



## *'Child centred learning in the heart of the community'*

14<sup>th</sup> February 2025

Dear Parents and Family Members

We have enjoyed a busy and productive few weeks here at school which you can read all about in the sections below.

We have been focused on self-belief and the importance of using mistakes as a learning opportunity to support future challenges we may face. The children had some fantastic suggestions of how to grow their confidence and have been encouraging each other to try new things.

We have also welcomed John Bailey, our Town Councillor, and Jeremy from Ilchester Parish Council for an assembly about how to care for and improve Ilchester. The children have been invited to support the councillors with some traffic data and will be contributing to the initiative 'Truck Watch'. The children demonstrated our value of curiosity by asking some thoughtful questions. This opportunity will support the children's learning in both Geography and Maths.

You can read about the learning opportunities that have been happening for your child below in the class paragraphs. As always, Reception and Pre-School will communicate independently.

### [Class 3](#)

We have had a very exciting week in Class 3 this week as on Tuesday we arrived in our classroom to find an invitation to a Wild Rumpus! We had great fun chanting, stomping, dancing and feasting under the trees before heading back to the classroom to write about our experience! The children produced some fantastic independent writing! Great work, children.

In Maths, we have been learning about measure. We have used scales to measure weight, rulers to measure length and a selection of containers to

measure capacity using both standard and non-standard units. We are now learning to measure the time and tell the time using analogue clocks.

In Geography, we followed a map and walked through the village, adding features such as the church and garage to the map as we walked. The children will be using these to create their own maps of Ilchester later this week.



## Class 4

Class 4 children have been very busy with some of our learning outside. We all enjoyed our walk to the Old School House; following a map of Ilchester. The Year 1s made it all the way to the pharmacy; they looked at lots of human and physical features. The Year 2s followed their maps carefully too and added symbols to their maps. Well done, it was a long walk!

We have been learning about 2D shapes. The Year 1s walked around the school looking for shapes in the outdoor environment. The Year 2s have been looking at regular and irregular shapes; this has been very interesting! Class 4 had a fantastic Number Day. We played number games, sorted the numbers we were wearing in number order and talked about odd and even too. The most popular number was 7. Amelia thought this was because it was on the 7th February.



In English, we have had fun with poems and performing them in different ways. The children have enjoyed rhyming poems, we focused on the 'Dinner time rhyme' where people's names and foods rhyme. This week we have researched some different animals on the iPad and described them to create our own rhyming poems.

Class 4 has been very enthusiastic and keen to learn Spanish. The children can count from 1-30. We have learning to say, 'Good morning', 'Good afternoon', 'yes', 'no' and 'thank you'. We love practising for the register! Keep up the Spanish words, Class 4.



## Class 5



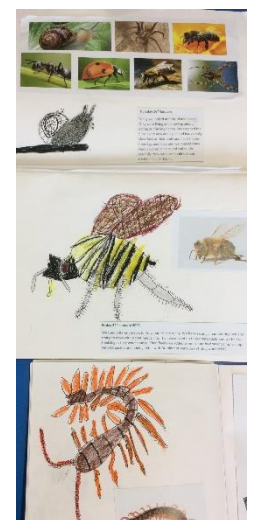
In English, we have been enjoying the story of 'Red and the City' by Marie Voigt. It is a twist on the traditional tale of 'Red Riding Hood'. Through this unit we have written setting descriptions of the city, diary entries pretending we were Red and instructions of how to get to Grandma's house so that Red doesn't get lost again.

In Maths we have been looking at data handling and 2d shapes. We had great fun on Number Day tallying the colour of Smarties and different Haribo in a pack. We then produced block graphs and answered questions about our data. On Number Day we also had a great game of Bingo.



We have concluded our Geography topic on our local area and enjoyed our walk down to the old school in the village. We looked at the features / landmarks we passed and then created maps of our routes for others to follow.

This half term in art we have been doing a unit on collage and looking at the work of Eric Carle who illustrated the 'Hungry Caterpillar'. We started off drawing insects and plants and then moved onto collage. Here is a sample of our work.



