



10 October 2025

Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

It was lovely to see so many of you at All Saints Church on Monday to celebrate our Harvest Festival. The children sang beautifully and our readers delivered their lines with clarity and confidence. It was a great opportunity to share the important message of thanks and being grateful for everything we have. I am extremely grateful for the generosity you showed towards our collection for the Bishop's Stortford Food Bank. The goods were all collected on Tuesday and we managed to fill the van! Jane Towns from the Food Bank wanted me to extend their appreciation so that they can continue to support local families through challenging times. Please do get in touch if you feel you need any further support or would benefit from any advice.



We have also been celebrating Black History Month through assemblies and the curriculum. We have been developing an understanding of why Black History Month is celebrated and used the story *Change Sings* to discuss the changes that have happened, people who have fought for these changes and what needs to change further. I was really proud of the children for their contributions and the sensitive way in which they listened to and supported the message of being inclusive and fighting for equal rights for everyone. This message is embedded throughout many topics in our curriculum and we will continue to celebrate diversity in our community.



Our Year 6 children recently applied for roles of responsibility across the school and went through a mini interview process. They came prepared with ideas about how to promote and further embed our Ready, Respectful and Safe behaviour expectations as well as promoting our Anti-Bullying policy. We were really pleased with how well the children conducted themselves throughout the process and I am pleased to share the children who have been selected for the responsibilities on the Year 6 page.

As mentioned at the start of the year, we are having a drive on developing oracy across the school to improve the children's speaking and listening skills. We have been following the Voice21 programme to implement the strategies and benefitted from the external view of three local headteachers from the Envision partnership. There were lots of strengths identified, including the development of oracy being strongly led by Miss Tarran and Mrs Lamb, positive attitude of children towards using talk tactics and the use of sentence stems to promote good oracy. Following a workshop we have also come up with a shared action plan which includes embedding talk tactics across all subjects and developing a consistent toolkit of language. I look forward to sharing further updates as we move through the year.

Looking ahead, we have Arts Week starting on 20th October. The theme this year is the Festival of Lights and Poetry Together. We are delighted to have Kate Wakeling visiting us to launch the week with a poetry assembly for Year 1 to Year 6, followed by a workshop for our Year 6s. They will then recite the poems they have written in the workshop to grandparents and grandfriends. We would welcome any grandparents and grandfriends to come and join us. Throughout the rest of the week the children will be looking at different light festivals: in Early Years Diwali, KS1 Lantern Festival, LKS2 Matariki Festival and UKS2 Northern Lights Festival. I am really looking forward to seeing the poetry and art outcomes at the end of the week. Thank you to Mrs Fuat and Mrs Brodie for developing the themes for the week and organising the events.



I hope you all have a lovely weekend and enjoy the beautiful autumnal weather while it lasts.

Kind regards,

Mr Jess
Headteacher



EYFS

In Every House, On Every Street!

In EYFS the children have been continuing their topic *It's Good To Be Me* and have recently been looking at their families.

In Reception, the children read the book *In Every House, On Every Street* by Jess Hitchman and in Nursery the children read the book *So Much* by Trish Cooke. We then spoke about who is in our own family and how each family is special, even though it may look different to someone else's.

We drew pictures of our families and spoke about the things we like to do with them. Nursery arranged 2D shapes to create a shape house and Reception collaged 2D town scenes - selecting the correct shapes needed to represent different houses and homes.

Across Early Years we have also read the story *The Colour Monster* by Anna Llenas. The book is about a monster who has lots of colours all over him as he is feeling confused. A girl helps the colour monster to separate his colours into jars and each colour is linked to a different emotion.

We then looked at each emotion more and spoke about how it's ok to feel the different emotions and what we can do if we were ever feeling a certain way. The children discussed what might make them feel happy, sad, angry, scared, loved and calm. We also learnt the different Makaton signs which represent each feeling! In Reception, the children used fat and thin brushes to paint the different colour monsters and in Nursery the children snipped coloured paper and stuck it onto an outline to make their own monster!

In maths, Nursery have been exploring the language of 'more', 'fewer' and 'the same' when comparing quantities of objects. Reception have been sorting by colour, size and other criteria such as number of points and holes in buttons.

What a busy and fun few weeks the children have had!





Year 1

Blast Off!

