

SOUTHDOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER MAY 2026



CHALLENGE 26

We are quite overwhelmed with the support that you have all given to Challenge 26 -thank you so much. The current total is **£3775 -AMAZING!** If you still haven't sent in your money please do so asap.

It has been a real delight to see all the different ways that children have raised their money. We have a lovely display in school of all the pictures that we were sent so next time you are in please come and have a look at it.

All of the children that took part, whether they raised £1 or £100 will receive a medal. We announced the Challenge 26 winners in our SHINE Assembly today and the following children have received a voucher:

- Nursery: Marnie
- Reception: Ada
- Year 1 and 2: George Mo, Nancy W and Ayla
- Year 3 and 4: Izzy, Elsie & Leona
- Year 5: Ruben M and Freya Y
- Year 6: Izzy

The money from this challenge will be put towards the new Trim Trail. Year 5 with the help of Mrs Mountain and Miss Gardner have been busy designing what they would like the new area to look like and which equipment they'd like. Their ideas are now being finalised by the company so fingers crossed we will be able to have it all fitted before the summer.

50TH BIRTHDAY

We also had a great time celebrating the school's 50th birthday. We didn't let a bit of rain and wind spoil our 'street party' which we ended up having inside. A massive thank you again to Fiona the cook and the kitchen team Sue, Yasmin and Leah for making a delicious lunch. Thank you also to Newydd who provided additional food and party items at no cost to the school. The children should have all received a bookmark as a little token to help them remember the celebrations.

It was wonderful to celebrate after school with both past and present staff. We were especially delighted to welcome former staff who were part of Southdown when it first opened in 1976. Sharing memories over a cuppa and a cake made the occasion even more special. A heartfelt thank-you to Steph Griffiths-Gidman and Colin Devitt for providing the delicious cakes, and to the Friends of School team for their support and help throughout the event.

SCHOOL NEWS

- Who'd have thought that we would have a dinosaur at school!! Year 1 and 2 got such a surprise when 'Teach Rex' visited school. I'm not sure who had the most fun with the dinosaurs the children or the staff!
- Year 5 visited Greenfield Valley. As always, the children were a real credit to the school, learnt so much and most importantly had lots of fun too!
- Year 5 also completed a URENCO workshop in school. The children found out about what URENCO do, practised their science skills and also learnt about all the different career opportunities URENCO has to offer - something for the future!
- Year 4 are currently on their way back from Plas Menai. They have had a wonderful time and we are so proud of how the children threw themselves into the different activities. A massive thank you to Mr Smith, Mr Godwin, Mrs Moore, Mrs Wilcock, Mrs Watterson and Miss Hughes-Roberts for taking them.
- Year 6 have also just about recovered from an amazing 2 nights at PGL Boreatton Park last week. We were also so proud of them too and many of them had to face a few fears with some of the activities! The Giant Swing was a big hit along with the Zip Wire and Laser tag. A massive thank you to Mrs Mathieson, Miss Say, Mrs S Wilson and Miss Luke.
- Congratulations to the children who have represented the school at sporting events this half term. These events included Years 3 and 4 football team at the Elwen Owen Cup and Years 5 and 6 who took part in the Cross Country at Buckley Common this morning. Great team spirit as always with a number of successes too!
- We had our class photographs this half term and all the details on how to order them have been emailed -as already reminded please respect GDPR.
- We completed our termly Fire Drill and our termly Safer Inside drill will be next half term.
- Thank you to Rev Chris and Open the Book for leading two assemblies this half term. Rev Chris spoke to us about the importance of listening and with Open the Book we learnt about trust.
- We celebrated National Numeracy Day this week and the children enjoyed completing lots of different fun numeracy activities. It was also lovely to see a number of parents at our 'Help your Child Love Maths' session. Thank you to Mrs Mountain for leading this. All the children should have received their 'scrapbook'. These will be going home each half term and they will hopefully provide a lovely opportunity for you to take part in fun maths at home and we can continue to promote both with the children and adults how exciting and useful maths can be.
- Congratulations to Lillie in Year 5 who won the lunchtime prize from Newydd -a family ticket on the Chester Sightseeing Bus.
- We will be welcoming back Mrs Hollinrake who is returning to school after her maternity leave. Mrs Hollinrake will be working across the school completing PPA cover. That means we won't be seeing Mr Roberts as much next half term however we are pleased that he will still be working with us on Fridays in Years 3/4 and Year 1/2.

CLASS ORGANISATION 2026-2027

We are aware that some parents are already wondering about school organisation for next year, 2026-2027. Although as a school we continue to focus on the current school year we have made decisions about the organisation and thought it would help to share this with you now.

For those of you unaware Southdown Primary School has historically been a 2-form entry school however with changing demographics and challenging school budgets across the county and Wales the organisation of the school has to be considered each year and adapted where needed.

Our 'Moving Up' morning isn't until Friday 26th June so information in regard to class teachers, staff and rooms won't be shared until this date with both children and families.

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| • Nursery morning | • Year 1 | • Year 4/5 x 3 |
| • Reception x 2 | • Year 2/3 x 3 | • Year 6 x 2 |

DIGITAL SAFETY

We want to take a moment to highlight some important concerns around children's online activity at home. Although our children receive strong and regular online safety learning in school, what happens on devices outside school hours has a significant impact on their wellbeing. Increasingly, we are seeing issues linked to apps and social media platforms that children are not developmentally ready for, and which they are far below the required age to use safely.

