



# NEWSLETTER



## EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT



## Inclusion / AEN Update

### A Fresh Look for AEN

We are adopting the term Additional Educational Needs (AEN) to align with international COBIS standards. We are currently redesigning our staff structure to ensure our team can work in the most effective way to support students.

### Creating a Neurodevelopmental Pathway

We are hoping to collaborate with Health, Social Care, Police and Prison Service to discuss how we can support neurodiversity on St Helena. This is in its infancy and further updates will follow.

### New Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students who have additional support

We have designed a new IEP format that focuses on four areas of need:

- Cognition & Learning
- Communication & Interaction
- Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)
- Physical & Sensory

These will be shared with staff, students and parents soon.

### Expanding Our Support Toolkit

- Targeted Interventions: We are reviewing our programmes to ensure we have the right tools for every child's needs.
- ELSA Training: Between March and June, 10-12 staff members will train as Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). This will greatly increase our ability to support students' emotional and mental wellbeing.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### SHSS PTA Fundraiser Event

21 March, 2026

Afternoon Fun Games at SHSS - come along to enjoy a variety of activities designed for all ages.

### Austim Awareness

17 April, 2026

Mufti Day for Autism Awareness Month - Proudly wear blue to show support

### St Helena Autism Awareness Support Group

is hosting a number of events in celebration of Autism Awareness Month.

Thursday 19 March -  
Bake Sale

Saturday 18 April -  
Music Bingo

Sunday 26 April -  
Sensory Forest Walk

## Education Skills and Employment Director:

Dear All,

I have the pleasure of writing the latest update on all things educational. I would like to first extend my thanks to you all for your patience and support whilst we made some dramatic changes in January and reworked bus routes.

We have, in effect, closed three schools and reopened two. Students are settling well in their temporary locations, and though there has been a delay in commencing the building works at the KSI site, this has not had any knock-on implications on the reorganisation or our funding. Our implementation plan anticipated these risks and prepared us well. Students are safe, and their education continues whilst PMO secures the best contractors for the renovations.

The Portfolio covers much more than just the reorganisation of the primary schools. Our small but dedicated team is also working hard to improve our Post-16 offer, gain COBIS accreditation in the next 2-3 years, and improve safety and safeguarding in our schools.

We have established closer links with Government departments in the UK to further develop our research and Post-16 study offers. A Post-16 review will be launched shortly, allowing a fresh approach to how we support students in their transition from school to employment.

We have also started the work for COBIS accreditation and are in regular contact with our sister school on Ascension (Two Boats). Our COBIS lead and advisor will make his first visit to the island in the Spring of this year. This visit will begin the start of the evaluation process, which typically takes two to three years to complete.

This is a very busy, yet exciting time for the Portfolio. Given the number of changes underway and still to come, I would like to say a huge thank you again to staff, parents, and of course the students. They have done magnificently and we are proud of them.

They remain our priority.  
Many thanks to you all.



Ceri Morgan

## St Helena Community College (SHCC)

SHCC is excited to share some key updates. Recently, the College successfully hosted its first ACCA Session-Based Examination series at the Pearson Vue Testing Centre. Previously, these exams were held online, often presenting technical challenges for candidates. Holding the exams in-centre has created a more relaxed and supportive environment, allowing candidates to feel more comfortable and confident during their assessments.

Additionally, we are thrilled to have registered two UK-based trainers under our Qualsafe Awards Centre. Qualsafe Awards is a nationally recognised UK awarding organisation specialising in high-quality qualifications in prehospital care, first aid, health and safety, and vocational training. Our new trainers recently delivered the FREC3 (First Response Emergency Care Level 3) course to Emergency Services personnel in Montserrat, marking an important milestone in expanding our professional training offerings beyond St Helena.

All VRQs are now functioning smoothly after initial login and access issues with the SmartScreen platform were resolved by the City and Guilds team. Our 2025 cohort, consisting of five candidates, is making excellent progress. Their commitment and dedication to their studies are evident, and they are on track to complete the Level 3 Diploma ahead of schedule. The 2026 cohort, despite having just begun their studies, is also progressing well, with their dedication and commitment shining through.



Think Ahead

## Career Access St Helena (CASH)

The current Sixth Form programme is progressing well, with 29 first-year and 20 second-year students enrolled. In the past month, two students left the programme after securing full-time employment.