It has been incredibly exciting in Year 1. Miss Borg and Mrs Lamb were inspired by the character Jabari. Just like Jabari, they poured, mixed ingredients and made rockets soar across Summercroft. Luckily, the rockets didn't land on the roof! The children wrote comic strips and sentences about the launch. They listened for the sounds in the words and remembered to use finger spaces between the words.

In design and technology lessons, the children have learnt how to join materials and plan projects. They successfully stuck to their plans and built their own freestanding structures. The children showed creativity and resilience in abundance. Thank you to all the parents and carers for their donations of cardboard and materials.

In maths, we have been investigating 'one more' and 'one less'. The children used cubes and pictures to show their understanding. Leading on from this, the class used number lines to show one less. It was tricky at first to remember which way to jump on the number line.

We have been working on learning about human senses in science lessons. We have conducted various experiments to understand our senses. We had variety of scents and the children predicted what they were. Vanilla was the most popular aroma, and they most disliked the smell of vinegar. When investigating taste, the children graded the flavours as 'yummy' or 'nasty'. It proved to be interesting that not all the children liked and disliked the same things.





Year 2

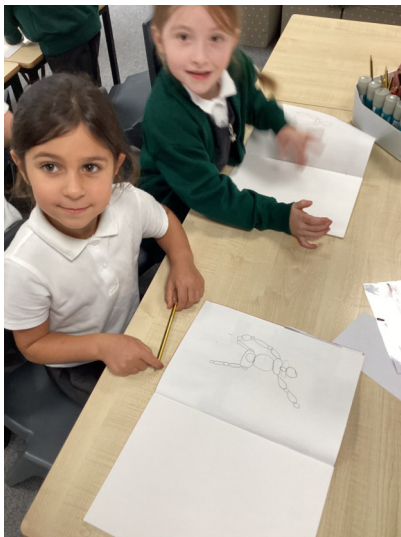
My Pet Potato!

We have had a busy exciting few weeks with our new text in English, *The Pet Potato*. The children met a little boy called Albert who was particularly sad as he was desperate for a pet. His dad gave him a present and when he opened it, he found it was a potato! From this, the children were each given their own potato to turn it into something. They loved using a variety of craft materials to create their own pet potato. We had cats, dogs, superheroes and even fairies! The children are very excited to find out what happens next in the story.

We are still busy on our UK tour, which we started in England. So far, we have learnt many facts about England and have tasted crumpets, which were very popular! We are now heading to Wales, with a focus on the Welsh dragon.

In art we have been inspired by the work of Antony Gormley and have been using our observation skills to sketch the human form. The children found it fascinating being about to draw humans in different shapes – they were brilliant!

In science, we have moved on from learning about animals and their needs, to humans. We have been thinking about how we can keep our bodies healthy. We began by looking at exercise and conducted an experiment to see what happens to our bodies when we do exercise. We practised feeling our heart rate before and after exercise to compare the differences. The children found they were feeling hot and sweaty after!





Year 3

Mummies, Mummies Everywhere!

We have picked up the pace over the last two weeks with our topic, *Ancient Egypt*. We have discussed Ancient Egyptian pastimes, and the children learnt how to play an Ancient Egyptian game called Senet, which they really enjoyed! Senet is a game of chance which is a bit like snakes and ladders, but instead of throwing a dice, you have to throw a two-sided stick!

This week we learnt all about the process of mummification through mummifying a Barbie doll. First, we had to wash the body. This would have been done with red wine and water from the Nile. Next, the brain would have been removed using a long hook pushed up the nose and wiggled about. Then the organs (liver, lungs, intestines and stomach) would have been removed and placed in Canopic jars. After that, the body would have been covered in salt, called natron, and left for 40 days. (We counted to 40 after covering Barbie in salt). The excess salt would have been removed and the body wrapped tightly in many layers of linen strips. The linen was then wrapped in a waxy substance called resin to seal it. Finally, a death mask would have been placed over the face and the body positioned in a sarcophagus with personal items such as jewellery, sometimes food, clothes and weapons for their journey to the afterlife. The children took on the different roles of mummification and had great fun.

