



SUMMERCROFT NEWS

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Headteacher's Update



UPCOMING EVENTS

- * **Reception Reading & Phonics Workshop**
14th October at 2:30pm in KS1 hall
- * **Year 4 Parent Presentation**
15th October at 2:30pm in KS2 hall
- * **Year 3 Parent Presentation**
16th October at 2:30pm in KS2 hall
- * **Arts Week**
19th – 23rd October
- * **Year 6 Parent Presentation**
22nd October at 2:15pm in KS2 hall

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been another very busy and productive couple of weeks with the children now well established in their new classes and routines and becoming fully immersed in their learning. As you will see throughout the newsletter, there have been lots of exciting learning opportunities in daily lessons, and with visitors and trips out of school to further enrich the topics.

I am particularly proud of two of the wider community events we have hosted in the last couple of weeks. Firstly, our Macmillan Coffee Morning that the Year 6 children and staff organised was a huge success. Their generous contributions and abundance of cakes and treats as well as serving parents and carers on the day provided a lovely opportunity for families to come together. They raised over £600 for Macmillan and I know from recent family experiences the value and importance of their work. I know there are many other families who will feel the same so thank you for all the donations that were made.

Our Harvest Service at All Saints Church on Monday was another community event I was extremely proud of. The children were fantastic singing in the church and sharing the important message of being grateful for what we have and sharing within our community. We were completely blown away by your generosity with donations for the Food Bank. I think it was one of our biggest ever collections and we know it will be going to support local families through challenging times.



Looking ahead, we have a very busy couple of weeks before the end of this half term. Next Friday, all of the children will be taking part in age-appropriate workshops delivered by Aaron and Sadie (two of our parents) as part of Restart a Heart Day. We know the benefit of teaching these important life skills at an early age and giving children the skills to be able to deal with emergency situations.

We also have Arts Week starting on Monday 19th October, with a theme of 'Wonder' this year. Early Years and KS1 children will be thinking about The Wonder of Nature, LKS2 will focus on The Wonder of You and UKS2, The Wonder of the Sky and Beyond. I am looking forward to seeing the poetry performances and artwork that are produced by the end of the week.

I hope you all have a great weekend.
Kind regards,

Stephen Jess

UPDATE

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.



ARRIVING 5
MINUTES LATE
EVERY DAY

3 DAYS LOST PER YEAR

ARRIVING 15
MINUTES LATE
EVERY DAY

2 WEEKS LOST PER YEAR

ARRIVING 30
MINUTES LATE
EVERY DAY

19 DAYS LOST PER YEAR

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

SEND UPDATE

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.



New SEN Signposts:

- 'Understanding My Autism' & 'Understanding My ADHD' courses for children starting in January 2026
- Neurodiversity support Hub- for children with a diagnosis or awaiting an assessment

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EYFS

Understanding What Makes Us Great!

It has been another busy and enjoyable week in Early Years, with the children exploring ideas about themselves, their feelings and the world around them through stories, creativity, music, maths and Forest School.

Nursery have been thinking about what makes each of us special. After reading *What I Like About Me!*, by Allia Zobel-Nolan, the children created some fantastic self-portraits, carefully considering details such as their hair and eye colour. We continued this theme in Forest School, where the children used natural materials to create their own portraits. They also thought about the things they love about their lives and created colourful rainbows with all the things they like raining down from them. It has been lovely to hear the children talking about the people, activities and things that are important to them.

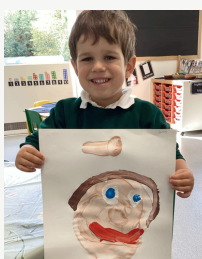
The children have also been developing their early phonics and fine motor skills. They have been listening carefully for the first sound in their names and practising their pincer grip as they carefully placed pom-poms along the shapes of the letters. These activities are helping to strengthen the small muscles in their hands in preparation for future writing.

Reception's focus has been on understanding our feelings. We have been learning to name different emotions and recognising that all feelings are natural and something we all experience. Reading *The Colour Monster*, by Anna Llenas, helped us to explore emotions such as happiness, sadness, anger and worry. The children created their own colourful monsters, using paint, cutting skills and split pins to make moving figures with expressive faces. We also talked about ways we can help ourselves when we experience tricky feelings, and how we can support our friends when they are upset.

