



30th January 2026

Dear parents/carers



Smartphone Free

As you know, Cottesmore hosted Smartphone Free Childhood's event back in January 2025. A recording of this informative event can still be watched via this link and still has a wealth of helpful information. So much has happened since this meeting and all in just one year.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JyAqYBf59zE>

Over the last year, the school has been invited to speak at Local Authority and Diocesan conferences as well as continuing to help other schools as they embark on their Smartphone Free journey. We helped the SFC team with a letter to all Year 6 families across the city, noting that phones weren't needed in secondary school, giving guidance and links. We set up Year 6 Smartphone Free Ambassadors and assemblies were held to discuss our mission. We met with Councillors and other members of the Local Authority to discuss our work and, in September, we heard that B&H Council had written a letter for all families in the city emphasising the harms associated with children's exposure to smartphones. Their letter also noted that they gave their full support to schools in Brighton and Hove who decide to become smartphone-free. They suggested that parents may wish to delay giving their children smartphones until 14 and encouraged them to sign the SFC Parent Pact.

<https://www.smartphonefreechildhood.org/parent-pact>



Headteacher Rachel Breen, Cottesmore Primary, Brighton



Rachel has been a driving force in Brighton's move towards healthier, smartphone-free childhoods.

- First school in Brighton & Hove to urge parents to delay smartphones, backed by clear, consistent communication through school newsletters.
- Helped ignite a city-wide movement by hosting a pivotal SFC Brighton panel event in January this year.
- Worked with SFC Brighton to draft a letter to Year 6 families at primary schools across the city, cosigned by all 10 secondaries in the area, stating that no smartphones would be needed to attend secondary school.
- Presented to Brighton & Hove Council leaders, which resulted in them writing to every family in the region urging them to delay smartphones until 14.
- Introduced a fully smartphone-free policy in September 2025, and supported other heads across the city, creating a genuine domino effect with many primaries following suit.
- Launched Year 6 smartphone-free ambassadors – with 17 pupils applying this year – and brought in local Year 10 student leaders to present to the whole school about the risks around smartphones.

Recently, Cottesmore was nominated for the monthly, national, Changemaker School Award and we were delighted to receive this. <https://us21.campaign-archive.com/?u=5378b40846e0948620c8eb668&id=6d89e34b70>

Our school remains Smartphone Free and children no longer bring Smartphones in (for collection on entry) and we continue to see a reduction in who has them at home. Staff continue to be Smartphone Free around the building (where the children could see) and phones aren't left on desks during staff meetings or training days. A big thank you to parents who have been following our encouragement not to use their own phones on school grounds either at drop off or pick up - your support is appreciated. Moving forwards, organisers from SFC are looking to build a thorough understanding of parent/ carer opinion on smartphone policies in schools across Brighton and Hove. Even though our school is already Smartphone Free, parent voice from our school would still be valued as they would like their survey results to include as many parents as possible. Their survey will be open until 28th February. It is anonymous and no personal data will be stored. Once the survey has closed, they will share the findings with parents, headteachers and local policy makers.



Please complete this survey to **share your views on smartphone policies** in Brighton & Hove schools.

- It only takes 2-3 minutes, is completely anonymous and no personal data will be stored
- All schools in Brighton & Hove will be asked to share this survey with their parents / carers
- The survey will close on 28th Feb 2026
- Please share with friends and families in Brighton & Hove



<https://sfcbrighton.co.uk/survey>



Brighton & Hove

sfcbrighton.co.uk

Have a lovely weekend and thank you for your ongoing support with regards to our Smartphone Free policy. Rachel Breen, Headteacher

Governor vacancy

School governors play a vital role in education. By volunteering as a governor for a school, you can make a difference by shaping the future of children and young people.

We will soon be in need of a Foundation (Catholic) Governor at Cottesmore. If you are Catholic and feel that you have some time to give to helping further develop our school, please do get in touch with our joint Chairs of Governors, Katie Raymond and Thomas Medveczky

katieraymond@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk

thomasmedveczky@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk

What is Governance?

The Governor's role is to both support and challenge the school leadership team. In their latest Governance Handbook, the Department for Education (DfE) is encouraging governors to focus on three core functions:

- Strategic Direction - ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Critical Friend - holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils;
- Ensure Accountability - overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

How do I start?

- Our Chairs would contact you for an informal chat to discuss the role, hours taken to fulfil it, how you would be supported etc. Following that, if still interested, as part of our school's commitment to Safer Recruiting practices, our Chairs would contact you for interview. This will also be an opportunity to plan specific roles that will suit you as a member of our body.
- You will be given a Diocesan Application Form. This includes a declaration that must be signed by a Parish Priest.
- As you would be working around young people, you would be asked to fill the forms for a standard DBS background check.