CASH is actively engaging with the current Year 11 students at the Secondary School, preparing them for the transition after school, including work experience and Sixth Form applications.

We continue to support unemployed clients, offering job-seeking assistance and skills development. In the last month, 39 visitors came to CASH for help. The Graduate Scheme, which runs over two years, is also making great strides. At the start of the scheme, there were four graduates, and one has since secured a permanent position with her work placement provider. A new graduate joined in October 2025, with a placement in ESEP in Inclusion.

The next steps for CASH include the Post-16 review.

## St Helena Research Institute (SHRI)

SHRI continues its ongoing collaboration with Public Health colleagues to develop research capacity, especially in data management and analysis. This partnership is helping to strengthen our ability to analyse and use data to inform future work.

Significant progress has been made in advancing our digital research capabilities, particularly with the adoption of REDCap. This platform is helping to streamline data collection and applications for the St Helena Research Council (SHRC).

Work on strengthening the governance of iRecord is also underway, aiming to improve system management and ensure smoother operations. Despite working remotely, collaboration with Annalea has been highly effective. Her support has been invaluable in advancing both iRecord and the Digital Research Library.

One of our Sixth Form students, Ruth, has been assisting with administrative tasks, helping ensure smooth and efficient operations.

While initial challenges were faced in managing relationships with project partners, these experiences have led to valuable reflection. We are now better equipped to define and approach equitable research partnerships in the future.

We have also encountered some difficulties with project finances, particularly in relation to SHCFP, but we are working

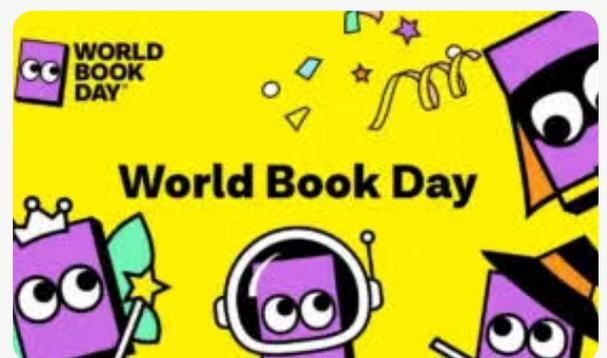
to improve communication and clarity with the finance department.

Looking ahead, SHRI will focus on completing capacity-building activities and expanding engagement with other licensed entities on St Helena. We aim to further strengthen data management practices, with a particular emphasis on supporting high-quality data analysis, ensuring licensed projects can effectively manage and interpret their data, thus enhancing research quality and impact across the island.

## Public Library

The holiday activities at the library saw a very good turnout. However, the extra activities offered by New Horizons during the holidays have impacted children's attendance at our craft days.

We are in discussions with New Horizons to avoid scheduling conflicts in the future. In the meantime, library staff is in contact with the creche in advance to estimate the number of children attending, helping us better allocate resources and time.



World Book Day was celebrated on 5 March 2026, with a special window display at Greenland's featuring new book arrivals.

Library members can contact the library to reserve any of the new books if needed.

## Primary School Reorganisation – Monthly Update

### The redevelopment of the KS1 school in Longwood is ongoing.

In the meantime, we have taken a phased approach to introducing the new Key Stage model – and we are pleased to say Phase 1 is well underway.

- Students are settling into their temporary Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 locations.
- The transition has helped us safeguard students and staff while renovation work begins.
- Teaching and learning have continued with stability and focus, even during a period of significant change.
- Most importantly, our children have shown resilience and adaptability – and we are incredibly proud of them.
- Now that the transition is in place, we are turning our attention to the exciting part: building the future of primary education across the 5 P's – People, Platform, Process, Programs, and Practice.

## The 5 P's – What This Means for Our Community

**People** – We are investing in our teachers, leaders, and support staff – strengthening skills, building confidence, and creating a shared vision for the future.

*Our goal is simple: a strong, supported workforce that helps every child thrive.*

**Platform** – We are improving our IT systems, digital tools, and learning spaces to better support modern teaching and communication.

*Stronger infrastructure means better learning experiences and more efficient operations for everyone.*

**Process** – We are streamlining how we work – clarifying roles, improving systems, and reducing unnecessary complexity.

*This will help us respond more quickly, communicate more clearly, and make better-informed decisions.*

**Programs** – We are strengthening our curriculum, enhancing support for students with additional needs, and aligning with international education standards through COBIS.

