January 25

Heads Up!

Avalon School
Learning for Life

Dear Parent Carers,

Welcome back to Spring term, my very favourite term.

Daffodils are starting to raise their heads but we know that the bad weather is far from over. If we need to close the school because of bad weather we will endeavour to get the news out to you as soon as possible, by email and advertised on the Somerset County Council website https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/school-life/school-closures/

For those families who do not use technology, we will telephone you.

Despite this advice, we are always determined that the school should open for our awesome students, whatever the weather, and we would only close in extreme circumstances. You may of course, be notified by transport that your route has been cancelled, as was the case for one of our buses this week. In this case, and if school is open, you can bring your young person to school if you are able. If you are not able then they will be marked absent in the register and the reason will be noted as **Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available.** In all other circumstances, if the school is open, we will expect our young people to be at school, as usual.

Of course, if you are at all unsure, please give us a ring—unless the circumstances are extreme and unexpected, there will be someone on site from 7:30 who will try to answer your call or ring you back as soon as possible.

As ever, we work hard at Avalon School and I am proud of my staff team for all of the care and consideration they put in to the children you have entrusted to us. I hope you have enjoyed a winter break and enjoy the sight of those yellow flowers growing over the next weeks.

Amy Norris, Head of School

January 25

Communication

Avalon School
Learning for Life

Sign along
the communication charity
charity no: 1039788

At Avalon we have been on a real journey to improve communication systems for our amazing students.

'Signalong' sign language continues to be embedded and students in main school will have the option in the spring term to join Del and Louisa's 'Signalong Stars' lunchtime club which offers opportunities to learn and develop using Signalong to communicate. We will keep you updated on progress and celebrations.

New for January 2025 is Avalon's purchase of AAC programme called Grid 3 by Smartbox. This is a brilliant solution designed to enhance the learning experience for all students, Grid for Schools aids in communication and active participation in the classroom. It's designed for anyone with complex communication or access needs and includes a wide range of resources that you can control with touch, switch, eye gaze and pointing devices. We are thrilled and can't wait to become experts!

See next page for more information!

