

Simonside Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs Hills

Friday 12th February 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I can't believe we're at the end of the half term already! There have been lots of excited children in school today looking forward to the holiday next week. We return to school on **Monday 23rd February**.

I hope you managed to read the Governors' newsletter yesterday – it can also be found on the school website in the 'News' section.

As I mentioned last week in my newsletter, we held a **special school council meeting** yesterday which our Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister attended. We talked about their ideas for attendance prizes and have confirmed the following plans:

Each week the class with winning attendance will get the big trophy – but with a difference! It will be filled with pocket money toys or treats for the class. The class with the second highest attendance will get an extra playtime and the class with the third highest attendance will get Simon the bear to have in their classroom for cuddles that week. If, as a whole school, we have a day when we reach 96% the school council would like everyone to know about it and celebrate the fact! There will be a banner that we put up on the gates (with flashing lights apparently!) every time this happens and there will be special 'golden time' in school for all classes.

The school council are going to write to local businesses and see if any of them would like to/be able to donate any special prizes or resources we can use to boost attendance.

I was so impressed by the energy and thought that the school council put into this. Hopefully their ideas will help us reach our attendance targets.



**Artsmark
Silver Award**
Awarded by Arts
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As you know, we have been really focusing on maintaining high expectations of behaviour in school. This includes playing safely at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Some children are acting out scenes from programmes and films they have seen at home – which are not appropriate for their age group. This leads to rough and unsafe play. Please do monitor what your child is watching at home – it can have a significant effect on behaviour. Children are recognised for following the playground charter with raffle tickets that they can put in the Golden Welly for prizes.



Food Bank

Our school food bank is running low on supplies. Any donations would be greatly appreciated. It has been such a vital support for many of our families but is entirely dependent on the generosity of staff, governors and parents. We would be grateful for any of the following:

Tinned foods

Dried food

Toothpaste and toothbrushes

Toiletries

Second-Hand Uniform

We have plenty of second-hand uniform if any families need it. Please just ask at Reception or complete a slip at the office for someone to give you a ring. Just a gentle reminder that children should be wearing black shoes. On PE days, they should be wearing school PE uniform.

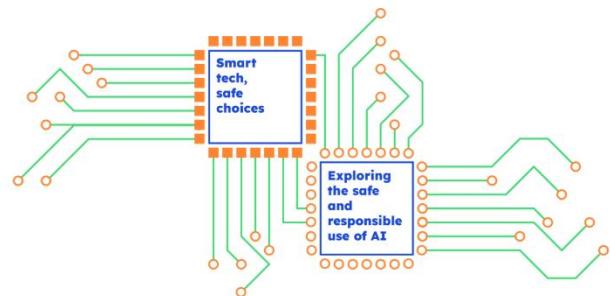
Safer Internet Day – ‘Smart tech, safe choices – Exploring the safe and responsible use of AI

This week we marked **Safer Internet Day** across school by talking about how we can make safe choices when using smart technology.

Here are a few top tips for families:

Explore online life together

Spend time online with your child to understand how they are using technology and talk together about the good and bad parts of being online. Make sure your child knows they can talk to you about anything that they see or experience online.



UK Safer Internet Centre

Talk about AI in everyday life

From summaries on search engines, to voice assistants and photo editing tools, AI powered features are being added to many of the apps and devices we use day-to-day. Help your child recognise when AI is being used and remind them that it can sometimes share unreliable information.

Make use of settings and controls

Parental controls and other safety settings can help protect your child from online harms, including

upsetting or inappropriate content. Think about how your child uses technology, for example if you have a smart TV or a voice assistant at home and explore specific settings to support your household.

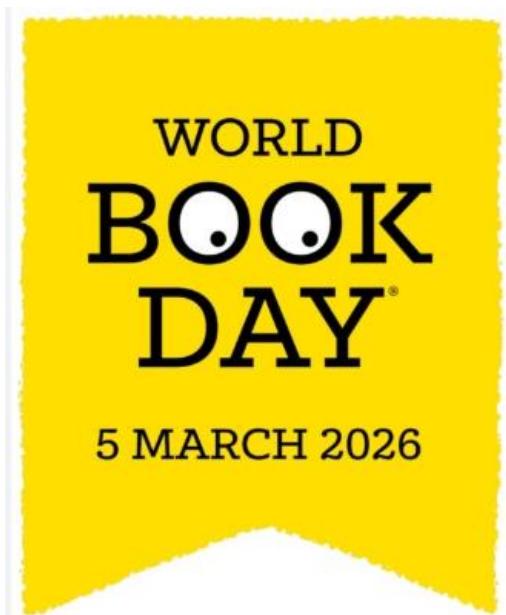
Stay informed

During our discussions, children have raised concerns about the impact of AI. Explore trusted resources together and talk about any questions or concerns your child may have. The UK Safer Internet Centre share brilliant advice: <https://saferinternet.org.uk/>

Know where to get help

If something online worries you or your child, many apps and platforms have reporting tools built in (e.g. ChatGPT). Many social media platforms also allow you to report content you suspect has been created with AI.

World Book Day Thursday 5th March



Please join us in celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 5th March.

We would like to invite children to come into school dressed up as a favourite book character or, if they feel more comfortable, to wear something cosy that they would enjoy reading for pleasure in.

Throughout the day, children will participate in a range of activities celebrating books and the joy that they bring. There will even be a themed lunch. In addition to this, we would like to invite parents and carers of children from our Early Years and Key Stage One classes in to school to share a story with their child/children. This will be at 2.45pm and more information will follow on Class Dojo pages next half term.

Book Fair

We are delighted to share that we have the Scholastic Book Fair returning to school on the 18th March. The book fair will be open daily from the 18th -24th March in the Small Hall. This will be after school from 3.15-3.30 and payments are card only.

Children can redeem their £1 book token, which they will receive on World Book Day, against the value of a book.

Have a lovely half term holiday. Relax, recharge and refresh!

Take care,

Mrs Hills

Headteacher