Lucas

Arwyn

Amiyah

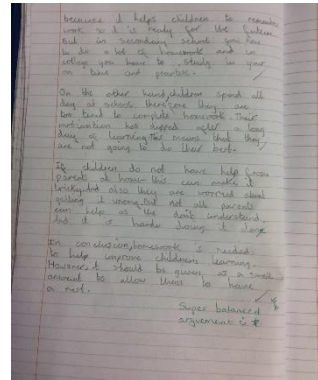
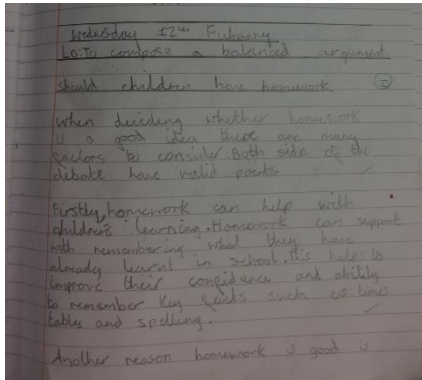
Lucas

Reuben Y  
Grace  
Maisie



## Class 6

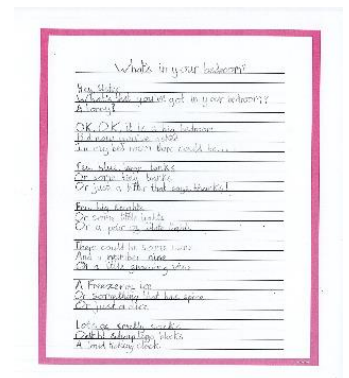
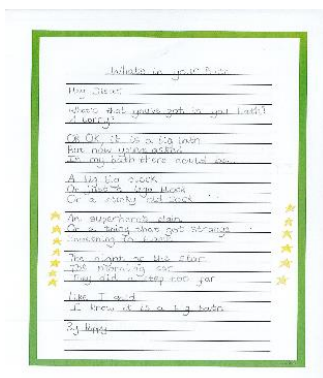
Over the past week, the children have delved into the features of a balanced argument, learning how to present both sides of a debate effectively. To put their skills into practice, the children have composed their own balanced arguments on a topic they feel quite passionate about: "Should children be given homework?" This topic has sparked lively discussions in class, and it is wonderful to see the children engage with their thoughts and opinions. They have expressed various viewpoints, considering the benefits of homework as well as potential drawbacks.



## Class 7

The children have experienced poetry by children's favourite, Michael Rosen, over the last few weeks, exploring how poem performances can be improved through the use of gesture, facial expression and voice tone. Pupils then discovered different language tools such as rhyme, alliteration and onomatopoeia which allowed them to innovate 'What's in your bag?' to create some fabulously imaginative and humorous poems.

In Maths, the children have polished up their times tables knowledge through the use of written multiplication and fractions, and on NSPCC Number Day recently showed great imagination when coming dressed as a number. Alice Kettle and Hannah Rae have been the focus artists of the children's work in art this term, exploring their use of textiles and paint to create landscape images with real depth and texture.



## Class 8

Class 8 have had a fantastic time since our last update!

In Maths, we have been delving into solving reasoning problems using multiplication. This has given the class a chance to create their own word problems and test each other. We have also started to work on understanding how to use the bus stop method for division and, surprisingly, they absolutely loved it! Some children even asked if we could do it again later in the week! In English, we have been working on writing an explanation text based on a poem by Valerie Bloom. This has involved reading the poem, picking out the themes, and trying to understand its meaning. The children then turned that understanding into an explanation text! It's been very tricky work, but they are absolutely smashing it and producing some incredibly thoughtful pieces.

In Science, we have been exploring food chains, focusing on which organisms are producers and consumers. The children have shown great enthusiasm for this topic, and their understanding of ecosystems is growing stronger each week!

In Art, the class has been working with Mrs Khan-Davis to produce some beautiful mixed-media artwork that incorporates both painting and sewing. The children began by exploring various painting techniques, including watercolours and acrylics, to create vibrant backgrounds for their pieces. They then learned basic sewing skills, using colourful threads to add texture and intricate details to their artwork.



## Class 9

It has been a fantastic end to the half term for Class 9! The children have continued to push themselves and apply their learning across many different topics.

In their English unit, Class 9 have been learning about the poet, Karl Nova. The children have found his rap-style poetry to be engaging and they have enjoyed performing his poems as well as applying his style to write their own.