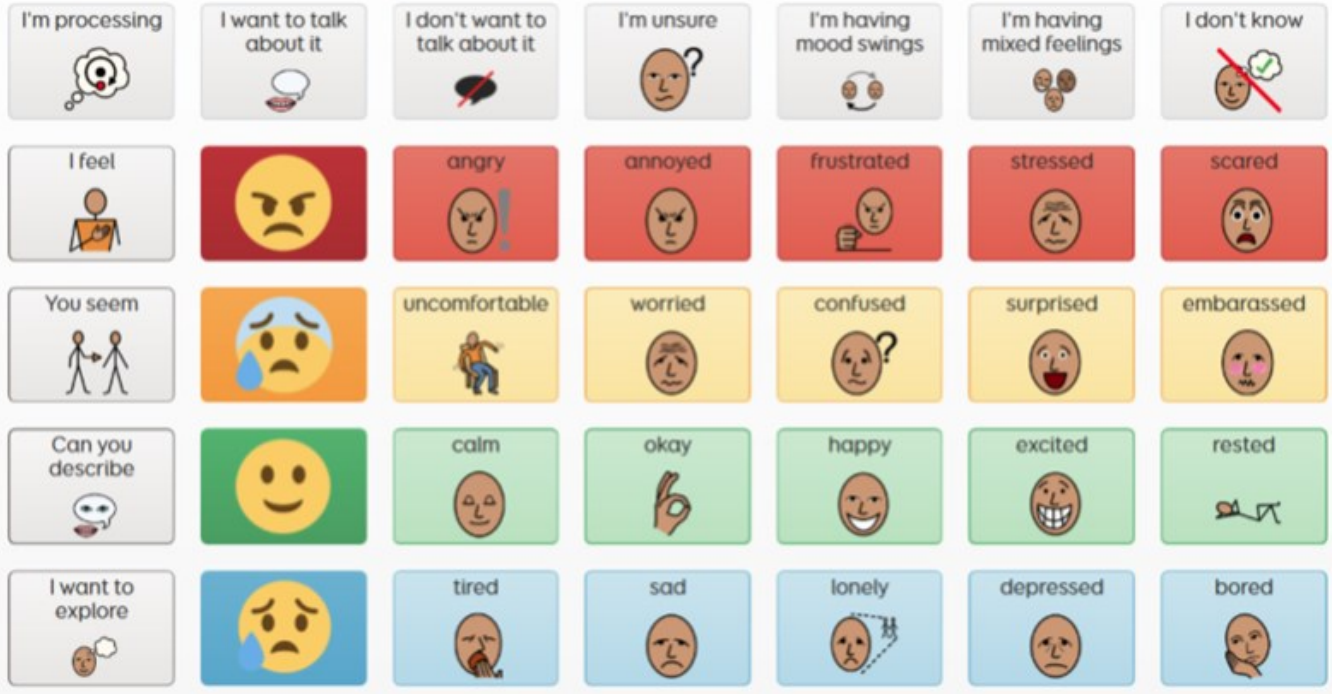
January 25

Curriculum

Avalon School
Learning for Life

Currently, when our children and young people are communicating, we use a mix of real items, symbols, pictures and communication aids that we have made for them so that they can understand and respond.

The new Grid for Schools will help us be consistent in our communication, it looks like this:



Some of our children use Eye Gaze technology and they ALREADY know how to use the new system so are the experts. Look at Bella using an iPad for communication!

January 25

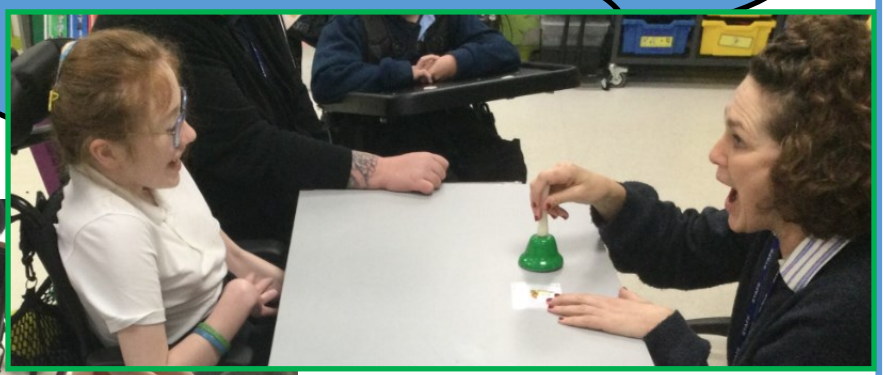
Curriculum

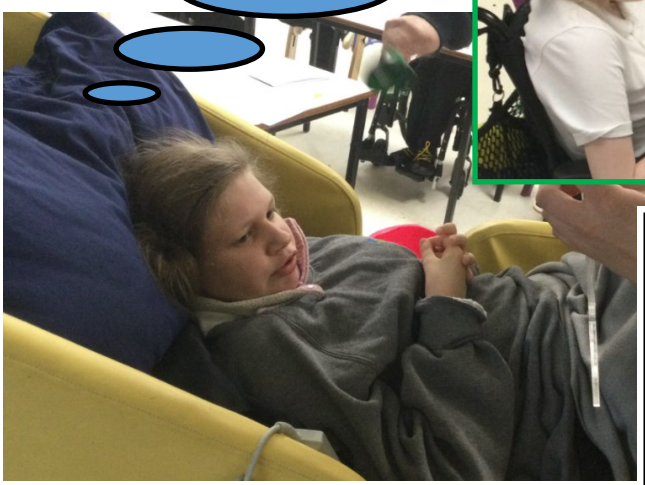
Avalon School
Learning for Life

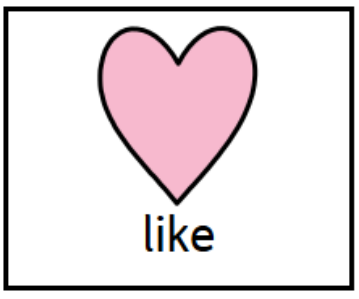
Please enjoy these pictures of Holly Class saying how they feel about different sensory experience. Soon they will be able to use the Grid to share their feelings with us!

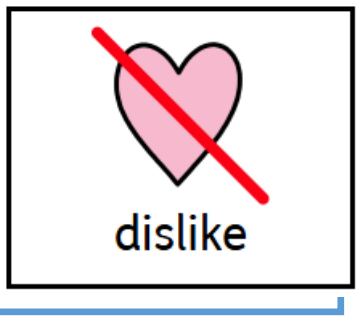
I can sing like a bell and that makes me happy

No I do not like the bell!









