



24 October 2025

Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

What an amazing end to this half-term we have had! Last week it was lovely to see the children bring all their learning together for the end of their first topics, with many presenting their knowledge and understanding at parents' presentations. I know the Year 6 parents and carers were challenged to learn about the survival topic through a quiz while our Year 4 parents enjoyed the art, poetry and body soundscape from the *Amazon* topic. It is always a pleasure to see the children share their learning in a range of ways and with such passion and confidence.

We also took the opportunity to develop practical lifesaving skills on Restart a Heart Day. We benefitted from the expert knowledge of Aaron and Sadie (parents of Locksley and Beauden) who are paramedics and spent the day teaching CPR to the children from Nursery to Year 5. They also explained to the children what they should do if they were ever in a situation where someone is in cardiac arrest. The children listened attentively and got the opportunity to practice CPR. Developing these skills from an early age can really make a difference as we know how vital early intervention is if someone is in cardiac arrest. A huge thank you to Sadie and Aaron for delivering the workshops in such a child-friendly way and giving our children these vital life skills.



This week, we have all enjoyed our Arts Enrichment Week. The week started with our visiting poet, Kate Wakeling, who inspired the whole school with her assembly and then followed this with Year 6 workshops. Again, I was really impressed by how well the children learnt and performed their poems to our grandparents. Mayor Councillor Richard Townsend was in school for most of the day and commented on what a happy and creative school we are. These comments were echoed by Kate Wakeling who also said it is the friendliest school she has ever visited and that she was blown away by the quality of the performances by the children. As always, it is great to hear this positive feedback from visitors to our school. Further work throughout Arts Week has also included the children learning about different light festivals, writing poetry and being creative with their artwork. There have been some stunning outcomes and a lot of excitement in the classrooms. A very creative way to end this half term. Thank you to Mrs Fuat and Mrs Brodie for organising the week.



Our Smart School Council has also become embedded in Summercroft life this term. This is an opportunity for all children to have a voice in our Thursday morning Talking Groups to share ideas about what they enjoy most at Summercroft and what they would like to be implemented to make school even better. The children all voted the new catering company (Lunchtime Co.) and OPAL lunchtimes as the best changes made in school recently. Some new ideas to develop further have already been started; there is now a drawing club at lunchtimes lead by a willing group of Year 5s, as well as table tennis, litter picking and a reading club. The children also have further ideas including intra-school sports competitions between houses and more plants in communal areas and classrooms. I look forward to seeing these ideas develop over the coming term, with Mr Eaton's guidance.



I am also delighted to share that we have been awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark (PSQM). This is in recognition of the curriculum design and teaching and learning in science across the school. Comments in the feedback included celebration of providing an inspiring science education, children having access to enrichment experiences and the subject being well led by confident subject leaders. Congratulations to Mr Wilson and Ms Lynch who are our Science Subject Leaders and have been preparing the information for the accreditation.





24 October 2025

Headteacher's Message continued

The PTA had a very successful AGM last week and I am really pleased that we have a new board who are committed to developing the success of the PTA over the coming year. Wendy Szelong-Cowell and Laura Hunter will be Co-Chairs; Kathryn Brown, Secretary; and Ben Brodie, Treasurer. We also had a number of new faces who are keen to support the board and I'm excited about events coming in the near future. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing board: Claire Williams, Emma Reid, Vicki Scott and Sarita Thompson, for all the hard work and dedication they have shown over the past years. They have raised a huge amount of money to buy valuable resources and play equipment and fund extracurricular activities for the school, and they have also introduced new events to strengthen the community at Summercroft. A recent purchase has been visualisers which will be used in every classroom to enhance teaching and learning opportunities and we're looking forward to them being delivered just after half-term.

We have a lot to look forward after the half-term holiday. Please see the new [topic webs](#) on the website for further information about what the children will be learning about next half-term. We will also be celebrating Anti-Bullying Week, with the theme 'Power for Good'. This will be launched on **Monday 10th November with Odd Socks Day**. The whackier the socks, the better! There will be a non-school uniform day in support of **Children in Need on Friday 14th November**. The diary with further events for this term is also available on the [website](#).