In Maths, the children have continued to explore key areas including fractions, decimals, time, coordinates and the four operations. It has been lovely to see the children's knowledge and confidence grow and grow!

An area which feels particularly topical at the moment, is our study of natural disasters and specifically flooding, where the children have learnt about the Somerset Floods of 2014 and taken part in a workshop to find out more about how to manage floods. The children have enjoyed many experiments and investigations in science over the last few weeks to observe forces in action - they were especially excited to participate in a STEM workshop centred around the forces acting on drones.



What a busy few weeks, Class 9! You should all be proud of yourselves so have a well-earned break.

### Class 10

Last week, the children from Class 10 participated in a Flooding Assembly and Workshop. The assembly focused on what flooding is; where flooding might happen; what to do if faced with any flooding and how we can look after the environment. Our visitors, Bel and Paul, were able to talk through their job roles and how they support the county with preventing flooding.



The workshop involved exploring the flood map of Ilchester – identifying key areas and suggesting ways that we could prevent flooding from happening in the future. This continued to explore a 'grab bag', within the grab bag Bel was able to talk about the different items that can be used if faced with flooding. This included food, a blanket, a torch and a whistle – the children explored why she needed each of these items to keep safe.





## Class 11

Another half term at school has passed and the children have had a fantastic start to 2025. They have been incredibly enthusiastic during our Spanish lessons, learning the names of different colours and shapes—their pronunciation has been brilliant!

In English, this week, the children have applied their Geography knowledge to write superb explanation texts about *How Volcanoes Erupt*. We were also very lucky to welcome visitors who delivered engaging workshops all about flooding. The children learned what essentials to pack in an emergency bag in case of a flood and even created their own emergency kits. They also discovered how beavers help prevent flooding by building dams and had the chance to make their own dams out of clay, testing them to see if they could slow down the flow of water.



## Renovation Works

As you are already aware, Storm Bert removed the roof from our mobile classrooms at the Infant Department which led to the children being relocated to other spaces across the school.

This has led to a large insurance claim to replace the existing classrooms which I am sure you can appreciate has required support from various external experts.

I am delighted to inform you that I have met with our building contractor and surveyor today to look at options for a viable replacement.

It has been confirmed that the intention is for the demolition of the existing huts to begin next half term with the new building expected to be in place by June. I am sure the children will enjoy following the progress of the project.

The pond at the front of the Infant Department is also due to be renovated over the coming months with the intention of ensuring safety for the children and making the entrance more welcoming for all.

In other news, we have been busy removing various sheds and fencing from the Reception outdoor area in preparation for a full renovation of the area.

I am looking forward to seeing the improvements of our school over the coming months.

### Basketball

On Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February, our basketball team took part in a tournament at Bucklers Mead School in Yeovil against seven other local schools. The boys finished in a very creditable 5<sup>th</sup> place, especially when you consider that it was their first tournament and they came up against some considerably bigger and more experienced opposition.

The team drew three of their games and lost only one match against the eventual second placed team. Well done, all.



### Cross Country

The cross-country season restarted after its winter hiatus on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February with the fourth race of the season at Bucklers Mead School in Yeovil. The team showed great effort and determination in some sticky and extremely cold conditions to put in some fabulous performances; with 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Year 4 boys and Year 5-6 boys' races and the girls' Year 5-6 team posting a very competitive 91 point team total in their race. The remaining races will be on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at Aldon Hill and Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March at Yeovil Rec, put the dates in your diary.



### E-Safety from Mr Raine

#### **Online Gaming Safety**

As online gaming continues to grow in popularity among children, it's essential to ensure that they are engaging in these activities safely.



While gaming can provide entertainment, social interaction, and even educational benefits, it also comes with potential risks.

Here are some important guidelines to help you support your child's gaming experience while keeping them safe.

### **1. Understand the Games Your Child Plays**

Take the time to familiarise yourself with the games your child enjoys. Each game has its own age ratings, rules, and community guidelines. Websites like Common Sense Media provide detailed reviews and insights into the content and appropriateness for different age groups.