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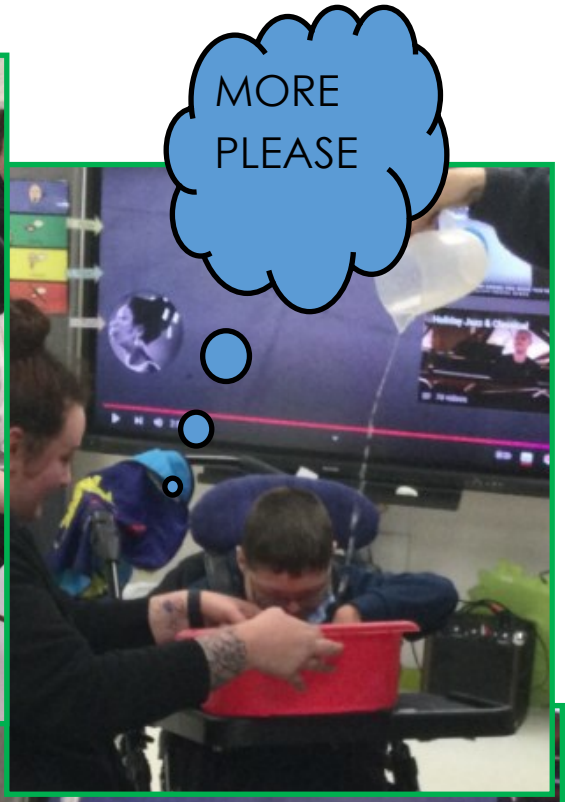

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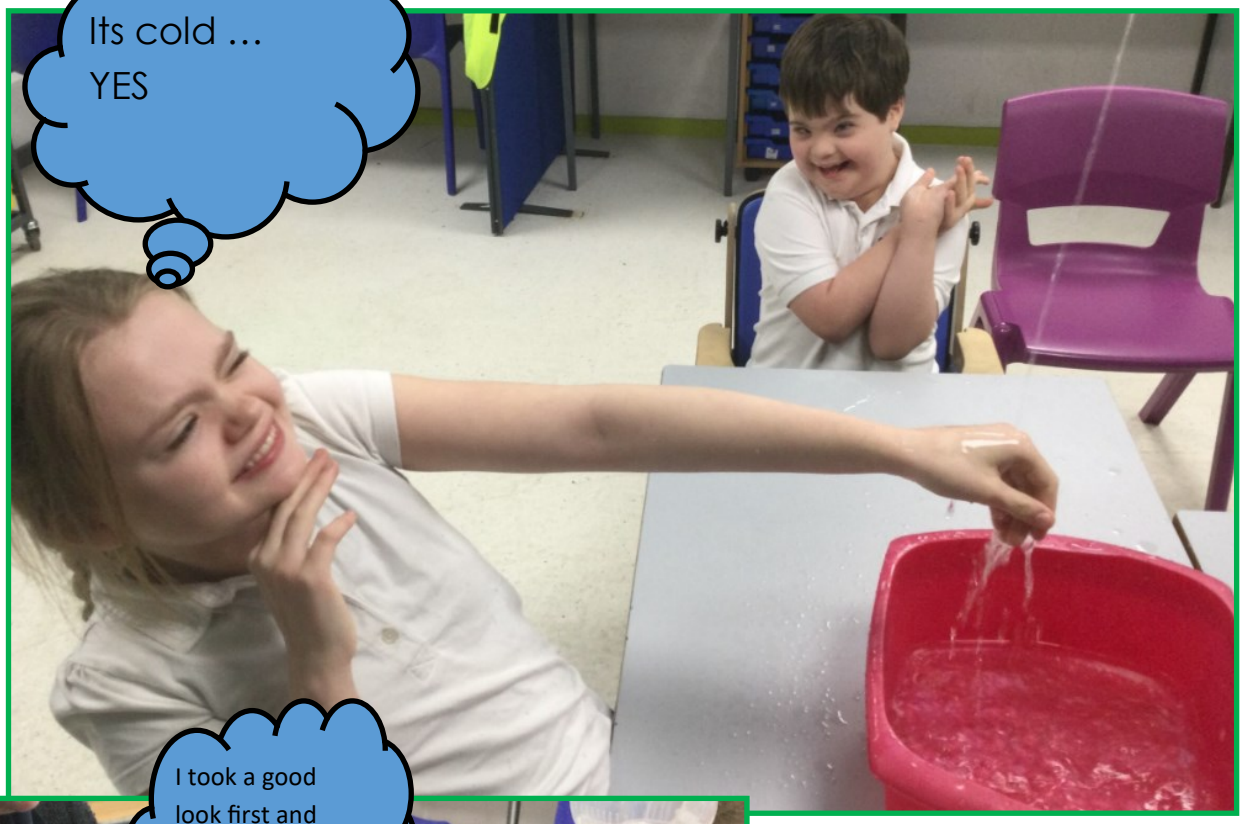