I hope you have a great week and I look forward to welcoming everyone back on **Monday 3rd November at 8:45am**

Kind regards,

Stephen Jess
Headteacher



OPAL Update



Now that the wet weather has embraced us, we would like to encourage the children to bring clearly- labelled waterproof trousers and coats into school. The children continue to have access to the whole school site throughout the winter months and we would like to ensure they are properly equipped to continue enjoying all of the OPAL play opportunities that are available to them.

Thank you to all the offers of support regarding the giant beach (sandpit). I look forward to keeping you up to date with its progress over the coming months. After half-term, we look forward to opening the wheeled vehicles and large loose part zones. We know these will be very popular with all age ranges.

To enhance our den building opportunities, if you have any tarpaulins, waterproof material or pegs you no longer need, they will be gratefully received. These will provide the children with the challenge of creating waterproof shelters. Also, if you have any milk crates, large strong cardboard boxes, small world toys (dinosaurs/animals/cars/diggers) they would be very useful to continue to enhance the areas we already have established.

Thank you for your continued support with OPAL.
Mrs Bugg



EYFS

From Supertato To Sparkles: Two Wonderful Weeks In Reception

What an exciting couple of weeks we've had in Reception and Nursery! Our learning has been bursting with creativity, imagination and discovery as we moved from exploring superheroes to celebrating Arts Week and the Festival of Light – Diwali.

Last week, our theme was *Superheroes!* We began by reading the wonderful story *Supertato* by Sue Hendra, which inspired thoughtful discussions about what it really means to be a hero. The children quickly realised that superheroes aren't just found in storybooks — there are real-life heroes all around us, such as vets, nurses, firefighters and paramedics. We were even lucky enough to have real paramedics visit our school, showing the children some of the special equipment they use and explaining how they help people every day.

In our Reception creative areas, we made colourful collages of emergency workers and in Nursery, drew pictures of emergency vehicles and made our favourites using paper plates. All the children loved role-playing as vets, farmers, police officers and firefighters — showing great imagination and teamwork.

This week, our focus turned to Arts Week and the Festival of Light, Diwali. We learnt about how families celebrate Diwali around the world by sharing gifts, eating special foods and watching fireworks. After listening to the story of Rama and Sita, the Reception children made beautiful diya lamps out of paper plates with paint, glitter and gems to represent the lights guiding Rama and Sita home and the Nursery children used salt dough to make their own diya lamps to take home. In Reception the children created firework pictures using straws, made salt dough hands decorated with Mehndi (henna) patterns, and designed Rangoli mosaics with symmetry in mind, whilst in Nursery they made simple Rangoli patterns using rice.

To bring our learning together, the children used their senses to think about what they might see, hear, smell, taste and feel during Diwali, and created wonderful class poems to celebrate the festival.





Year 1

Shining Bright

It's been another wonderful week in Year 1, full of creativity, music, and mathematical thinking!

In maths, we have been learning all about 'less than', 'more than', and 'equal to'.

The children have enjoyed comparing numbers using objects, pictures, and symbols ($<$, $>$, $=$). They learnt all about the greedy crocodiles and how they are always looking for the bigger number. They've been great at explaining their reasoning — we've heard lots of brilliant maths talk in class! You can continue practising at home by asking your child to compare groups of toys, snacks, or numbers on playing cards.

In music this term, the children have been learning how to create a steady beat to 'Hey You!' using glockenspiels. They have shown fantastic focus and teamwork. We're so proud of how confidently they are performing and listening carefully to one another.

During our exciting Arts Week, we were inspired by Lantern Festivals. The children explored the beauty and meaning of lanterns and then designed and created their own unique lanterns — each one glowing with imagination! Inspired by the visiting poet, Kate Wakeling, we wrote a class poem about lanterns, which we learnt and proudly performed. We enjoyed Kate's mini-beast riddles and when we discovered that sometimes riddles are written on lanterns, we decided to write our own. The children created a class riddle and wrote it neatly on the reverse of their own lantern.