In maths, Reception have been developing their understanding of matching and sorting. They have moved beyond sorting simply by colour or size and are beginning to identify more complex criteria, such as the number of sides or whether shapes have straight or curved lines.

Forest School for Reception has provided plenty of opportunities to notice the changing season. The children collected fallen leaves in a wonderful range of autumnal colours and created autumn bangles using sticks, seed pods and bark. Crunching up leaves to make their own 'natural glitter' added a magical finishing touch and before long, the bangles had become superhero accessories!

Finally, a reminder for Reception parents that our Reading & Phonics Parent Workshop is on Wednesday 14th October at 2:30pm. If you are able to attend, please sign in at the main office from 2:15pm and then make your way to the KS1 Hall via the dining room door entrance. We hope to see lots of you there.



Year 1

Blast Off in Year 1: Rockets, Towers, and Tasty Discoveries!

What a whiz-bang few weeks we've had in Year 1! The children have hit the ground running with big ideas, huge smiles and boundless curiosity.

We've been diving into our marvellous class story about Jabari and his incredible flying machine. Jabari showed true resilience as he designed his ramp, even adapting his plans to include his little sister, Nika! Channelling their inner scientists and engineers, the children were thrilled to watch a real rocket launch right here at Summercroft! Fizz! Pow! Pop! We listened carefully to every sound before grabbing our pencils to write about our observations. Year 1 did a fantastic job remembering their super sentence rules: capital letters, finger spaces and full stops!

Engineering fever continued as the children put their teamwork to the test by building free-standing towers. When towers wobbled and tumbled, our resilient Year 1s didn't give up—they put their heads together to discover new joining methods for stability! Moving on to LEGO, our master builders evaluated their creations, tested new ideas and shared brilliant tips for next time.

Maths has been full of hands-on action! We introduced part-whole models using giant hula hoops to represent our answers to fun questions like "Do you like carrots?". The children discovered how two parts come together to make one whole, exploring all the different ways to partition numbers. We've also officially mastered writing addition number sentences using the + and = symbols!

Year 1 put on their lab coats for their very first official science investigation! Exploring the four main tastes—sweet, salty, sour and bitter—the children bravely sampled lemon juice, salt, sugar and cocoa powder. The scientific verdict? Cocoa powder was far too bitter for most, but sugar and tangy lemon juice were huge hits!



**BLAST
OFF!**

**5 4 3
2 1**

Year 2

The UK Tour

We are still busy enjoying our UK Tour! We began our journey in England and have been learning lots of interesting facts, including the national animal, the national flower, and some traditional foods. The children particularly enjoyed tasting crumpets with butter, which proved to be very popular! We then travelled to Wales, where we learned about the Welsh flag and its famous red dragon. Inspired by this, we designed and painted our own Welsh dragons using watercolours.

We are thoroughly enjoying our new English text, *Bear and Bird*, by Jarvis. The children have written personal narratives about a special friend and have taken great care when publishing their work, trying hard to focus on neat handwriting and presentation. Handwriting and spelling will continue to be a focus throughout this term.

In art, we have been inspired by the work of British sculptor, Antony Gormley, and have been developing our observational drawing skills by sketching the human form. The children especially enjoyed taking turns to pose while their partners carefully observed and drew them.

In science, we have moved on from learning about animals and their needs to exploring how humans can stay healthy. We began by investigating the importance of exercise and conducted an experiment to observe how our bodies respond to physical activity. The children measured their heart rates before and after exercise and compared the differences. They discovered that exercise made their hearts beat faster and left them feeling hot and sweaty, helping them understand how exercise affects the body.



yummy!



Year 3

Mummies, Mummies Everywhere!

We have picked up the pace over the last 2 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!

A Fair Old Time With the Pharaohs!