Please do consider offering your time in this very worthwhile voluntary position. For more information about Governance, you may wish to follow this link.

<https://www.nga.org.uk/about/become-a-governor-trustee/>



Club support

We are aware that there are a significant number of families who don't quite meet the criteria for Pupil Premium funding but are also finding things a challenge. We currently offer Pupil Premium children £50 towards a club of their choice, each term, so please get in touch if you have not yet accessed this. We also have access to some free spaces in a range of after school clubs, as well as holiday clubs, which we reserve for other families in certain circumstances. If you do not meet the criteria for Pupil Premium funding but are on a low income and finding it hard to fund such activities, please get in touch so we can see if we can help. All information will be treated in confidence but we will have to ask some personal questions in order to prioritise who gets what help. Email: annamullans@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk

Attendance

Evidence shows that good school attendance not only helps children develop but helps them in later life. If you are ever unsure as to whether you should keep your child off from school or send them in, please refer to this link.

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery



Permanent Admin Assistant – Finance & Personnel Cottesmore St Mary Catholic Primary School

Position: Admin Assistant – Finance & Personnel
Part time: Either:
5 days a week Term Time Only, 17.5 hours per week
8:45am - 12:15 pm; 9:00am -12:30 pm; or 9:30am – 13:00pm
OR
3 days a week Term Time Only, 16.5 hours per week
Monday - Wednesday or Wednesday - Friday (TBC)
8:30am-14:15pm; 8:45am -14:30pm; or 9:00am -14:45pm
Contract Type: Permanent
Grade: NJC Role C, Scale 5 Point 13-17 (£29,064 - £31,022 pro rata)
Actual Salary: £12,520 - £13,363 (for 17.5 hours per week) or £11,804 - £12,600 (for 16.5 hours per week)
Start: April 2026

The Governors wish to appoint an organised, motivated, flexible and committed Admin Assistant to work in our school for either 5 mornings per week or 3 days a week. The successful applicant will provide support with a wide range of financial processes such as orders, invoices, credit control, ParentPay, inventory records, school fund, lettings, bank reconciliations, updating /creating spreadsheets plus general personnel administration linked to recruitment, under the guidance of the School Business Manager.

The successful applicant will have experience in financial accounting or bookkeeping and be educated or working towards a Level 3 or equivalent qualification plus a minimum of 3 years office experience. They will be able to use their own initiative, as well as their experience and knowledge, to deal with differing queries and make decisions to carry out tasks effectively. The successful applicant will have excellent literacy and numeracy skills plus a good level of computer skills and support the Catholic vision of our school.

Applicants must have good inter-personal skills in addition to good numerical, literacy, computer skills with the ability to work accurately and with attention to detail.

Closing Date: 9am Tuesday 24th February 2026 (only successful candidates will be contacted)
Interview Date: Tuesday 3rd March 2026

The application pack is obtainable from the school website. Please contact Georgie Hodgson via email georgiehodgson@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk via phone on 01273 555811 if you would like to find out more information about our school and talk about the role. During half term please contact Rachel Breen via email rachelbreen@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk. We look forward to receiving your application.

Cottesmore St Mary Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



THANK YOU TO

Nicholas James

SALES LETTINGS AUCTIONS

Nicholas James will kindly donate to the PTA 20% of their commission for properties sold on behalf of Cottesmore families.



FOCP
PRESENTS

QUIZ NIGHT



Friday 13th March 2026

TIME: 19:00 – 22:00 (Quiz starts at 19:30)

VENUE: Hove Rugby Club Hove Recreation Ground, BN3 6NQ

THE CLUB IS SITUATED IN THE MIDDLE OF HOVE REC AND CAN BE ACCESSED VIA THE FOOTPATHS. FREE PARKING IS AVAILABLE ON THE SURROUNDING ROADS.

A licensed bar will be open on the night

**TICKETS
£10 each**

Also tables of eight available to purchase as a single booking



LIMITED TICKETS!