*This ensures every child receives high-quality, consistent learning – no matter their starting point.*

**Practice** – We are embedding strong safeguarding culture, consistent teaching approaches, and evidence-informed strategies across our schools.

*Our focus is on measurable impact – not just change, but meaningful improvement.*

### Looking Ahead

This reorganisation is about more than buildings. It is about creating safer schools, stronger teaching, and brighter futures for our children.

Thank you for your continued support as we take these next steps together.

## KS1 School Update

Since opening its doors on 12 January 2026, KS1 School has embarked on an exciting and dynamic journey. As with any new initiative, the early weeks have brought both challenges and opportunities for reflection. Through adaptability and teamwork, however, we have continued to move forward with purpose and confidence.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to our teaching and non-teaching staff, whose dedication and cooperation have been instrumental in guiding the school through its first half term. Their willingness to work collaboratively and respond positively to challenges has been a key factor in our progress. Indeed, collaboration has been a defining theme of this early stage of our development.

A significant focus during this period has been the establishment of systems and processes to ensure smooth and effective daily operations. As with any new organisation, these structures will continue to evolve as we refine our practices and build on our experiences.

From a curriculum perspective, the [Read Write Inc.](#) programme – which forms the foundation of early reading development in

the school – has been successfully introduced and embedded. Under the guidance of our Phonics Teacher, Mrs Deborah Augustus, staff have been supported and empowered to deliver specific elements of the programme. This structured approach is already helping to strengthen our literacy provision, and we look forward to developing it further.

After seven weeks, we are pleased to report encouraging pupil progress. Assessment information gathered during this period will allow us to review and adjust pupil groupings for the coming half term. This is particularly significant as one of the school's key performance indicators is the Year 1 Phonics Screening.



Children engaging in phonics sessions

In addition, a series of assemblies focused on kindness has been delivered and warmly received by pupils. It has been especially encouraging to see the positive relationships between staff and pupils continue to grow and develop during these early weeks.

Overall, the school has made a strong and promising start. We look forward to building on these foundations as we continue to develop KSI School in the months ahead.

## KS2 School Update

It has been a real pleasure to welcome our new staff, pupils and parents to our KS2 school. We sincerely thank all those who made it to our school familiarisation day on Thursday 12 February.

As many of you know, we are in the early stages of a significant new chapter, “wiring together” three schools – three histories, three sets of traditions, and three communities – into one unified, purposeful, whole.

Staff are learning to adapt to different leadership styles, getting to know each other and their unique ways of working, and building strong relationships.

Pupils are gelling well, having socialised during the Building Relationships' Week in October last year and participated in other island and community events through organisations such as New Horizons, Scouts, and Guides. We are all adapting to the new and sometimes longer school transportation routes; even the extreme heat in Jamestown this time of year is taking some getting used to.

Change of this scale is never simple. It brings with it challenges, questions, and at times, uncertainty. But it also brings something incredibly powerful: opportunity. Opportunity to reimagine what we can be, to build something stronger together, and to create a school that truly reflects the very best for our children.

As part of this journey, we are working towards COBIS compliance and aligning school policies with their expectations. We are also refining our strategies and classroom practice to cover subject content and skills in the core subject areas for the upcoming SATS in May.

This is not just about meeting a standard or ticking boxes—it's about ensuring that our school operates at an internationally recognised level of quality, consistency, and excellence. It's about strong teaching, clear expectations, effective leadership, and, most importantly, positive outcomes for our children.

But let me be clear: this is not a journey the school can take alone.

**We need your support in simple but meaningful ways:**

- **Supporting routines at home.**
- **Encouraging a positive attitude towards learning.**
- **Communicating openly with us.**
- **Trusting the process, even when things feel new or different.**

Your role as parents is absolutely vital. You are your children's first educators, their biggest supporters, and their most powerful role models. The partnership between home and school is one of the strongest predictors of a child's success – not just academically, but socially and emotionally as well.

There will be moments on the journey where things feel settled, and others moments where we are still refining and improving. That's the nature of building something new and ambitious. What matters is that we are moving forward together, with clarity, purpose, and a shared belief in what we are trying to achieve.

**If we get this right - and I truly believe we will** - then the benefits for our children will be enormous. So together, let's reaffirm our shared commitment. A commitment to collaboration, to patience, and to progress.

Thank you for your continued support, your trust, and your partnership.

