James Cambell Primary School

The Cambell Newsletter

Friday 23rd October 2026

Issue number: 42

Our school values: Respect. Honesty. Responsibility. Equality. Resilience.

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Message from the Headteacher

Welcome to our first newsletter of the school year! It has been a busy and enjoyable start to the Autumn Term, and it is lovely to see the children settled into their new classes.

Thank you to everyone who attended our parent welcome sessions and the opening of our Soft Play and Sensory Rooms, which offer new opportunities for play and learning for children with additional needs.

Children in Years 3–6 have been enjoying our new outdoor gym and adventure trail. After half term, our new Mud Kitchen will be ready, alongside a new playhouse in the 'Teletubby Hill' playground for Nursery and Reception. These additions give children more ways to play, explore and enjoy time with their friends.

A particular highlight this half term was Year 5's wonderful Black History Month assembly. We were delighted to welcome Councillor Jane Jones, who attended the assembly and officially opened our newly refurbished Cambell Primary Centre. With over 40 languages spoken by our pupils, we are proud of the diversity of our school community and

Our vision is to give every child the opportunities they deserve, through excellent teaching, enriching experiences and a caring school community. Building on our existing work, this year we are focusing on:

- Writing: giving children more opportunities to write and strengthening handwriting, sentence writing and presentation.
- Inclusion: continuing to develop the learning and support available to children with the highest levels of need, including in our Willow and Aspen Rooms and Cambell Primary Centre.
- Teaching: supporting staff to refine their teaching and share effective approaches, so children benefit from consistently high-quality lessons across the school.
- Behaviour and wellbeing: reinforcing shared routines and expectations, helping children manage their emotions and nurturing kind, respectful relationships.

Thank you for all the ways you support your children and our school, whether by attending

coffee mornings, speaking with teachers or reading together at home. It really does make a difference.

I wish you and your families a restful half term and look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday, 3rd November.

With best wishes,
Ms Breakwell

Parent Forum: You Said, We Listened!

A huge thank you to the parents and carers who joined our first Parent Forum of the year. It was a lively, positive meeting full of great ideas, and we loved hearing what you think about life at our school.

We covered clubs, school dinners, volunteering, collection arrangements and outdoor play. We were delighted by your kind words about Reception induction, Breakfast Club, class welcome meetings and the fun children have at playtime. Lisa Marshall, our learning mentor also told us about the weekly coffee mornings.

You Said, We Did

You said: Finding out about clubs and spaces is tricky.

We did: Club information is going on our website, and we are working on more ways to keep you in the loop all year round.

You said: You would love to get more involved and help out.

We did: We would love to have you! Pop into the school office for an expression of interest form.

You said: School dinner information is hard to find.

We did: The latest menu is on our website, and every Monday we will post the weekly menu on ClassDojo.

You said: You have concerns about gate times and collection arrangements.

We did: Our Senior Leadership Team has talked these through, and they are part of our ongoing review of drop-off and collection.

You said: You love hearing about outdoor play.

We did: We loved welcoming the Parent Forum to tour our new adventure trail and outdoor gym, and to see the exciting activities children enjoy at playtimes and lunchtimes.

Thank you again for helping to make our school even better. We cannot wait to see you at the next forum in January!

Year 3 & 4 History

Our Year 3 and Year 4 children took part in an exciting online webinar all about the Bayeux Tapestry, which is on loan to the British Museum from France. The children thoroughly enjoyed this interactive session, learning more about the tapestry's fascinating history and having the opportunity to explore its intricate details more closely. It was a fantastic way to bring their history learning to life!





Bayeux Tapestry

Our Year 6s were lucky enough to see a replica of the Bayeux Tapestry which is being displayed at the British Museum, on loan from France! They discovered how this amazing piece of history tells the story of William the Conqueror, King Harold and the Battle of Hastings in 1066. What a fantastic way to bring history to life!



PE Competitions

Congratulations to Chidera 6B for successfully making it into the Barking and Dagenham District Team.

A huge well done to the children who represented James Cambell at the Badminton Festival. They showed great enthusiasm, teamwork and sportsmanship, and were excellent ambassadors for our school.





Black History Celebration

We were delighted to welcome Rufina Stuart, author of *Alina's Glowing Afro* and *Kiran's Glowing Afro*, to speak to our Reception and Key Stage 1 children as part of our Black History Celebrations!