The children had a wonderful day with 'History Off the Page' last week and looked fabulous in their Egyptian outfits! Our day began in Year 8 of Pharaoh Akhenaten and Nefertiti's reign, working as slaves to finish building the new city of Amarna. In the market square, we learned essential Ancient Egyptian skills: mummifying a peg, crafting Canopic jars, writing with homemade ink on papyrus, tomb painting, perfume cone making, bread plaiting, amulet making and scarab moulding.

During the morning, two teachers—Mrs Brodie and Mrs Brewer—were arrested by guards for tomb raiding and worshipping forbidden gods. In the afternoon, we split into groups to rehearse and perform plays and dances for Akhenaten and Nefertiti in the Royal Court, with every performance earning royal approval. Finally, we had a wonderful feast to celebrate. A brilliant day! Thank you so much to parents and carers for supporting this event. The children looked amazing in their costumes and loved sharing their work with you. We would also like to say a special thank you to wonderful parents for helping on the day.

The children are especially excited to share their hard work and knowledge about the Egyptian era during our upcoming Parent Presentation Afternoon on Friday 16th October at 2:30pm – we hope to see you there!

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!



Year 4

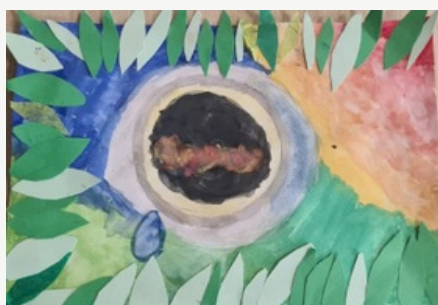
Vertebrate or Invertebrate? Vélo or Voiture?

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.

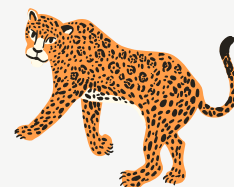
In English, we have been busy drafting, editing and proofreading our own stories about the rabbit who was never called back from The Place Between. The children came up with their own backstories for the rabbit and told their stories, focusing on the rabbit's thoughts and feelings. They have now begun 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.



WOW!



BIRTHDAYS

Josh K
Luke S
Jax K
Elia S-B
Hussain N
George L
Ted M
Matilda C
Freddie M
Kaliyah W
Sophie R
Lilly M
Nuwairah K

Apple
Chestnut
Willow
Oak
Cherry
Apple
Sycamore
Willow
Maple
Ash
Elm
Lime
Beech



Year 5

History Comes to a Halt

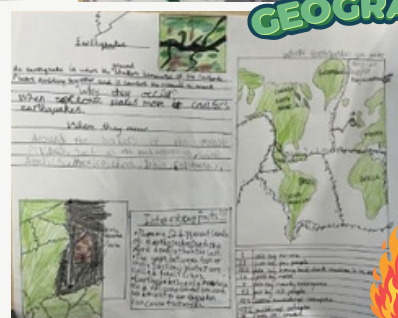
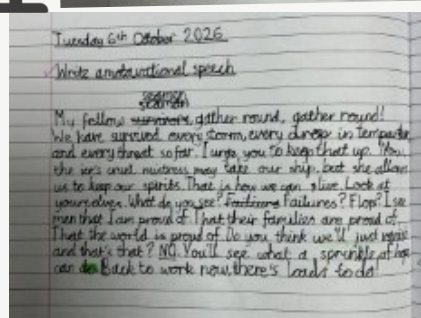
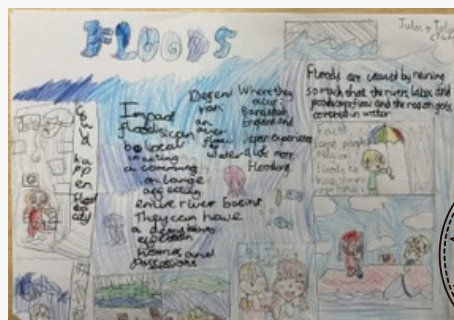
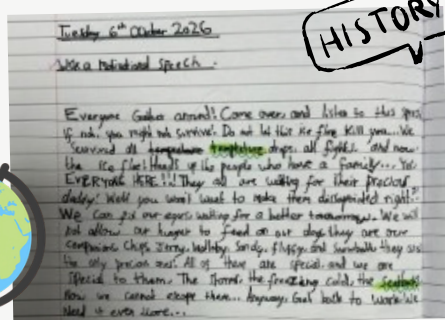
What a fantastic fortnight we've had in Year 5! Sycamore and Hazel Classes have been working hard, throwing themselves headfirst into every challenge with ongoing enthusiasm. From rocking out on their instruments with an energetic rendition of 'Livin' on a Prayer', to mastering key tactics on the pitch in tag rugby, and getting creative with bold typography in art, the classroom energy has been buzzing.

