

Simonside Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Hills



Friday 23rd January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

January is proving to be a very busy month in school – with lots of lovely things happening.

Yesterday, our school governors visited the school along with Mrs Stuart, our Chief Executive Officer. They walked around school and observed all the teaching and learning in classes. I then did a presentation describing all the ways in which we are ensuring high quality teaching and learning in school. We are so proud of your children – they were so well behaved, enthusiastic to learn and showed excellent oracy skills. I thought you might like to read the message sent to the children from the governors:

Thursday 22 January 2026

To the children at Simonside Primary School,

Thank you so much for being so welcoming when we visited school today. It was lovely to see all the welcoming smiles, the respect and good manners you showed and your positive attitude to learning. You are doing some amazing work!

It's obvious that all the adults in school are working so hard to make sure that you enjoy learning and make good progress. They are an impressive group as well.

We had such a good morning and were so impressed! Keep up the great work.

**From Mrs Rae, Mr Harbottle, Ms Mohan and Ms Anderson,
Governors at Simonside Primary School.**

New Website

Our new website went live yesterday. I hope you'll find it easier to navigate and much more modern. The aim is to illustrate it with professional photos and a virtual tour of the school. We'll be adding in more curriculum content too to give you as much information as possible about what your child is learning. I encourage you to look at the Friday Class Dojo posts by class teachers for the most up to date information



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on learning and how you can further support learning at home. The teachers put a lot of care into creating these and it really means a lot when parents take a moment to like the posts. 

Buddy Benches

It's really important to us that children enjoy breaktimes and we know that children can feel very anxious if they feel they have no one to play with. Mrs Rae (Chair of Governors) has very generously paid for one bench in the KS2 yard. We have used money raised by the PTFA and fairs to pay for another in KS1 (These are similar to the one in EYFS). The idea is that children can alert their peers, friends and staff if they are feeling in the 'blue zone' or that they don't have anyone to play with.

A big 'thank you' to Mrs Rae and to everyone who supported our summer and Christmas fairs.



Attendance

Too many children are currently missing out on important learning and our overall attendance has dropped to 92.5%, which is lower than it should be. We want every child to thrive and we're committed to helping families overcome any barriers to good attendance. We've offered support in many different ways and made referrals where extra help might be useful. If you feel you need support please contact Miss Coon in the school office.

When support isn't taken up or attendance doesn't improve, we do have to follow our attendance policy, which is in line with both Local Authority and national guidance. Unfortunately, this has already resulted in legal penalties for some families. Please remember that any fines are handled entirely by the Local Authority and do not come to the school.

On a brighter note, we've received lots of generous donations for attendance prizes and we now have a fantastic selection to give away. Every Friday from now until half term, children with 100% attendance and excellent punctuality will be entered into our raffle. We'd love to see as many children as possible **'In it to win it'**!



Dates for your diary:

Spring Term 2026	
Monday 5th January Training Day – School closed to children	
Tuesday 20 th January	Y1 PACT
Tuesday 27 th January	Y2 PACT
Tuesday 3rd February	Rec PACT
Thursday 5 th February	Nursery PACT
Tuesday 10 th February	Y3 PACT
Half Term Monday 16th to Friday 20th February	
Wednesday 4th March	Y4 PACT
Thursday 5th March	World Book Day
Tues 10 th March	Y5 PACT
Tuesday 17 th March	Parents' Evening
Tuesday 24 th March	Y6 PACT
Thursday 26 th March	Parents' Evening
Wednesday 1st April	Easter Egg competition
Easter holiday Friday 3rd April – Friday 17th April 2026	



Online Safety

Roblox has been featured in the news recently so we thought we would provide a reminder of key points to be aware of.

PEGI rate Roblox with a Parental Guidance label. This is because it is considered a platform with a huge level of user generated content. It is therefore important that appropriate parental controls are set up to monitor what your child is accessing.

What should I be aware of?

Game content –Roblox label content based on the type of content rather than by age. The labels are Minimal, Mild, Moderate and Restricted.

Chat Facility - Players can chat with each other (users under the age of 13 need parent permission to access certain chat features though). You can turn communication off completely or add restrictions, such as only able to communicate with friends.

Virtual Currency - Players can buy Robux (their virtual currency) to buy in game upgrades or accessories.

How do I report abuse and block users?

This article outlines the different reporting facilities: <https://en.help.roblox.com/hc/en-us/articles/203312410-How-to-Report-Rule-Violations>

What else can I do?

Chat to your child regularly about what they are doing online and remind your child that if anything is worrying them, then they should talk to you or another trusted adult.

Have a lovely weekend and take care,

Mrs Hills

Headteacher