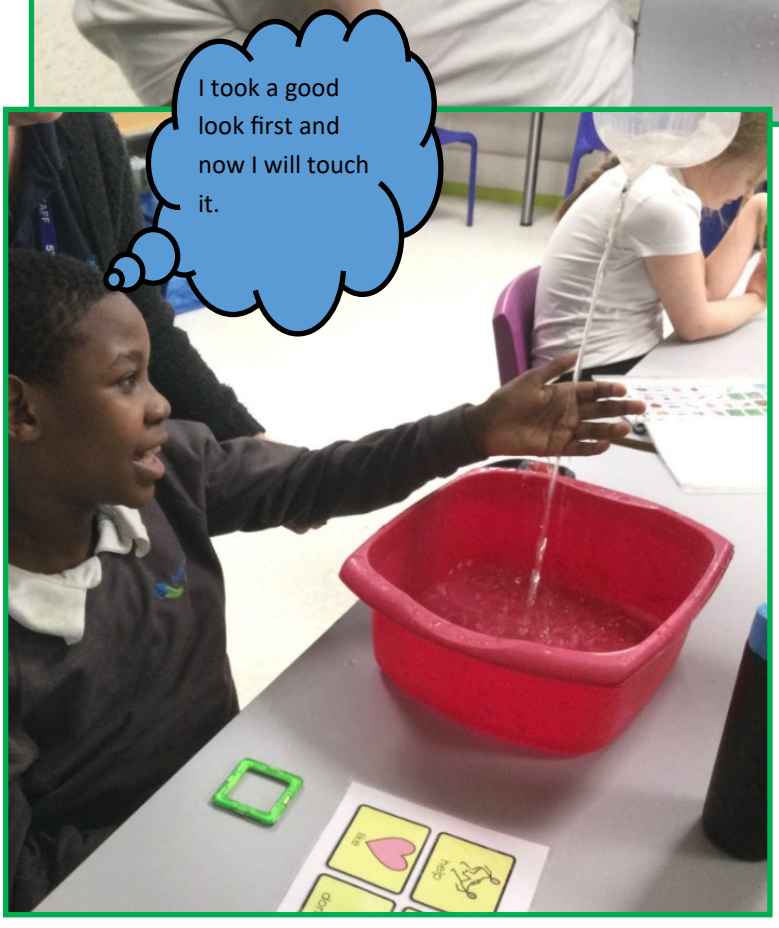

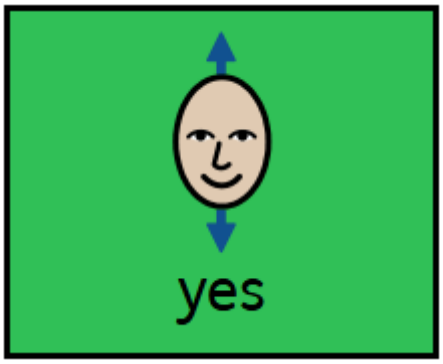

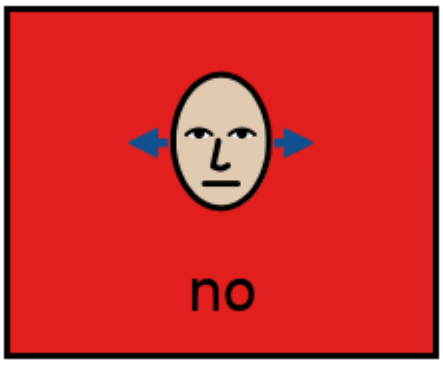

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January 25

PFSA News

My role as a PFSA for Avalon School

I work with the families of Avalon School to identify areas of support, help families achieve positive outcomes, which in turn have a positive effect on educational outcomes for their child. If you feel you need any support, please do get in touch with me.

We have a school parents Facebook page that we encourage you to join to keep up with all things going on at school. The page is named **Avalon School Parent Carer Support**.

Spare Uniform

If you have any outgrown uniform that is no longer needed, it will be gratefully received, please send it in to school with your young person!

The next parent coffee afternoon is taking place **Wednesday 22nd January 2-3pm**. We will be joined by the Parent Carer Forum who will share information and answer questions.

pfsa@avalonsch.uk

Tania Barry

January 25

Safeguarding

A letter from our designated safeguarding lead, Debora Corbett...

Dear Parents Carers,

I am writing to address an important issue affecting our students—social

media problems—and to ask for your help.