Shackleton and courageous crewmembers (our lovely Year 5 students) are well on their journey towards being the first explorers to cross the dangerous continent of Antarctica. However, despite the determination and hard work of the crew, the Endurance and its inhabitants have found themselves stuck in the dreaded pack ice of the Weddel Sea. The children have been enjoying the unit so far, even if the outlook for their crew member now seems bleak. In hopes of raising the crew's morale, pupils took on the role of Shackleton and wrote a motivational speech. During the planning stage, we looked at appropriate tone and language for such a monumental and historic chapter in our Polar expedition. The children edited their speeches with their peers before rehearsing and applying their embedded oracy skills to eventually deliver an impactful and purposeful speech to the rest of the crew. An inspiring effort all around!

Children worked in small groups to research and create an information fact file about a natural disaster that we have yet to cover in our classroom learning. The children chose choose between tornadoes, droughts, landslides, avalanches, earthquakes and typhoons. Working within their research teams, children retrieved information about famous examples of these natural phenomena, how they happen and where in the world they are more prevalent. Coupled with technical illustrations and diagrams, the children have prepared their fact files so that they can share their findings with our buddy classes in an upcoming learning collaboration with Year 2. We are all very much looking forward to seeing how effective our Year 5 students can be when explaining some pretty complex information to their younger peers.

Sumdog and Spelling Shed homework are fully up and running as of Friday 9th October. The expectation, along with their nightly reading, is that children will be completing twenty minutes of Spelling Shed and Sumdog at least three times a week. Usernames and passwords have been given to the children, but if you would like another copy of their log in details, please don't hesitate to ask.

As always, a huge thank you for your continued support at home - it makes such a world of difference. Here is a closer look at what our brilliant young learners have been getting up to over the last two weeks:



Year 6

Navigating Islands, Saving Lives, and Unravelling Mysteries in Year 6!

Our grand mission to escape the island continues! The children have been honing their practical survival techniques by developing their map-reading abilities and mastering the art of semaphore flag signalling. As part of our topic, we were delighted to welcome Sadie and Aaron for a fantastic hands-on First Aid workshop. The children gained invaluable real-world skills, learning how to conduct a primary survey, administer CPR, safely use an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and assist someone who is choking. It was an interactive, highly memorable session that gave the children the confidence to step up in an emergency.

In English, we reached the compelling denouement of David Almond's, *The Savage*, but the ending left us all with big questions! The children looked closely back through the events of the story to investigate the central mystery: who, or what, is the savage? Is he real, a part of Blue himself, or a physical representation of his grief? The children then wrote deeply moving letters to Mam, explaining how Blue's story came to life.



Other News

Mrs Lamb is Running the Marathon



Mrs Lamb will be tackling the London Royal Parks half-marathon this Sunday (11th October). She will be running thirteen miles and will not be stopping to play in the park! If you would like to support her efforts, then please click the link. https://www.justgiving.com/page/karen-lamb-3?utm_medium=FA&utm_source=CL.

Alternatively, you can scan the QR Code below.

She is raising money for Bone Cancer Research Trust in memory of a family member.



Macmillan Coffee Morning

A massive thank you to everyone who supported our recent Macmillan Coffee Morning.

Thanks to your amazing generosity, we raised an outstanding **£614.58**
Your support makes a world of difference.



Thank you as always for your continued support and encouragement.

Thank You



School Nursing Newsletter

The newsletter contains health and wellbeing information, practical advice, and details of local support services available to children, young people and their families. By sharing this information, we can help ensure families have access to trusted resources and know where to seek support when needed.

