and D&D Roleplay Games. No booking required. 6-10.30pm, For 10yrs + Attend with parent carer if under 10 or if 1:1 support is needed, £4 entry (first time free, parent carers free)

To book, email email@greengoblinsgamesclub.co.uk

Purple Elephant
Football Club, Berkley Road, Frome, BA11 2EH
Family holiday fun, with a healthy meal: Explore all kinds of animals, mammals, amphibians and reptiles! 10am-1pm. 0-18yrs £3 suggested donation. Free to those on free school meals.

To book, email rebeccaharrison@purpleelephant.org.uk

Monday 26

Emma Bettridge Projects
Chocolate Books, 9 High Street, Wiveliscombe. TA4 2JX
Spooky Story Club: Share spooky ghost stories, invent your own, read favourites aloud, and enjoy delicious spooky hot chocolate together 10.30-11.30am, 5-12yrs, £3 per child

To book, email elbettridge@outlook.com





Tuesday 27

Ark
Ark at Egwood, Merriott, TA16 5QN
Halloween Experience! Meet animals, enjoy accessible games, sports, pumpkin carving and toast marshmallows around the campfire. 10am-2pm. Over 5s. £4 per person

To book, email Office@ark@egwood.com or call 01460 391974

Emma Bettridge Projects
Chocolate Books, 9 High Street, Wiveliscombe. TA4 2JX
Spooky Story Club: Share spooky ghost stories, invent your own, read favourites aloud, and enjoy delicious spooky hot chocolate together 10.30-11.30am, 5-12yrs, £3 per child

To book, email elbettridge@outlook.com



Rainbow Roots
Dove Barn, Manor Farm, Silver St, Barton St David, TA11 6DB
The Woodland Knows: Explore & Discover. Look for seasonal changes, investigate habitats and tracks, and find your own special place in Rainbow Wood. 9.30am-12pm. 8-12yrs. £7.50 per child

To book, email events@rainbowroots.uk or call Lou Stockley 07432 384287

Wednesday 28

Purple Elephant
The Key Centre, Feltham Lane, Frome, BA11 5AJ
Family holiday fun, with a healthy meal: Spooky arts & crafts. 2.30-5.30pm. 0-18yrs £3 suggested donation. Free to those on free school meals.

To book, email rebeccaharrison@purpleelephant.org.uk

Shared Earth
Vallis Veg BA113JQ
Nature based activities and play incorporating nature-studies, crafts, gardening, games, shelter-building & simple campfire cooking. 10am-2.30pm. 8-18yrs £15pp

To book, email sharedearthbookings@gmail.com

The Balsam Centre
The Balsam Centre, Wincanton, BA9 9HB. (Parking BA9 9PA)
Together in nature: Arts & crafts using natural material and things we find around us. Campfire cooking, depending on the weather! 10am-1pm. 0-16yrs. £4 per child

To book, email info@balsamcentre.org.uk

Rainbow Roots
Dove Barn, Manor Farm, Silver St, Barton St David, TA11 6DB
Tiny Worlds: Discover the small, use magnifying glasses to explore the woodland floor, discover tiny patterns, textures, plants & habitats. Use natural, recycled matierial to design miniature worlds. 9.30am-12pm. 8-12yrs. £7.50 per child

To book, email events@rainbowroots.uk or call Lou Stockley 07432 384287

Thursday 29

Purple Elephant
Trinity Church Hall, Trinity Street, Frome BA11 3DE
Family holiday fun, with a healthy meal: Spooky family cookery 10am-1pm. 0-18yrs £3 suggested donation. Free to those on free school meals.

To book, email rebeccaharrison@purpleelephant.org.uk

Wilderwoods
Drayton Woods, Langport, TA10 0JZ
Halloween Walk. Create a character and den for a scary trail through the woods. Parents can join at dusk, if they dare! Hot chocolate & hot dogs provided. 2-7pm. 8-18yrs. £10 per child (includes food), £12 siblings

To book, email joe@wilderwoods or call 07552 230302



Friday 30

Minehead Eye CIC
1A Mart Road, Minehead, TA24 5BJ
Enjoy the Pod, bouldering, skatepark, music, sensory games, lego, team challenges and arts & crafts. Café available. 2.30-4.30pm, 0-18yrs £2 per child.

To book, email reception@minehead-eye.co.uk

Rainbow Roots
Dove Barn, Manor Farm, Silver St, Barton St David, TA11 6DB
The Last Leaf: Pumpkins & Play. Creativity, games, sensory activities. Costums welcome! 9.30am-12pm. 8-12yrs. £7.50 per child

To book, email events@rainbowroots.uk or call Lou Stockley 07432 384287

Saturday 31

Emma Bettridge Projects
Chocolate Books, 9 High Street, Wiveliscombe. TA4 2JX
Spooky Story Club: Share spooky ghost stories, invent your own, read favourites aloud, and enjoy delicious spooky hot chocolate together 10.30-11.30am, 5-12yrs, £3 per child

To book, email elbettridge@outlook.com

Rainbow Roots
Dove Barn, Manor Farm, Silver St, Barton St David, TA11 6DB
Halloween: Inclusive Family Celebration. Enjoy creative activities, costumes, games, seasonal fun and a gentle woodland experience. 12-3pm. All ages £7.50 per child

To book, email events@rainbowroots.uk or call Lou Stockley 07432 384287

Saturday 24

Moor Outdoor CIC
North Hill Tank Tracks, TA24 5LB
Intermediate Mountain Biking: For confident off-road riders. Build trail skills through games and guided rides. Equipment provided. 10am-12pm. 8-18yrs £7.50 per person.

To book, email Alicia Hockin hello@mooroutdoor.org

2026-2027

Petherton Park School

Key
School Holidays
Inset Days
Bank Holidays
Occasional days

September '26

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
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28	29	30				

October '26

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November '26

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December '26

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January '27

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February '27

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March '27

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April '27

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May '27

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June '27

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July '27

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August '27

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