It's been a truly inspiring end of term, full of creativity and collaboration.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support at home. Enjoy the half-term break.





Year 2

The End of Our Tour!

We have finally reached the end of our tour around the UK. We have learned about each country, including their traditional foods and traditional dress and their national flowers, animals and flags.

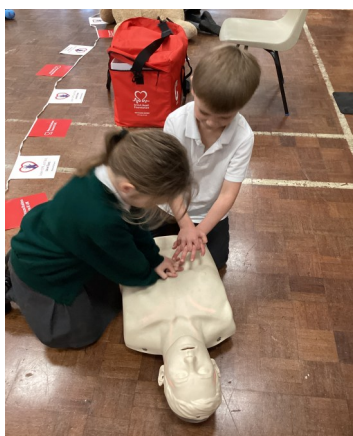
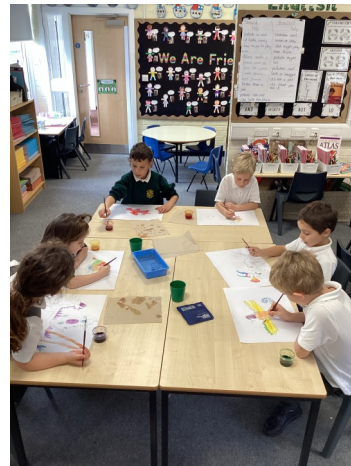
We have sampled crumpets and shortbread but were keen on trying haggis! We created some amazing artwork linked to each country and especially can't wait for you to see our dragons! We ended the unit by creating a triarama about one of the countries.

We have also come to the end of our book, *The Pet Potato*, in English. The children enjoyed decorating and taking their potatoes home and thought a lot about what it takes to look after a real pet. We researched looking after a dog and created fact files about dogs. We also thought about dealing with loss and how to overcome our feelings.

Last week we took part in a Restart A Heart Day! We lucky to be joined by two paramedics, Aaron and Sadie, who took us through what to do if someone collapses and appears to be unconscious. They also showed us how to do CPR. The children listened so carefully and all tried their best to perform CPR on the dolls.

We have had a wonderful but tiring first half term. The children have settled in well to the new routines of Year 2 and are starting to grow in independence.

We would like to wish you all a fantastic half term break and look forward to seeing back for another busy and hopefully merry half term!





Year 3

That's A Wrap!

Year 3 wrapped up their learning of Ancient Egypt to an almighty close with our Ancient Egyptian Day - and it was a roaring success! It was wonderful to see so many pupils enjoying dressing up and spending the day immersed in Egyptian life. Pupils made perfume cones, created hieroglyph name tags, produced beautiful art pieces, and even performed for their very own pharaoh and queen.

A huge thank you to all the parents who helped make the day possible - from providing costumes and materials to volunteering on the day and joining us for the afternoon presentation. The children were incredibly proud to share their work and show off just how much they've learned about this pharaoh-cious civilisation!

A Purr-fect Ending

As our *Tiger, It's Snowing* unit comes to a close, Year 3 pupils have been busy creating their own original picture books inspired by Daishu Ma. They brainstormed story ideas, collaborated in workshops, and carefully planned their storyboards before publishing their final books one double-page spread at a time.

The children have shown wonderful creativity, producing heartfelt and imaginative stories that take readers on a true emotional journey - complete with expressive illustrations worthy of any library shelf!

Time to Hit Paws

We are so proud of how well Year 3 pupils have settled into life in Key Stage 2. They've embraced new routines, taken on fresh challenges, and shown fantastic enthusiasm for learning every step of the way.

We hope everyone enjoys a well-earned break over half term - plenty of rest, a sprinkle of fun, and maybe even a little reading under a blanket! We can't wait to welcome our brilliant learners back, refreshed and ready for another exciting half term ahead.