Fortnite - 13+

Minecraft - 8+

Roblox - 13+

Among Us - 10+

*\*Ratings according to common sense media*

### **2. Set Clear Boundaries**

Establish rules around gaming time, including how long and when your child can play. Encourage a healthy balance between gaming and other activities, such as outdoor play, reading, and family time. Games are designed to provide players with frequent feelings of positive feedback. This can sometimes lead to frustration or disconnection from activities that offer slower or more long-term benefits, such as reading. While it can be challenging, it's important to encourage children to engage in a variety of activities to achieve a balanced and fulfilling experience.

### **3. Monitor Online Interactions**

Many online games include chat features that allow players to communicate with one another. Be aware of who your child is interacting with and educate them about not sharing personal information, such as their name, address, or school details. Discuss the importance of recognising and reporting inappropriate behaviour.

### **4. Use Privacy Settings**

Encourage your child to utilise privacy settings available on gaming platforms. These settings can limit who can communicate with them and ensure that their profiles are not publicly accessible.

### **5. Play Together**

One of the best ways to understand your child's gaming experience is to join them! Playing together not only strengthens your bond but also allows you to observe their interactions and the game's content firsthand.

### **6. Discuss In-Game Purchases**

Many games include options for in-game purchases that can lead to unexpected costs. Talk to your child about the importance of asking for permission before making any purchases and consider setting up parental controls to limit spending.

## **7. Encourage Open Communication**

Create an environment where your child feels comfortable talking about their gaming experiences. Encourage them to share any concerns or negative experiences they encounter while playing. This open dialogue will help you support them effectively.

Online gaming can be a really fun and enriching activity for children, but safety should always come first.

By following these guidelines and maintaining an open line of communication, you can help ensure that your child's gaming experience is both enjoyable and secure.

## **[Internet Safety Day 2025](#)**

On February 11, 2025, our school participated in Internet Safety Day, embracing this year's theme: "Too Good to be True." This important event aimed to educate our students about online safety and encourage them to think critically about the information they encounter on the internet.

To kick off the day, students watched an informative BBC live lesson focused on recognising scams and understanding the importance of questioning online offers that seem too good to be true. The lesson provided valuable insights into how to identify misleading information and the significance of protecting personal information online. Our students were engaged and participated actively, asking thoughtful questions and sharing their thoughts about online safety.

Following the live lesson, students took part in an exciting gameshow quiz designed to reinforce the topics discussed. This interactive quiz tested their knowledge on internet safety, including identifying scams and understanding safe online practices - as well as how to generally contribute to a 'positive' internet. More information, including the quiz, can be found on our website:  
[Click Here To Find Out More](#)

## **[KS1 Geography Fieldwork](#)**

This week, our Key Stage One classes have been working on developing their geographical skills and have been out and about in the town completing fieldwork activities.

The children followed a simple map to walk from the Infant School down to Ilchester Pharmacy. Whilst we were walking the route, we stopped and added both human and physical geographical features such as the church, garage, river and museum to our maps using a symbol to represent each feature.

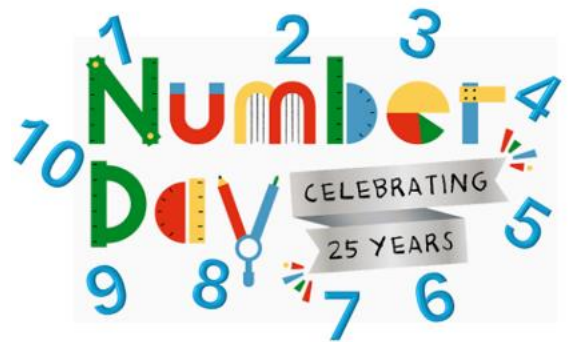
Back in the classroom, the children have drawn their own maps to show the route that we walked and adding symbols to their maps using a Key.

During our fieldwork we have also been using maps to teach simple compass directions and locational language such as North, South, East, West, Left and Right.



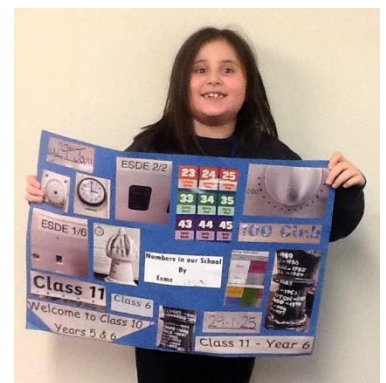
### NSPCC Number Day

It was wonderful to see so many children taking part in NSPCC Number Day last week. I was lucky enough to visit classes across the school to see the fun maths activities on offer in the classes.