<https://r1.dotdigital-pages.com/p/7BK1-CJ6/hct-school-nursing-a26>



Stay healthy

Wake Up Wednesday Top Tips



It can be challenging for parents and carers to know whether children are spending too much time on their devices. Furthermore, it's even more of a challenge to know whether a child is addicted to the internet and social media. As technology is becoming more pervasive, children and young people are experiencing tech-related dependencies. Do we as parents and carers have the knowledge to identify and support children and young people who may be developing an addiction to their devices?

47% of parents said they thought their children spent too much time in front of screens



What parents need to know about SCREEN ADDICTION

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Children as young as 13 are attending 'smartphone rehab' following growing concerns over screen time. There are now help centers in the UK which deal with screen addiction for children and adults showing the seriousness of device addiction. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has officially recognised gaming addiction as a modern disease. The condition was confirmed as part of their International Classification of Diseases (ICD) which serves as an international standard for diagnosing and treating health conditions.

LOSS OF INTEREST IN OTHER THINGS

Your child may become less interested in anything that does not include their device. You may notice that your child is missing school time and generally being less engaged with other activities in the home. It is important to discuss this with your child as soon as you notice a behaviour change.



CONFIDENCE, SUPPORT & ADVICE

The Children's Commissioner report 'Life in Likes', explored how children aged 8-11 are using social media today. It showed that children are using their devices to speak to their online friends about their problems and seek acceptance and support, removing face to face interactions.

LACK OF SLEEP

7 out of 10 children said they had missed out on sleep because of their online habits and 60% said they had neglected school work as a result. It is important that children get the sleep they need in order to focus the next day.

APPS CAN BE ADDICTIVE

Apps have been designed with 'psychological tricks' to constantly keep grabbing your attention. One example of this is on the app Snapchat, where you can gain 'streaks' when interacting with your friends. If you don't respond, you lose the streak. This addictive nature of apps aims to engage children and keep them coming back for more.



Top Tips for Parents



LIMIT SCREEN TIME

In today's digital age, technology is an important part of a child's development so completely banning them from their device will mean they are missing out on a lot, including conversations and communication with their friends. Rather than banning them from using their devices, we suggest setting a screen time limit. Work out what you think is a suitable and healthy amount of time for your child to be on their device per week. Remember that your child may need to use devices for their school homework so only set screen limits on recreational time on their device. Once you have established this, have the conversation with them to discuss why you are implementing a screen limit. There will be others in your child's friendship group who will not have screen limits set and will be sending messages when they do not have access to their phones.

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children model their behavior on their peers, so if their parents are constantly on their device, they will see this as acceptable. Try limiting your own screen time and follow the same rules you have set for them. If you have asked your child to not use their device at the table, make sure you don't. Try setting house rules that the whole family abide by.

REMOVE DEVICES FROM THEIR BEDROOM

Setting a rule about removing devices from bedrooms will help your child to get the sleep they need and be more focussed the next day at school. 20% of teenagers said that they wake up to check their social network accounts on their devices. Even by having a device switched off in their bedroom, they may be tempted to check for notifications.

ENCOURAGE ALTERNATE ACTIVITIES

It may seem like an obvious solution, but encouraging children to play with their friends, read a book, or playing outdoors will help them realise they can have fun without their device. Playing football, trampolining, camping, going for a walk or swimming are all healthy replacements for screen time. Try to join them in their Outdoor activities to show your support.

MOBILE-FREE MEAL TIMES

Have you tried to settle your child by giving them a tablet at the dinner table or restaurant? This may seem like a quick fix to calm them down but in reality, it is encouraging them to use their device as a distraction from conversation and dealing with their emotions. We suggest removing all technology from the dinner table and having conversations with your family about how their day has been.

STATISTICS

- 52%** of children aged **3-4** go online for nearly **9hrs** a week
- 82%** of children aged **5-7** go online for nearly **9.5hrs** a week
- 93%** of children aged **8-11** go online for nearly **13.5hrs** a week
- 99%** of children aged **12-15** go online for nearly **20.5hrs** a week

Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report 2018