Year 4

Hello and Welcome to Summercroft News!

Firstly, we would like to congratulate the children for their excellent presentation about the amazing Amazon Rainforest last week. They have certainly succeeded in helping their friend 'Rang-Tan' to explain the threats to the rainforest to the adults they know. With great enthusiasm and confidence, they showcased their topic work and we were very proud of their animal eye art, hard-hitting poems and storming soundscape performances. The hall was teeming with squawking and whistling birds, croaking frogs, chirping insects and loud howler monkeys as we were transported to the deepest layers of the rainforest. The children hope that they have inspired you to make changes in your everyday lives to help save the rainforests. We were very proud of them all.

In news closer to home, throughout this week's Arts Week we have immersed ourselves in festivals and poetry. We began by exploring the legend of Matariki, the Māori name for a small cluster of stars. Matariki is also known as the Māori New Year and is a celebration of people, culture, language, spirituality and history. The children then studied Māori patterns called kowhaiwhai, before designing their own and using these to decorate stars.



Following a fantastic visit from a real-life poet, Kate Wakeling, on Monday, the children were brimming with enthusiasm to write their own poetry. Our poems were also inspired by the night sky and we have been working hard to create vivid images, using sensory language to describe the night. We have linked our poems to the Matariki festival, including hopes and dreams for the future.

On Restart a Heart Day, which helps raise awareness of cardiac arrest and aims to teach people CPR, we were lucky to have a visit from two Reception parents who are paramedics. They taught us about how to help someone in a cardiac arrest situation. We were impressed by how much the children learnt in a short space of time.

We wish you all a happy and restful half term. Well done for a super start to Year 4!



Birthday List

Happy Birthday to the following children who have celebrated their birthdays recently.

Leo M
Reeva P
Chloe M
Helena G
Louis A
Juliet M
Skye T

Beech
Beech
Elm
Birch
Holly
Beech
Birch

Florence D
Celyn P
Charlie H
George T
Lyra H
Albert D
Anouk V-B

Hazel
Hazel
Apple
Apple
Apple
Maple
Sycamore

Aysha J
Emma G
Prakathi M
Jayan K
Edward D
Samuel C
Ruby W
Suri K-B

Willow
Birch
Birch
Beech
Sycamore
Beech
Acorn
Oak





Year 5

The End Of A Journey

Our courageous but perilous adventure has finally reached its end! The Year 5 crew have been deeply engaged in the concluding chapter of Shackleton's epic Antarctic expedition. After learning of Shackleton's daring plan to cross the Drake Passage with only a small lifeboat and five crew members, the children wrote heartfelt letters to advise him of the risks. Despite their warnings, Shackleton made the voyage to South Georgia, and, against all odds, succeeded! The children were amazed to discover that after nearly two years stranded on the ice, every single crew member survived. To bring this momentous event to life, the children wrote and performed dramatic playscripts, retelling Shackleton's heroic return. Frank Hurley even "snapped" a crew photo to commemorate their survival! This unit has been a brilliant start to Year 5 English - filled with adventure, courage, and creativity. The children's passion for storytelling and historical inquiry has truly shone through.



A Visit That Shook Things Up!

We had the privilege of welcoming Josh Macabuag OBE, a structural engineer who specialises in responding to and preventing natural disasters. Josh shared fascinating insights into how scientists and engineers prepare for events such as earthquakes, floods, and tsunamis. The children learned that disaster management follows a cyclical process: preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation. They also explored real-world case studies, including the 2022 Peru earthquake, where rescue teams had to work quickly to save lives and rebuild safely. This workshop brilliantly complemented our geography learning about tectonic plates and our science focus on forces and materials. The children were captivated by seeing how the skills they're developing in school, such as problem-solving, resilience, and curiosity, can be applied to make a real difference in the world.



