



26 September 2025

Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents and Carers,

The children have all settled really well into their new routines and are now fully immersed in their new topics as you will see throughout the newsletter. We have been continuing to embed our behaviour expectations of Ready, Respectful and Safe and I am pleased to see how well they are being modelled on a daily basis. We have also been developing our learning powers and identifying how we use them on a daily basis.

It was lovely to see many of our Year 6 parents at the Macmillan Coffee Morning today. Thanks to everyone who contributed cakes and for the donations. Macmillan is a charity very close to our hearts at Summencroft and we know many families and staff have benefitted from the support and service they provide. It is great to be able to give something back and I know our Year 6 children and adults thoroughly enjoyed organising the event. We raised lots of money (over £150 in cash plus online donations) which we know is going to a great cause!



Next week, we will be launching the Meet My Brain module from myHappyMind, and giving the children a chance to build on their prior knowledge to learn about the different parts of their brain using Team HAP, use happy breathing to regulate and find out what happens to our brain when we learn something new. There are lots of resources and additional support is available for families through the myHappyMind app. Please do access these and talk about it with your child at home to build on the sessions they are having in school.

Our Harvest Festival is coming up on **Monday 6th October** for children in Year 2 to Year 6. We would love to celebrate this with as many of our school community as possible and hopefully lots of you will be able to join us at 2:00pm at All Saints Church. If you are able to walk down to the church with us then please let your child's class teacher know. Next week, we will have a representative from Bishop's Stortford Food Bank delivering an assembly to the children to explain to them about the work they do, how they help families locally and how we can help. We would welcome any of the suggested items from the Food Bank (attached separately) being donated and brought to school on the 6th October. These will then be distributed via the Food Bank to support local families.

Parking continues to be an issue and unfortunately we have had another near miss reported already this term. I would appreciate everyone's cooperation in taking care to park carefully and with consideration for the children walking along the pavement. The local PCSOs and parking attendants will be increasing their visibility around school at drop-off and pick-up times. Please ensure you leave enough time to get to school punctually to remove the rush at drop-off time.

The PTA will be hosting the AGM on Friday 17th October at 11:00am. This will be an opportunity to review the successes of last year and also appoint a new board. The current board are stepping down and the PTA cannot exist without having this in place. Please email pta@summencroft.herts.sch.uk for further information if you are interested in taking on any of the following positions: chair, vice-chair, secretary or treasurer. We benefit hugely from the community events that are organised and the money that is raised to enhance the provision we have for the children.

I hope you all have a great weekend.

Kind regards,

Stephen Jess
Headteacher



EYFS

I Am Unique, I Am Special, I Am Me!

Over the past week in Early Years (Nursery and Reception), we have been finding out about each other and what makes us unique!

We read the story *The Colour of Us*, by Karen Katz. The book provides a positive and affirming look at skin colour, from an artist's perspective. Seven-year-old Lena wants to paint a picture of herself. She wants to use brown paint for her skin. But when she and her mother take a walk through the neighbourhood, Lena learns that brown comes in many different shades.

We used mirrors to look at our faces and had a class discussion about our hair, skin and eye colour and whether our hair was long or short. We then used the mirrors to identify other features we have on our faces, including eyelashes and eyebrows. We painted self portraits by selecting the colours carefully to ensure they matched the colour of our eyes, skin and hair.

We also thought about how we are all different on the inside and have different likes and dislikes. We played a game to see which children liked different foods and attended different clubs. We talked about what the world would be like if we all looked the same, had the same name and liked exactly the same things.

In maths, we thought about making pairs and how a pair means two. The children matched socks to make pairs and were able to explain why it did or didn't make a pair.

We then went on a nature treasure hunt to see if we could find the objects to match the pictures on our treasure hunt list. We had to look closely to check that the objects were the same colour and shape.

In Forest School, we created Nature Faces, using the natural materials we found outside. We were very proud of the results!

We have had a very busy week and look forward to thinking about our families next week!





Year 1

A Flying Start!

Challenge, communication, creativity and resilience were seen throughout Year 1 over the last couple of weeks. Cherry and Chestnut Class were challenged to see who could build the tallest tower using sponge bricks. At first, Chestnut Class built a tall tower with great communication; however, when they all stepped back, the tower toppled to the floor. Using Chestnut Class's plan for layering the bricks, Cherry Class used this to support their tall tower while also creating a base, which ultimately left them victorious! Both classes showed great sportsmanship, cheering each other on and giving each other a well-deserved handshake at the end.