Some of the language being used in children's WhatsApp groups has been inappropriate and, at times, quite shocking. It's clear that the sense of distance and anonymity behind a device can lead children to behave in ways they would never choose face-to-face.

Please take time to check your child's devices, review the apps they are using, and speak with other parents if you notice anything worrying or inappropriate. These conversations are most effective when they happen at home and between families, rather than once issues spill into school.

Even if your child does not have a mobile phone, please remain aware of other potential concerns linked to excessive digital use – including gaming, YouTube, and shared devices. Healthy boundaries help protect children's wellbeing and support their development.

Online safety is not about fear. It is about awareness, boundaries, and protecting childhood in a world where technology is everywhere. Our Digital Wizards will continue to send out their monthly newsletter with tips, advice, and support to help you navigate this ever-changing online world.

ESTYN INSPECTION OF LOCAL AUTHORITY

We have been informed that Flintshire's Education and Youth Portfolio has received notification of its Estyn Inspection. This will take place during July. The LA has asked us to promote the Estyn survey with school families and staff so that Estyn can hear your views. This is open on the Estyn website and can also be accessed using the following link: <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/V3H6VY/>

A FEW REMINDERS

- We appreciate that the Trim Trail (playground) is currently out of action but a reminder that this area, the twizzly bars and both grassed hill areas should not be accessed by any children or adults after school during pick up time. For Health and Safety reasons these areas are for use during school time only and under staff supervision. Thank you for helping us keep everyone safe by respecting these boundaries.
- Although many of us love dogs, they are not permitted anywhere on the school premises. We've noticed some families bringing dogs along the school path, including during Sunshine Club hours. To ensure the safety and comfort of all children and families, please avoid bringing dogs onto the site at any time.
- We know that the better weather does help but it has been lovely to see so many children walking and riding their bikes/scooters to school. If your child does use a scooter or bike to travel to school, please can you ensure that an appropriate safety helmet is worn at all times. If children are not wearing a helmet we will ask that scooters and bikes remain at home. We want our children to be safe so appreciate your support with this.

DATES

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| • Monday 1 st June: | Back to School |
| • Monday 1 st June: | Year 6 Leavers Photo -The Leader (<i>full uniform, no trainers or hoodies</i>) |
| • Tuesday 2 nd June: | Talk with Me for New Nursery parents (6 weeks) |
| • Monday 8 th June: | Whole School Photo - <i>full uniform, no trainers or hoodies. School jumper or cardigan no fleeces. Nursery afternoon to be in school in the morning only.</i> |
| • Wednesday 10 th June: | Reception trip to Blue Planet Aquarium |
| • Wednesday 10 th June: | Year 5/6 Cricket Competition |
| • Thursday 11 th June: | Year 1 and 2 trip to Explore |
| • Monday 15 th June: | Wellbeing Week starts |
| • Tuesday 16 th June: | Years 3 to 6 Sports Day at 1.30pm |
| • Tuesday 16 th June: | New Nursery 2026 Parents meeting at 6pm |
| • Wednesday 17 th June: | Year 1 and 2 Sports Day at 1.30pm |
| • Thursday 18 th June: | Reception Sports Day at 2pm |
| • Friday 19 th June: | Non-Uniform Day (for the Summer Fair) |
| • Monday 22 nd June: | Year 3 and 4 Egyptian Day |
| • Tuesday 23 rd June: | Year 5 Team Building at Elfed High School |
| • Tuesday 23 rd June: | New Reception 2026 Parents Meeting at 6pm |
| • Thursday 25 th June: | Nursery Sports Day at 10.45am and 2.15pm |

- Friday 26th June: Year 6 Transition at Argoed & Elfed
- Friday 26th June: Moving Up Morning (Nursery to Year 5)
- Friday 26th June: New Nursery Stay and Play -10am
- Wednesday 1st July: Year 4 Puzzle morning at Elfed High School
- Wednesday 1st July: Summer Fair after school
- Wednesday 8th July: Llangollen Eisteddfod -Cryw Cymraeg & Choir
- Friday 10th July: School Reports to go home
- Monday 13th July: Nursery & Little Rays Trip to Park Hall Farm
- Monday 13th July: Report parents meeting 4-5pm (only if needed)
- Tuesday 14th July: Buckley Jubilee (School Closed)
- Wednesday 15th July: Year 6 Bowling
- Thursday 16th July: Year 6 Leavers Assembly at 9.15am
- Friday 17th July: School Closes for the Summer

School Calendar 2026-2027

Autumn Term		
Staff Training Day	Tuesday	1 st September 2026
School Opens	Wednesday	2 nd September 2026
School Closes (Half Term)	Thursday	22 nd October 2026
Staff Training Day	Friday	23 rd October 2026
School Opens	Monday	2 nd November 2026
School Closes (Christmas)	Friday	18 th December 2026
Spring Term		
Staff Training Day	Monday	4 th January 2027
School Opens	Tuesday	5 th January 2027
School Closes (Half Term)	Friday	5 th February 2027
School Opens	Monday	15 th February 2027
School Closes (Easter)	Friday	19 th March 2027
Summer Term		
School Opens	Monday	5 th April 2027
May Day	Monday	3 rd May 2027
School Closes (Half Term)	Friday	28 th May 2027
School Opens	Monday	7 th June 2027
Buckley Jubilee	Tuesday	13 th July 2027
School Closes (Summer)	Friday	16 th July 2027
Staff Training Day	Monday	19 th July 2027
Staff Training Day	Tuesday	20 th July 2027