A Sweet Ending to Our Science Unit

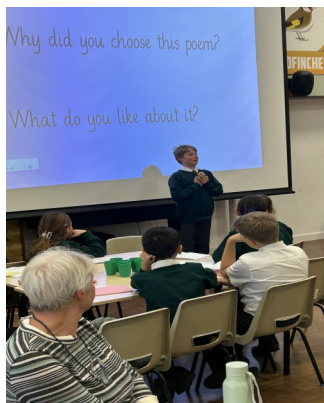
To wrap up our science topic, *Earth and Space*, the children learned about the phases of the moon in a rather tasty way! Using Oreos (and plenty of self-control!), they carefully recreated the lunar cycle (new moon, crescent, half, gibbous, and full moon) by scraping the cream filling to model how sunlight reflects off the Moon's surface. This hands-on (and delicious) activity helped the children visualise the way the Moon changes shape in our night sky, reinforcing their understanding of key scientific vocabulary such as 'orbit', 'rotation', and 'reflection'. It was a memorable way to end our unit, and definitely one of the best smelling science lessons we've had so far!



Presentations, Poetry And Polar Light Shows

We finally wrapped up our *Survivors* topic with an impressive presentation to our families and friends. They were put to the test with a survival-themed quiz and had to rely on the brilliant stalls the children had created to find the answers. The children spoke confidently and knowledgeably, showcasing their understanding with professional-looking displays. The good news is that we've all managed to survive and escape the island and have returned to Summercroft safe, sound, and ready for our next adventure!

During the rest of Arts Week itself, our theme was Celebrations and Festivals. We explored the magic of the Northern Lights Festival, learning about what causes these spectacular displays and why so many people gather to witness and celebrate them. The children created stunning Aurora Borealis-inspired artwork and wrote atmospheric poems to capture the beauty of the northern skies.



As a token of their appreciation, the children were invited to visit the air ambulance base, in North Weald, to tour the facilities and see the helicopter close up.





SEND Updates

We would like to make you aware of some of the local support available for parents of children with SEND.

You can find lots of articles to support children's wellbeing and emotional health [here](#).



Please access the Developing Special Provision Locally, Area 3 (DSPL3) website and Facebook page linked below. There you will find a range of helpful information, advice, courses and further SEN support.

DSPL3 Website- [Developing Special Provision Locally \(DSPL\) 3 - Home](#)

DSPL3 Facebook page- [Delivering Special Provision Locally Area 3 - East Herts | Facebook](#)

There are also a range of other support groups, including:

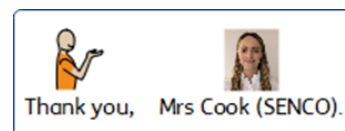
[SPACE Hertfordshire – Supporting families in Hertfordshire | Autism | ADHD | Neurodiversity](#)

[ADD-vance](#)- The ADHD and Autism Trust- courses include 'Understanding my ADHD'.

[Families in Focus | Courses for Parents, Hertfordshire](#)

[Families Feeling Safe](#) • Protective Behaviours training, courses and workshops.

SENDIASS- [Home](#)- Info, advice and support with the SEN systems.



Punctuality Matters!

Did you know?

The early work in our classes helps the children to embed and practise the skills that they have learnt previously.

Our registers close at 8:55am.

Missed minutes = missed learning = missed opportunities!

Being frequently late for school means lost learning:

- o Arriving 5 minutes late every day adds up to over 3 days lost each year.
- o Arriving 15 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 2 weeks a year.
- o Arriving 30 minutes late every day is the same as being absent for 19 days a year.

Our school attendance policy can be found [here](#).

If you need advice or support regarding attendance or punctuality please contact our Pastoral Lead, Mrs Willis, at jo.willis@summercroft.herts.sch.uk.

CARERS WEEK - YOUNG CARERS

Caring about Equality



- Could someone in your family be a young carer?
- A young carer cares for a **family member** who, due to illness, disability, a mental health condition or an addiction, **cannot cope without their support**.
- We are proud of our young carers and the care they provide. However, a young carer **may miss out** on extra support offered and opportunities in their education, careers and personal lives due to their caring role.
- You can get them further support by contacting the Young Carers Service at Carers in Hertfordshire.