In our English lessons, we have been thinking about Jabari, the main character in our book. The children wrote descriptions about how Jabari was feeling when beginning to build his flying machine. The illustrations in the book showed Jabari building a ramp. The children used this to inspire their own design for a ramp, like true engineers. They then used their designs to build a ramp in our outdoor garden and wrote instructions on how to build a ramp using our 'bossy verbs'.

In maths, we have been practising counting accurately to 10. We have practised tapping and counting objects, as well as counting within a group. We have used tens frames to organise our counters and write down how many counters we had.

We have become keen scientists, exploring our five senses, beginning with sight. The children carried out an experiment to see who could throw the highest number of bean bags into the basket from a certain distance. We also used 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' to help us name the parts of the body. We have practised over and over, getting quicker each time.

In PSHE, we have discussed who our 'special people' are and created a 'trusted hand' which included adults who the children can talk to both inside and outside of school. The children also discussed what it takes to be a good friend and how we use our behaviour expectations, showing that we are Ready, Respectful and Safe.

In art, the children studied the artist, Molly Haslund. Molly creates spirals on large landscapes by using a homemade, giant compass to help sketch the spirals using different materials. The children created their own large spirals on large sheets of paper using different colours, as well as practising outside in the Year 1 garden using chalk.





Year 2

All Aboard the Year 2 Train!

What a great start to Year 2 we have had! The children have settled so well into class and have already begun to develop their independence by taking on new responsibilities.

We began our new topic, *The UK*, by boarding the 'Summertime Express' train to London. The children enjoyed the journey, especially the onboard snacks and entertainment! This was a great way to kick off our tour of the four countries of the United Kingdom. We will be learning about the similarities and differences between each country, including traditional food, dance, legends and landmarks.

We shared the story *Mrs Noah's Pockets* in English and the children enjoyed making their 'troublesome creatures'. We then wrote descriptions of our creatures with a focus on using adjectives. The children are starting to grow in confidence with their writing and are enjoying the opportunity to share their ideas.

In maths, we have been revising our numbers to 100 and the children have been challenged to think about how they can partition numbers into tens and ones.

Our science topic this half term is *Animals Including Humans* and we have been looking at how all animals have the same basic needs of air, food, water and shelter. We then thought more closely about how these differ depending on whether the animal is a carnivore or herbivore and whether the animal is wild or a pet, which links well with our class text.

It was good to see so many of you at our Meet the Teacher meeting. If you couldn't make it, please feel free to come and speak to us at the door if you have any questions. We are looking forward to working with you this year to support the children and give them the best opportunities to succeed!



Year 3

Snow Joke – This Tiger's Wild!

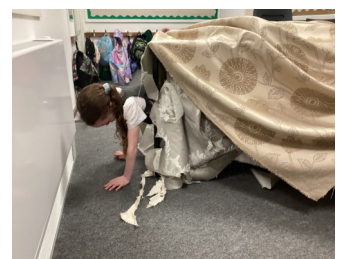
Year 3s have jumped into their first English unit this year with the vibrant and funny picture book *Tiger, It's Snowing* written by Daishu Ma. Children have laughed at the mischievous Tiger's escapades and discussed predictions and the artistic choices Daishu has made throughout the book. They've even been taught how to draw Tiger like Daishu!

Mummy Knows Best

The children have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the wonders of Ancient Egypt so far - particularly the gross parts of the mummification process! Children discovered an Ancient Egyptian tomb in Summertime and had the chance to explore and uncover ancient artefacts, learning about what Egyptians left in the tombs of pharaohs and why they did so, believing objects would travel with them through to the afterlife. We're very excited with the learning we have planned, including Egyptian Day on **Wednesday 15th October**.

Diary of a Summertime Reader

Thank you for all the support parents have given so far. We're thrilled with how the pupils have started this year, taking lots of changes in their stride and showing all the school's learning powers. Thank you to all who have been reading at home with their children and keeping their reading diaries up to date. It's been wonderful to see so many enjoying reading at home!





Year 4

Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again...

The children have made an excellent start to the new school year – they have settled back into school life quickly and we have enjoyed getting to know them all.