Over the past few months, we've seen an increase in social media arguments and fallouts among students. These issues are having a big impact on:

- Learning: It's making it hard for students to focus on their work.
- Mental Health: Many students are feeling stressed and anxious.
- Body Image: Some students are struggling with negative body image from social media.

What we ARE doing:

- We are teaching students about online safety as part of our curriculum.

What we CAN'T do:

- We can't get involved in social media issues that happen outside of school but will report anything that children raise at school to Children's Social Care and the police where necessary.

How you can help at home:

- Consider deleting apps like Snapchat, WhatsApp, and TikTok. These apps can create stress and lower self-esteem.
- Monitor your child's use of social media including What's App and support them by looking after their phones after a certain time in the evening.
- Consider a 'No phones in bedrooms' rule
- Report serious issues like threats or bullying to the police by calling 101. They are best placed to help.

We know this can be difficult, but working together will help students succeed. If you need advice on how to handle this, feel free to contact us.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely, Debora Corbett Assistant Headteacher / DSL

January 25

Can you help?

From this...

If you are throwing away any small items of wooden furniture, please could you let our office know and we will use it for upcycling work experience projects.

To this...

January 25

PTA

Please join us

PTA MEETING

of 2024-2025

WHO?	WHEN?	WHERE?
PARENTS GRANDPARENTS TEACHERS & STAFF COMMUNITY MEMBERS	DATE & TIME Wednesday 29th January 2-3pm	AVALON SCHOOL

WHY?

- Research shows that when parents are involved, children do better
- A great chance to stay involved and make important decisions
- Meet friends and be a part of something great – volunteering is healthy!

Refreshments provided!

We hope to see you there!

January 25

Opportunities

Avalon School
Learning for Life

Wessex Water COMMUNITY DROP in

Yeovil Library
King George Street
Yeovil BA20 1PY

Mondays 2025
10 February, 14 April
9 June

Drop in
10am to 12pm
and 1pm to 2pm

Or book a time to meet an adviser at **wessexwater.co.uk/community-drop-ins**

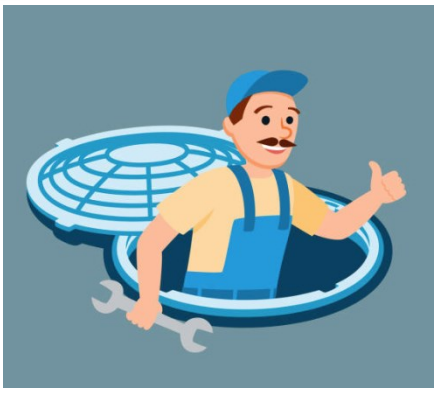
Come and meet Wessex Water

Chat to us in person if you have a query about:

- Your water bill
- Your water and sewerage services
- How to save water and prevent sewer blockages

Wessex Water
YTL GROUP

FOR YOU. FOR LIFE.



January 25

Up next...

Dates for your diary…

Spring Term: Curriculum focus areas for online safety, PSHE and Literature. If you would like further information about our curriculum, please do not hesitate to contact us!

Online safety focus for Spring Term: I am safe and secure

PSHE Focus:

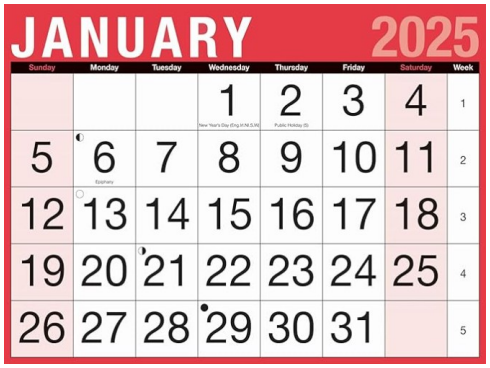
Spring 1 Managing Feelings/Dreams and Goals

Spring 2 Changing and Growing/Changing Me

Literature texts:

KS3 The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Sue Townsend

KS4 The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, Mark Haddon

6th Form Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Tennessee Williams

Parent Carer Coffee afternoon—joined by the Somerset Parent Carer Forum	Wednesday 22nd January 2-3pm
PTA meeting	Wednesday 29th January 2-3pm
Parent Carer Coffee afternoon	Wednesday 12th February 2-3pm
Half term	Friday 14th February
World Book Day	6th March
Save the dates for summer term...	
DofE Bronze Expedition	5-6 June
DofE Silver Expedition	11-13 June
Leavers Event	26th June