Kindly sponsored by
Hove Rugby Club



FEBRUARY HALF TERM HOLIDAY CLUBS

COTTESMORE ST. MARY'S, THE UPPER DRIVE, BN3 6NB

MON 16 FEB TRIBAL ADVENTURE: BUILD, CRAFT & SURVIVE!
TUE 17 FEB CAMPFIRE COOKOUT PANCAKE DAY SPECIAL & BUSHCRAFT
WED 18 FEB WE'RE GOING ON A YETI HUNT!
THU 19 FEB BUSHCRAFT VS MINECRAFT
FRI 20 FEB NERF: WILD WEST SHOWDOWN

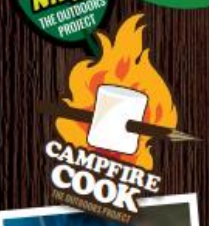
LANCING PREP HOVE, THE DROVEWAY, HOVE, BN3 6LU

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BRUNSWICK PRIMARY, SOMERHILL ROAD, HOVE, BN3 1RP

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For more info on dates, locations and how the clubs run & to book: WWW.THEOUTDOORSPROJECT.CO.UK



"NO SCREENS,
JUST GOOD
FUN OUTSIDE"

★★★★★



"BEST
HOLIDAY
CLUB AROUND"

★★★★★



MONDAY 9 th	
TUESDAY 10 th	• Safer Internet Day – extra online safety lessons in school • Year 5 school trip to Brighton Pavilion
WEDNESDAY 11 th	• International day of women in science
THURSDAY 12 th	Year 4 Viking workshop PTA uniform sale after school – items between £1 and £2
FRIDAY 13 th	PTA Valentines cake sale after school
HALF TERM Monday 16 th February – Friday 20 th February Outdoors Project Holiday Club on school field Tuesday 17 th February - Shrove Tuesday and Chinese New Year Lent - 18 th February to Thursday 2 nd April Saturday 21 st February - International Mother Language Day	
MONDAY 23 rd FEBRUARY	
TUESDAY 24 th FEBRUARY	Reception bikeability - children will be provided with a balance bike, or can bring their own, but ideally need to bring a helmet Year 3 Pedestrian Training
WEDNESDAY 25 th	Reception bikeability - children will be provided with a balance bike, or can bring their own, but ideally need to bring a helmet Year 4 St Lewinna Forest School am Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 26 th	• Reception bikeability - children will be provided with a balance bike, or can bring their own, but ideally need to bring a helmet
FRIDAY 27 th	• Reception bikeability - children will be provided with a balance bike, or can bring their own, but ideally need to bring a helmet • Year 4 Swimming
MARCH	
MONDAY 2 nd	• Fairtrade Fortnight (until 15th March)
TUESDAY 3 rd	• Year 3 Pedestrian Training
WEDNESDAY 4 th	• Year 4 St Cuthman Forest School am • Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm
THURSDAY 5 th	• World Book Day (dress in pyjamas and comfy clothes)
FRIDAY 6 th	• Year 4 Swimming • Year 1 and 2 PTA film show after school
SUNDAY 8 th	• International Womens Day
MONDAY 9 th	• Science Week
TUESDAY 10 th	• Year 3 Pedestrian Training
WEDNESDAY 11 th	• Year 2 St Monica Forest School am • Year 1 St George Forest School pm
THURSDAY 12 th	Parent Consultation zoom calls and face to face and SEN 3.15pm – 6pm
FRIDAY 13 th	Year 4 Swimming
MONDAY 16 th	• Year 5 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
TUESDAY 17 th	Year 5 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet) St Patrick's Day Parent Consultation zoom calls and face to face and SEN 3.15pm – 6pm Year 3 Pedestrian Training
WEDNESDAY 18 th	• Year 2 St Patrick Forest School am • Year 1 St Teresa Forest School pm • Year 5 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
THURSDAY 19 th	• Year 5 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
FRIDAY 20 th	• Year 4 Swimming • Let's Dance (children in Year 4 who have attended the sessions after school)
SATURDAY 21 st	• World Poetry Day
MONDAY 23 rd	• 2.30pm Stations of the Cross with Parents – Year 3 and 6 • Year 5 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet)
TUESDAY 24 th	9am Year 2 Easter liturgy in hall for parents Year 5 bikeability (children will need to bring – or borrow – a bike and helmet) Year 3 Pedestrian Training
WEDNESDAY 25 th	9am Year 1 Easter liturgy in hall for parents 2.30pm Stations of the Cross with Parents – Year 4 and 5 Annunciation of the Lord Year 3 St Martin Forest School am Year 3 St Cecilia Forest School pm
THURSDAY 26 th	9am Reception Easter liturgy in hall for parents Reception school trip to Drusillas PTA uniform sale after school – items between £1 and £2
FRIDAY 27 th	• Year 4 Swimming • PTA Easter Egg Hunt after school
EASTER HOLIDAYS Monday 30 th March – Friday 10 th April Outdoors Project Holiday Club on school field Thursday 2 nd April - World Autism Awareness Day	