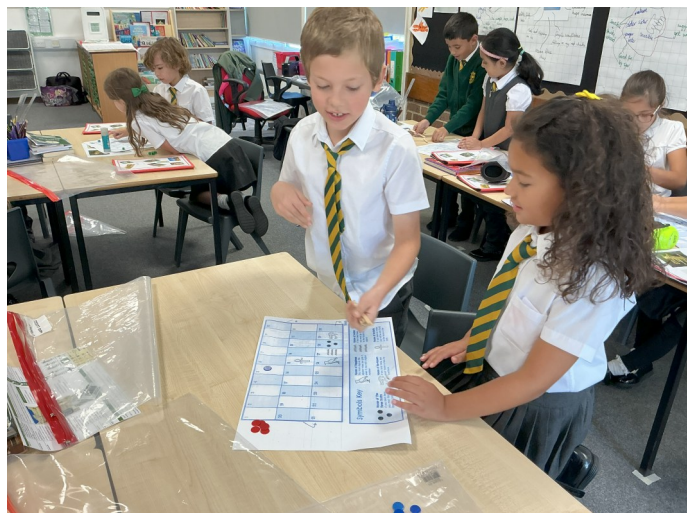
Our young historians have been hard at work constructing their very own Ancient Egyptian settlements! Using paper, card, sticky tape and plenty of teamwork, pupils designed villages complete with farmland, irrigation systems, and even tools like the shaduf (a clever water-lifting device). The children showed great creativity and problem-solving as they built and explained how these features helped Ancient Egyptians survive and thrive along the River Nile. They are especially excited to share their hard work and knowledge during our upcoming Parent Presentation Afternoon - we can't wait for you to see these tomb-terrific creations on display!

In English, we are continuing our Power of Pictures text inspired by Daishu Ma's book, *Tiger it's Snowing*. We started the writing process by looking at how Daishu created her picture book through deciding on the six main parts of the story, followed by a storyboard for each of the spreads. The children used these techniques to plan out their own picture book story. They are very excited about writing and illustrating their very own picture book stories and we know the children can't wait to share them



In science, we have continued our topic of *Humans including Animals*. Year 3 have been learning the names of different bones and the names of different types of skeletons. We learnt that some animals have a skeleton on the inside (an endoskeleton), some on the outside (an exoskeleton) and some don't have a skeleton at all!

We are very much looking forward to our Egyptian Day on **Wednesday 16th October** and welcoming parents and carers to share the children's learning after the event at approximately 2.45pm.





Year 4

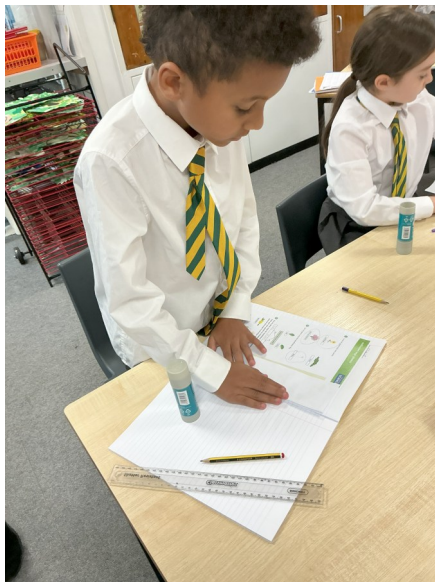
Vertebrate or Invertebrate? Vélo or Voiture?

We have continued to develop our knowledge of the Amazon Rainforest and have started to think about how we will share this in our presentation. The children are hoping to encourage their families to make some small changes in order to help save the rainforests. We have also begun to recreate the sounds of the rainforest, including a storm and various animals, using body percussion and instruments. The children have written poems to express their concerns about deforestation and urge people to do everything they can to save the rainforest.

In English, we have been busy drafting, editing and proofreading our own stories about the rabbit who was never called back from the Place Between. The children came up with their own backstories for the rabbit and told their stories, showcasing the rabbit's thoughts and feelings. They have now begun publishing their stories, focusing on how they present their writing and creating illustrations which are reminiscent of the original text. In French, we have been learning the names for different modes of transport. We have learnt to ask each other how we travel to school and reply with, perhaps, 'Je vais en vélo' or 'Je vais à pied'.

We are coming to the end of our first music unit and, Mamma Mia, the children's musicality has been impressive. Moving to the pulse, repeating rhythms and singing tunefully is certainly a lively way to start our week. Starting with the note G, we have begun to use glockenspiels to accompany our song.