As part of Number Day, it was fantastic to see so many children come dressed as a number, with plenty of inventive ideas on display! We had football kits, face paints, custom-designed t-shirts, and so much more. The creativity was incredible, and it really added to the excitement of the day.

A massive thank you and well done to all the children who took part in the "Finding a Number in the Wild" competition. We received such a wide range of entries, each one unique and thoughtfully put together, which made choosing the winners a very tough job! But a very well done to Imogen, Esme, Charlie and Aras - our winners.



The children had a brilliant time exploring how maths connects to real-life situations in their lessons, all while raising awareness for the important work of the NSPCC.



We are pleased to announce that the school raised a grand total of £187.10. Below, you'll find some photos and entries from the day that showcase the fantastic effort and fun everyone had!



### SEN Update from Mrs King

Class teachers have been busy reviewing the children's APDRs (Assess, Plan, Do, Reviews) and are in the process of writing new ones for Spring / Summer. The APDRs will be shared with you by your child's class teacher after half term.

Following the Parental SEN Questionnaire we have been busy implementing changes as per your feedback. Improving communication was one of the requests and so many of you may have noticed that written correspondence is now being sent as and when external professionals are visiting children or EHCP requests are being sent off. The SEN section of the school website is also being updated regularly to offer parents vital information too. We hope that you are finding this to be a positive change.

Please be reminded that the next SEN Coffee Morning will be at 9am on Thursday 13th March at the Infant Department. All SEN parents will be sent an invitation via ParentMail nearer the time.

### Disco

Last night, the children had a fantastic time at the FIS disco. They showed off their 'Colour Pop' outfits and enjoyed showing off their imaginative dance moves. The event raised a magnificent £840.45 which will be used to subsidise the travel costs for school external visits over the next two terms.

I would like to thank Matt and the whole FIS team for all their time, efforts and support in organising such a brilliant event.

### STEM Workshop

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February, the Year 5 and 6 children participated in an exciting and engaging STEM Workshop which centred around the fascinating world of drones.

Under the guidance of their enthusiastic instructors, the children were introduced to the fundamental principles of flight, including the forces of lift, thrust, drag, and weight. Through hands-on activities, they learned how these forces interact to enable a drone to soar through the sky. The workshop not only provided them with theoretical knowledge but also allowed them to apply what they learned by flying drones themselves, fostering a deeper understanding of aerodynamics in a fun and engaging way.

The children experimented with different flight patterns and observed how adjustments in speed and angle affected the drone's performance. This practical experience reinforced their learning and sparked curiosity about the science behind flight technology. By the end of the workshop, the students not only gained valuable insights into the mechanics of drones but also developed teamwork and problem-solving skills as they collaborated to troubleshoot challenges during their flights.



## Swimming

I am delighted that our KS2 children will be starting swimming again following the half-term. It has been a challenge to secure a suitable pool for the pupils.

The children in Class 9 will be the first children to swim and will be going to Huish pool at the Leisure Centre in Langport. The Leisure Centre will provide lifeguards and a qualified swimming teacher.

Other classes will be going swimming during the Summer Term. It is hoped this will be a fantastic opportunity for the children, ensuring they know how to stay safe in and around water.

## Message from Mrs Dickinson-Family Link Worker

Valentine's Day... You may or may not acknowledge it in your relationships, and you may or may not hold traditions around it and I have been reflecting on what it means for us.

I always think it is always a day where we show our love and appreciation to others but what about showing ourselves the same love?

Looking after yourself is the key to being able to look after others and manage the schedules of being a busy parent with young children. So, what does/could this look like for you?

Self-awareness is the first step. How are you feeling...calm, relaxed, frazzled, tired? How are you reacting to those around you...with care and nurture, or impatient and shouting?

How do you regulate yourself to a calm mental state...5 minutes to yourself whenever you can find it, a slow, short walk round the block, a run, a warm bath, simply locking the bathroom door for 2 minutes, mindfulness, time with friends, crafting?

What do you need from those around you? Can you ask for it?

Whatever Valentine's looks like for you, spare some love and kindness for yourself, especially during the school holidays.