Year 4 have been exploring the sights and sounds of the Amazon Rainforest as our new topic was introduced. The children listened to sounds of the jungle and investigated a range of creatures as they discovered that we would be studying the tropical rainforests of the world, specifically the Amazon. We began a close study of animal eyes, practising our sketching and watercolour skills in preparation for our first piece of artwork. The children have also been learning all about the different layers of the rainforest – the emergent layer, the canopy, the understory and the forest floor – and what creatures might be found in each one. Their challenge is to become experts on the Amazon and prepare a presentation all about this vital rainforest and how we can protect it.

We have continued the theme of the natural environment by finding out about living things and their habitats in our science lessons. The children started by looking at the characteristics of animals and then grouped examples of vertebrates according to their features.

In English, we have ventured into a magical circus visited by a young boy called Leon. We have performed parts of the text, experimenting with how we can use our voices and actions to tell the story. The children have described daring trapeze artists, breath-taking aerial silk acts and magnificent magicians. They have advised Leon about the reasons why he should or shouldn't step into the magic as a volunteer, and discovered an abandoned rabbit who will become central to our own stories ...

Music lessons have provided a joyous start to our week. 'Mamma Mia' is our first song to learn and both Elm and Beech have put 100% effort into our music lessons. We look forward to accompanying the song with glockenspiels and performing it by the end of this half term.

It's great to see that so many of the children have made a strong start on Times Tables Rockstars – keep up the good work! Do let us know if you are having any problems logging in.

**Birthday List**

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

Isla S	Acorn	Arthur C	Beech	Ruby A	Hazel
Elsie-Rose B	Sycamore	Ava L	Apple	Michal W	Beech
Troy B	Holly	Arthur B	Lime	Charlie T	Lime
Damien A	Elm	Sabrina L	Birch	Zack M	Oak
Erin T	Acorn	Ellie K	Elm	Gabriel A	Birch
Arlo H	Holly	Hiro M	Chestnut	Holly H	Acorn
David L	Sycamore	Taha K	Sycamore	Nahla S-O	Cherry
Ava A	Birch	Sara J-K	Sycamore	Zoe S-C	Ash
Nicholas W	Beech	Maya T	Maple	Thibaut K	Acorn
Oliver D	Acorn	Nathan S	Elm	Ola-Said I	Acorn
Raheem Z	Cherry	Alyssa B	Elm	Emily P	Hazel
Theo W	Chestnut	Ismael B	Birch	Orlando S	Elm
Dawud Q	Ash	Lathursa R	Cherry	Mae W	Hazel
Isla T	Sycamore	Bibi W-B	Birch	Phoebe K	Lime





Year 5

'Through Endurance, We Conquer!'

It's only fitting that Sycamore and Hazel begin their Year 5 journeys alongside the historic expedition of Ernest Shackleton and the *Endurance*. During these first weeks of term, the children have stepped back to 1914, exploring the epic voyage that set sail for the icy mysteries of Antarctica.

Using a range of primary and secondary sources, pupils have investigated the dangers and allure of the frozen continent before meeting 'The Boss' himself—Ernest Shackleton. Each child has now taken on the persona of a real-life crew member and successfully 'interviewed' for a place on the expedition.

History awaits our courageous crew as they document their adventures through letters, diary entries, logbooks and poetry. Will they all return in one piece? Only time will tell—watch this space for updates from the ice!

"Having Fun Isn't Hard When You've Got a Library Card!"

The wise words of Arthur proved true as Sycamore and Hazel enjoyed their first library trip of the year. Children explored the many experiences, opportunities and endless shelves of books our local library offers. For some, it was the excitement of receiving their very first library card; for all, it was the pride of checking out their own books independently.

The walk back to school buzzed with conversations about newly chosen stories, and we hope these were shared at home. Remember to return or renew books by **6th October (Sycamore)** and **8th October (Hazel)**. They can be renewed online too; you will need your library card and PIN to do this. Behaviour throughout the visit was exemplary—polite, enthusiastic and a real credit to Summercroft. What a wonderful way to launch a year of reading adventures!

A big thank you to parents, carers and all the children in Year 5. It has been an excellent start to the year, and the children have been a joy to teach. All of the Year 5 team are truly excited for the learning and good times ahead!



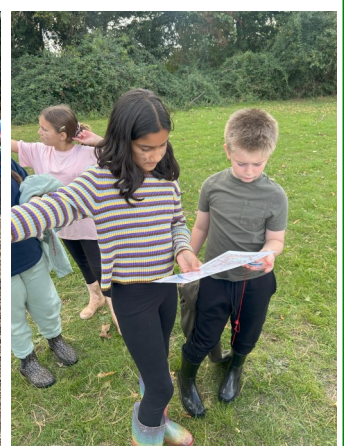


Year 6

Surviving And Thriving In Year 6

What a fantastic start to Year 6! The children kicked off the term by being cast away on a deserted island as part of our *Survivors* topic. Their first task was to design a survival plan using the rule of three. Since then, we've been building crucial skills to help us stay alive on the island, and eventually escape!