So far, in science lessons, the children have sorted vertebrates and invertebrates into groups and been introduced to classification keys. These are sets of questions that help people to classify living things. In this step, the children used simple keys to sort animals and plants correctly and created closed questions that can be answered with either "yes" or "no". Mr Beeson kindly identified some of the trees in our school grounds and we have used these to deepen our understanding of deciduous and evergreen trees. We look forward to revisiting classification keys later in the year.

**Birthday List**

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

Kaitlyn T
Joel W
Samuel H
Luke S
Elian S-B
Raza N-H
Ted M
Frederick M
Sophie R
Lilly M

Lime
Ash
Sycamore
Willow
Chestnut
Ash
Beech
Holly
Maple
Hazel

Nuwairah K
Ibrahima B-D
Leo M

Maple
Lime
Beech





Year 5

Shaking Things Up and Setting Sail!

It's been an action-packed few weeks in Year 5!

As part of our *Natural Disasters* topic, the children have been learning all about earthquakes — from what causes them to how they're measured. In our penultimate geography lesson, Sycamore and Hazel Class explored tectonic plates and how their movements shape the Earth, linking this to the Ring of Fire and real-world case studies. The children became engineers and seismologists, designing and building their own seismographs to detect and record vibrations before using the Richter scale to measure their very own 'earthquakes'. They then analysed their results and compared them, using mathematical reasoning to draw scientific conclusions. Who knew learning could be such a shaky business!

Meanwhile, in English, our adventure with Ernest Shackleton has taken a dramatic turn. The mighty *Endurance* has been lost to the ice, and the children, acting in role as brave crew members, have found refuge on the desolate Elephant Island. Shackleton has revealed his daring plan to sail 800 miles across the Drake Passage in the James Caird lifeboat to find help. The children have been busy debating whether this is truly the best idea and have written persuasive letters to 'The Boss' sharing their views, using evidence and formal language to support their arguments. Will Shackleton take their advice? Only time will tell — but one thing's for sure: the Year 5 crew are ready for whatever challenge lies ahead!





Year 6

Responsibility and Rescue?

Year 6 have had a typically busy fortnight, juggling interviews, responsibilities and performances!

We were pleased to see how many children were enthusiastic about undertaking the additional roles and responsibilities of Year 6. After an application process, they took part in interviews, where Mr Jess and Mrs Richardson were impressed by their thoughtful ideas on our school behaviour expectations. Now that roles have been assigned, the children have begun carrying out their duties confidently, and we're sure they will be excellent role models for the school.

Speaking of rising to responsibility, the children also did a wonderful job hosting the Macmillan Coffee Morning. Thanks so much for your support; together we raised £606.27 for this worthy cause. Your generosity made the event truly special!

The children also did us proud at our Harvest Festival: their performance of *Morning Has Broken* at the front of the church was beautiful and heartfelt, and they set a wonderful example to the rest of the school.



As part of our topic, we are on our final push to "escape the island." Birch Class caught up on their survival skills day with Duncan and Kes from *Let's Get Out*, and, back in the classroom, we explored how to use longitude and latitude to pinpoint locations, as well as semaphore signals to aid communication during our escape. The children have now turned their attention to their final challenge - creatively presenting these skills to parents. Will they have done enough to finally break free from the island, and wave it, and our topic, goodbye? We will find out next week!

Throughout all of this, the children have shown impressive maturity and dedication. We're confident that their hard work and new responsibilities will continue to make them, and us, very proud.

Thank you for your support.

House Captain	Sports Ambassador	PTA Rep	Play Leader	Librarian
Goldfinch George A Jimmy C Evelyn H	Reuben H Jack T Sienna S Harper D	Gracie B Callum F Oliver S Kaitlyn T Charlie D Joshua W Arthur B Ollie B Hunter M Henry M Aisha BT Mabel Q	Iris C Archie C Skye T Charlie T Rita U Rachel P Asil B	Bibi WB Eesher M Ella W Ava A Sabrina L Betty C Vicky S Prakathi M Rudy R Parker CB Helena G Madeline F Marty C
Robin Grace A Hazel L Emily H				
Woodpecker Jhia P Ria S Gabriel A Emma G				
Kingfisher Evelyn C Nayana T Freya L				



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:

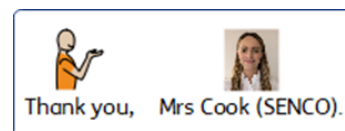
[SPACE Hertfordshire – Supporting families in Hertfordshire | Autism | ADHD | Neurodiversity](#)

[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 The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators USING AND REVIEWING PARENTAL CONTROLS

Phones and computers are essential parts of children's lives, but with unfettered internet access comes a multitude of risks. While not foolproof, parental controls can help with this; filtering out inappropriate content, limiting the ability to spend real money, capping screen time and generally making devices safer for young people.