THINK

REFER

SUPPORT



email: young.carers@carersinherts.org.uk



Visit: www.carersinherts.org.uk/young-carers

sch.uk
sch.uk



At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

10 Conversation Starters for Parents

Talking about mental health to children is sometimes hard. To the point that we can put off raising the subject, not wanting to unearth problems or raise overwhelming subjects that we perceive our child is too young or not ready for. But rather than keeping children in the dark, this guide is designed to help you confidently talk about mental health, so they feel comfortable talking about their own worries and end any stigma before it begins.



National
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#WakeUpWednesday

1 LISTEN

This sounds obvious, but it is not something we are always great at. Active listening is where we listen without interrupting or making judgements and shows interest in what is being said. If your child feels listened to in the 'smallest of problems' they will become confident that you will listen when the 'biggest of problems' arise.

2 ASK TWICE

The campaign from time to change is great. <https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/support-ask-twice-campaign>. Be tenacious about your child's wellbeing. Children instinctively know when your questions and support come from a place of wanting to help and care.

Are you sure?

3 THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A STUPID QUESTION

This advice also relates to the first point. If your child can ask you any questions about the smallest of things and you listen and answer without shaming or belittling, then they will have more confidence to ask the biggest of questions.

6 TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH NATURALLY

Speak about mental health as part of everyday life, so that talking about our feelings and those of others is normalised. If the usual 'are you ok?' is not creating an opportunity for dialogue then say something like 'I know when something like that has happened to me I felt like this... is that how you are feeling or are you feeling something else?'

7 EMPATHISE

'It makes sense that you would feel this way, it is understandable'. Children often worry about things that we, as adults, might see as trivial or silly. However, for them at their age and stage it is a big concern and they need our kindness and care when they show their vulnerability and share their worries.

8 HELP YOUR CHILD FEEL SAFE

Teens particularly feel that by talking about their worries or concerns that this will make things worse. Reassure your child that you will discuss a plan of action together and what may or may not need to happen next. If they are a younger child, it is likely you will need to lead the conversation and explain next steps.

4 BE OPEN AND HONEST

Children appreciate honesty, particularly if you are having to share information or talk about a difficult subject. For example, you may be talking about death or loss; 'It's very sad that Nana has died' or 'I feel sad that Nana has died'. How you talk about a subject will differ depending on their age and developmental maturity. Talking about death to a younger child for example will be different to that of an older teen, as their experience and understanding of death is different.

9 MIND YOUR LANGUAGE

Be mindful of the language you use at home to describe and talk about mental health. Stigma often arises from misconceptions and a choice of language which is harmful. Using the word 'mental', 'man-up' or other such words in a derogatory way won't encourage your child to talk about their mental health for fear of being belittled.

5 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Assess the severity of the mental health difficulty you are noticing. Is the difficulty making it hard for your child to function regularly throughout everyday life? How frequently is your child affected, how long does it last and how persistent is it? Are they having problems controlling the difficulty? Talk to your child about your concerns and that it is likely they will need further support beyond family and friends.

10 IT IS OK TO SAY 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT'

Adults do not have all the answers but often children think they do. It is ok to acknowledge that what your child is experiencing is not something you have come across before or know anything about, but that you will work it out together and seek help together.

Meet our expert

This guide has been written by Anna Bateman. Anna is passionate about placing prevention at the heart of every school, integrating mental wellbeing within the curriculum, school culture and systems. She is also a member of the advisory group for the Department of Education, advising them on their mental health green paper.



Sources of Information and Support

Your GP
Young Minds <https://youngminds.org.uk/v>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>
<https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/news-and-blogs/parenting-tips/2016/november/a-simple-guide-to-active-listening-for-parents/>
<https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health>

www.nationalonlinesafety.com

Twitter - @natonlinesafety

Facebook - /NationalOnlineSafety

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