**Together, we will achieve great things.**

Miss Elaine E Benjamin  
Head Teacher – KS2

## St Helena Secondary School



With the support of Corporate HR, Mrs Osborne is currently in the United Kingdom undertaking a series of exposure visits to a range of schools.

She is now in her second week and has been observing and learning from a variety of educational settings.

Her visits have focused on several important areas, including safeguarding practices, student wellbeing, PSHE and RSE provision, alternative curriculum pathways, and approaches to supporting students with additional educational needs.

Even while travelling, Mrs Osborne has already begun sharing a number of initiatives and ideas with the school team.

These insights will help us reflect on our own practices and consider new approaches that will continue to strengthen the support and opportunities we provide for all of our students.

## COBIS Update:

As part of the Portfolio's commitment to best practice, a COBIS Steering Group has been established to lead work towards COBIS Compliance and Accreditation.

COBIS (the Council of British International Schools) accreditation recognises high standards in teaching, leadership, safeguarding and organisational effectiveness.

Achieving this will demonstrate the strength of the Portfolio's systems and the quality of practice across our schools.

The Portfolio is now formally registered with COBIS, marking the first stage of the accreditation journey. A Lead Improvement Partner, Magnus Cowie, has been appointed to support the first five stages of the process – the compliance phase.

During this phase, schools must demonstrate that they meet core standards relating to governance, safeguarding and effective school operations.

This involves gathering evidence, reviewing systems and ensuring policies and practices align with COBIS expectations.

All of this work is building towards a COBIS Compliance Visit scheduled for November 2026, when COBIS representatives will review progress, examine evidence and evaluate how systems are implemented in practice. The visit will also provide professional guidance as the Portfolio continues through the accreditation process.

The first five COBIS standards focus on the core structures and responsibilities that ensure schools operate safely, ethically and effectively.

**Standard 1 – Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction** – This standard focuses on the clarity of the organisation’s vision and values, ensuring that they guide strategic planning, decision-making and school improvement. It also considers how the mission and ethos are understood and reflected in practice across the Portfolio.

**Standard 2 – Governance, Ownership and Leadership** – This standard examines governance structures and leadership arrangements. It ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, that accountability structures are effective and that governance supports strategic oversight and continuous improvement.

**Standard 3 – Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment** – Safeguarding is a central requirement of COBIS compliance. This standard focuses on robust safeguarding systems, staff training, safer recruitment processes and clear procedures for protecting children and young people.

**Standard 4 – Student Welfare, Care and Support** – This standard considers how schools support the wellbeing, safety and pastoral care of students. It includes systems for monitoring welfare, supporting vulnerable learners and ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities are embedded in day-to-day practice.

**Standard 5 – Staffing, Professional Conduct and Development** – This standard reviews staff recruitment, induction, professional expectations and ongoing professional development to ensure that staff are well supported and able to maintain high professional standards.

## COBIS Steering Group

**The COBIS Steering Group** has been formed to provide clear strategic leadership for this work. Its purpose is to lead, coordinate, monitor and assure the Portfolio’s readiness for COBIS Compliance and Accreditation. The group will oversee progress against the full range of COBIS standards and ensure that the evidence, actions and systems required for accreditation are in place and robust.

A key aspect of the group’s role is to ensure that the Portfolio continues to meet and strengthen safeguarding and safer recruitment requirements. It will also ensure that clear and comprehensive evidence trails are maintained for each standard so that the Portfolio can demonstrate both compliance and effective practice.

At this stage of the process, the Steering Group’s work is predominantly focused on Safeguarding, Governance and Policy development, with a number of workstreams currently underway. These workstreams are reviewing existing policies, strengthening governance arrangements and ensuring that safeguarding systems are fully aligned with COBIS expectations across the Portfolio.

## COBIS Steering Group Members:

The Steering Group brings together a range of leaders and specialists from across the Portfolio to ensure that the work is informed by expertise from different areas of practice.

List continues on next page

---

---

Director	Ceri Morgan
Assistant Director	Kerry Lawrence
Primary Senior Headteacher	Helen Gentle
Primary Headteacher	Elaine Benjamin
Primary Headteacher	Carlean Crowie
Senior SENCO	Nicky O'Donnell
Educational Consultant	Rachel Thwaites
IT & Data Coordinator	Phil Francis
Primary Advisory Support Officer	Pat Williams
Secondary Headteacher	Phil Toal

---

---