1 KNOW THE TYPES

While parental control software can apply to an entire device, it also pays to know about options on individual apps and websites. TikTok, for example, has Restricted Mode for limiting unsuitable videos, while Snapchat lets you keep an eye on who a child has been talking to. Check the settings of any new app young users want and review your options.

2 COVER ALL DEVICES

Knowing what parental controls cover is crucial, as remaining unaware can run the risk of 'blind spots' in the device's safety measures. Controls on a phone will apply whenever a child's on that device, for instance – but you'll want to ensure that parental controls are set up across any laptops, tablets and potentially other phones, too. Remember, buying a new device may require you to set everything up again.

3 DON'T NEGLECT SHARED TECH

While children often have their own devices, if you have a shared family computer or tablet, for example, you'll need to make sure that's not a weak point in your safety measures. Parental controls for your router, that cover everything connected to your Wi-Fi, are one option – or you can just be thorough with each device and online account. Just ensure that unprotected laptops, phones and tablets are password locked.

4 CONSIDER TIME CONTROLS

Even safe internet content can be harmful if it's viewed in excess. Not only are certain apps addictive enough to distract from other duties, but late-night usage can badly disrupt sleep, which is vital for adolescent brain development. Most parental controls offer some kind of time limit – either blocking access at certain hours or capping the number of minutes it can be used per day – so be sure to consider these.

5 BLOCK APP SPENDING

Seemingly free apps can sometimes include microtransactions: purchases that can be made using real money. While plenty of developers implement these fairly, some companies attempt to manipulate children into paying for additional features or content, which can soon add up to hundreds of pounds if a child gets carried away. Thankfully, iOS and Android's settings allow you to block in-app purchases, preventing any huge bills.

6 NO CONTROLS ARE PERFECT

Parental controls can be very useful, but they're far from infallible. Some unpleasant content can and unfortunately will slip through the net, so remember that setting up these measures isn't a substitute for taking an active interest in young people's digital lives. Talk to them, and make sure they're aware of the risks of the internet as well as its benefits.

7 MIND THE GAPS

There'll undoubtedly be some gaps in parental controls, no matter how thorough you intend to be. For example, if you use router-level parental controls, bear in mind that these won't cover WiFi outside the home. For that reason, it's important to keep an open dialogue with children about the many unpalatable aspects of social media and the web.

8 KEEP THINGS SECURE

Some children can react poorly to parental controls and feel tempted to circumvent them. It's important to ensure that the passwords to these settings remain unknown to children, otherwise they can easily modify the restrictions without you knowing. Similarly, make sure your phone isn't left unlocked and unattended.

9 REVIEW CONTROLS REGULARLY

Parental controls shouldn't be a 'set and forget' deal. Not only can parental summaries provide you with a frequent overview of a child's digital life – to let you spot any warning signs – but companies often add new features, and some of these may be useful to enable (or disable). Regularly checking in ensures that if a child has found a way to wiggle out of the controls, you'll be the first to know.

10 KNOW WHEN TO LET UP

The parental controls you install on a computer for a seven-year-old probably wouldn't be appropriate for a child of 16 – and as young people approach adulthood, bubble wrapping the internet can do more harm than good. Consider relaxing parental controls as children get older, so they can learn to manage the risks of the internet themselves, without so many training wheels.

Meet Our Expert

Alan Martin is an experienced technology journalist and the former deputy editor of technology and internet culture website Alphr. Now freelance, he has contributed articles to publications including the New Statesman, CNET, the Evening Standard, Wired, Rock Paper Shotgun, Gizmodo, Pocket Gamer, Stuff, T3, PC Pro, Macworld, TechRadar and Trusted Reviews.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College®

@wake_up_weds

/www.thenationalcollege

@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 28.08.2024