Happy Valentine's Day.

Mrs Dickinson

### [EYFS Church Visit](#)

This half term, Reception have been leaning about people who help us in our local community. They have had visits from our school cleaners and site manager, the police and armed forces, and Reverend Bruce. The children have learnt lots about crossing patrols and road safety, water safety and coast guards, postal services and much more! There have been even more visitors this week and the children have enjoyed hearing all about their job roles and how they help us and our community. We even put our learning into action last week by walking to the church to see if we could spot some of the things we had learnt about. Thank you to our fantastic parent volunteers who braved the rain to support us!

### [Communication-Emailing Office](#)

Could I kindly request that any communication or queries are sent direct to the office mailbox [office@ilchestercommunityprimary.com](mailto:office@ilchestercommunityprimary.com) and not to Staff's personal email accounts. This will ensure that we can respond to communication in a timely fashion given that the office inbox is checked several times throughout the day.



## [Mighty Hike](#)

As communicated in the previous newsletter a number of school staff will be taking part in the Macmillan Mighty Hike across the Jurassic Coast. Our training has already begun and you might pass many of us marching around the Limington Loop.



We have already raised an incredible amount in memory of the wonderful Miss Waterfield. If you would like to sponsor us, you can do this via the link below. Any donations greatly appreciated.

[https://www.justgiving.com/team/waterfieldwarriors?utm\\_medium=TE&utm\\_source=WA](https://www.justgiving.com/team/waterfieldwarriors?utm_medium=TE&utm_source=WA)

## [Moderator Training Success](#)

It is always encouraging when staff are looking to further their career and to progress their knowledge and skills. To this end, I would like to congratulate Mrs Argent who has recently been successful in her application to become a writing moderator for the Local Authority.

Mrs Argent will be visiting various schools across Somerset to support them with their writing judgments. She will receive in-depth training which will provide great benefit to the pupils at Ilchester Community Primary School.

The children have enjoyed a wonderful half term filled with a range of learning and enrichment opportunities and have certainly earned a well-deserved half term break.

Some of our pupils will be performing in the Somerton pantomime of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs over half-term. The details can be found below.

I would like to thank all our parents and family members for their continued support and wish you all a wonderful half-term holiday.

Yours faithfully

Michelle Mordue  
Headteacher



## DATES FOR THE DIARY

Half-Term Holiday	
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Girlguiding World Thinking Day
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> February	Story Workshop (Classes 8 and 9)
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Story Workshop (Classes 3 and 10)
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	Story Workshop (Class 4)
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	Story Workshop (Class 5)
	Bedtime Stories 5.30 pm – 6.15 pm
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> March	Story Workshop (Classes 6 and 7)
	Book Swap Day
Monday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	Story Workshop (Classes 1, 2 and 11)
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> March	Parents' Evening Year R - Year 6
Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> March	Parents' Evening Year R - Year 6
Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup> March	SEN Coffee Morning – Infant Department – 9.00 am
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March	Years Three and Four - Easter Performance - Puss in Boots Junior Hall 6-7pm
Wednesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March	Years Three and Four - Easter Performance - Puss in Boots Junior Hall 2-3pm
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> March	Vision Screening – Reception 9.30am
	Scholastic Book Fair 3.20-3.45pm Infant & Junior Department
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> March	Scholastic Book Fair 3.20-3.45pm Infant & Junior Department
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> March	Mufti Day - Donations of Easter chocolate for FIS Bingo
Wednesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	Year Five - Stanchester Academy WOW Day
	Year Three Trip – We The Curious, Bristol
Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	FIS Easter Bingo (Details to follow)
Easter Holiday and Easter Bank Holidays	
Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April	Return to School

## Community News and Events



**Book your tickets using the link below**  
**[#snowwhite-sevendwarfs](#)**

There will be a talk on Ilchester Roman Cemetery at the Town Hall at 2.30pm on Saturday February 22nd. The speaker is Chris Webster, Historic Environment Officer at South West Heritage Trust based at Taunton. The recent work on dating some of the skeletons that were found in the 1980s will form part of the talk. The charge is £5 to include tea and cake.

The talk is organised by Ilchester Town Trust.

Tina Rowe  
Volunteer at Ilchester Heritage Centre