Lime Class had a fantastic survival skills day with Duncan from Let's Get Out. They learned how to build fires, construct shelters, and navigate using both natural methods and maps. Birch Class are looking forward to their rescheduled skills day on **Thursday 2nd October**. We have also run a food preservation experiment to ensure we stay nourished and healthy while stranded, and our First Aid workshop with Robbie taught us life-saving skills, which will be invaluable both on and off the island. Over the next few weeks, we'll continue developing these survival skills, hoping to learn enough to escape before it's too late!



In English, we've started reading *King of the Sky*. By exploring both the words and illustrations, the children have been reflecting on what it must feel like to be an outsider in a new community. Their insight and empathy has been truly impressive. We've also become pigeon experts, with the children showing a thoughtful attitude in considering whether these often-maligned birds truly deserve their bad reputation.

After a long break over the summer, we've placed a strong emphasis on refreshing our understanding of the school's behaviour expectations: Ready, Respectful, Safe. We've been so impressed with how the children have already gone above and beyond to demonstrate these behaviours both in and out of the classroom. As part of our wellbeing focus, we completed the Helping Hands activity, which reminded the children of the trusted adults they can turn to, both in school and beyond.





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:

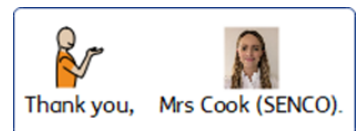
[SPACE Hertfordshire – Supporting families in Hertfordshire | Autism | ADHD | Neurodiversity](#)

[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 to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one issue of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Online Safety Tips for Children

Wow, it's September already! The month when autumn officially starts and ... oh yeah, the beginning of a new school year. Every cloud has a silver lining though! Another term means new friends to make, different stuff to learn, fresh online trends to jump on and exciting new games to play on your phone, computer or console. We've compiled a list of our top tips to ensure that - whether you're going online to chat, research things or just have fun - you can do it safely.

Be cautious with your profile

Be careful not to give out too much info on your social media or gaming profiles. Details like your full name, address or school's name could all help strangers to actually find you offline. A trusted adult can help you make your profiles private - so only your family and actual friends can contact you.

Lock your devices

Taking your phone or tablet to school? Turn password protection on. It keeps your private info safe and stops anyone accessing your device without permission. Passwords should be memorable to you - but difficult for anyone else to guess. Get a trusted adult to write it down in case you forget it!

Be smart with screen time

Too much screen time, especially just before bed, can affect your quality of sleep. Losing sleep, or not sleeping well enough, messes with your concentration and energy levels. Try muting notifications so you don't get pinged late at night: you'll feel fresher and more focused the next day.

Know how to deal with bullies

Sadly there are people online who enjoy picking on other users. If you ever feel like you're being bullied online - by anyone, not just someone from school - talk to a trusted adult about it. Together, you can discuss possible steps, such as blocking or reporting the person who's targeting you.

Manage online relationships wisely

Most people in a relationship chat to their partner online. Just be mindful that once you send a pic or message (even if it's private), you no longer control who else might see it. Messaging someone you've never actually met - and who might not be who they say - is definitely best avoided.

React well to inappropriate content

When you're researching something online, there's always a chance of finding content that makes you feel uncomfortable or upset. If this happens, you can report it as inappropriate and (hopefully) get it taken down. Tell a trusted adult what happened: they'll help you decide what to do next.

Report offensive in-game chat

If you game online with your mates, you'll know things can get competitive and heated on the in-game chat. Playing against people you don't know (especially if they're older) raises the risk of offensive comments and even threats. Our advice? Find out how to block or mute those bad losers.

Learn to spot fake news

If you're looking into a topic for homework or a project, be careful not to get taken in by fake news: content that's deliberately created to mislead people. Check the story with credible sources, like the BBC or Sky News. Trust your instincts, too - if it seems too unbelievable to be true, it's probably fake.

Keep it 'real' with online friends

Everyone enjoys adding friends and followers on social media. It's important, though, that the people you interact with online really are your friends. If they're just random people you've connected with to increase your contacts, you don't know if they could be trolls or bullies (or worse).



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