It was a wonderful opportunity for our children to celebrate diversity, explore the importance of representation in books, and learn more about embracing and celebrating what makes each of us unique.

A huge thank you to Rufina for sharing her stories with us and inspiring our young readers!



Year 2 Music

This year, Year 2 have started learning to play the recorder in music, and we are very excited! For the first time, we will continue developing our recorder skills throughout the whole year. With Christmas coming up, a recorder could make a great little gift and give children the chance to practise at home too!

Year 6 Visit to the Buddhist Centre

This half term, our Year 6 pupils have enjoyed a memorable visit to the London Buddhist Centre as part of their RE learning about world religions. The children had the opportunity to experience Buddhism beyond the classroom and develop their understanding in a calm and welcoming environment.

A highlight of the visit was the guided meditation session, where pupils learnt techniques to help them focus, relax and be mindful. They also explored important Buddhist teachings about compassion, mindfulness and the value of living peacefully and harmoniously with others.







The Pupil Leadership Team

We are delighted to introduce our new Pupil Leadership Team. Following a rigorous application and interview process, these pupils were selected for demonstrating strong leadership qualities, commitment to our

school values and a desire to make a positive contribution to school life.

Head Boy: David

Head Girl: Yusra

Deputy Head Boys: Shehat & Sajan

Deputy Head Girls: Ayesha & Emily

Ambassadors: Jasmina, Zoe, Evie-Mae, Alfie, Valentina, Kamila, Ishfi, Mahid, Erla & Sopto

We are incredibly proud of all these students and look forward to seeing them take on their new responsibilities. We are confident they will be excellent role models and will contribute greatly to life at our school.

Well done to everyone involved!



New Playground Equipment

The children at James Cambell Primary are thoroughly enjoying our new outdoor gym equipment and Adventure Trail. These exciting additions provide wonderful opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills, build confidence and stay active while enjoying outdoor play.





Year 3 Art

This half term, Year 3 have been learning about the work of artist Andy Goldsworthy and exploring how natural materials can be used to create beautiful works of art. The children collected leaves, sticks, stones and other natural objects to design and create their own ephemeral artwork, inspired by Goldsworthy's creations. They also enjoyed using clay to make unique natural sculptures. We certainly have talented young artists in Year 3!









Year 1 Design and Technology – Healthy Snacks!

Year 1 have been busy designing and making their own healthy snacks in DT! They tasted a variety of fruits and vegetables to discover their favourite flavours before planning and designing their own creations. The children then used their careful cutting skills to bring their designs to life. Finally, they compared their finished snacks to their original designs and evaluated how they looked and tasted.

Black History Assembly

Year 5 did a fantastic job at their Black History Assembly, celebrating this year's theme, "Honouring Our Communities".

We were delighted to welcome Councillor Jane Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Education and Schools, who joined us for the assembly and gave a lovely talk to the children at the end.

A huge well done to Year 5 for their wonderful contributions to such a meaningful and inspiring assembly.





African Drumming Workshop

As part of our Black History celebrations, our Year 3, 4 and 5 pupils took part in an exciting African drumming workshop!

Each child had their own drum and the opportunity to explore different rhythms and beats, learning how drumming is used to communicate, tell stories and bring communities together.

The children also discovered fascinating stories from West Africa and learned about the cultural significance of drums and the important role they play in traditions and celebrations.

It was a fantastic, hands-on experience that brought Black history and culture to life through music, storytelling and rhythm!





DT: Year 5's Fantastic Fishy Experience!

Year 5 had a fantastic time welcoming a special visitor from Billingsgate Seafood Market! The children explored a variety of fascinating fish, learning about their different features and the importance of Omega-3 for keeping our bodies and brains healthy. They especially loved getting hands-on and touching the different fish! It was a fun, exciting and a memorable experience that sparked lots of curiosity and enthusiasm for learning!





Celebrating Our Refurbished Cambell Primary Centre!

Over the six-week summer holiday, the Cambell Primary Centre (CPC) underwent a wonderful refurbishment, transforming the space into a fresh, welcoming and inviting environment for our children. The refurbished centre provides a lovely space for the children of CPC to learn, grow and thrive. To celebrate this exciting transformation, we held a special open day, attended by representatives from Barking and Dagenham, local newspaper and a councillor from the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. It was a fantastic event and a wonderful opportunity to showcase the newly refurbished centre. We are delighted with the transformation and hope our children continue to enjoy making the most of their refreshed surroundings!



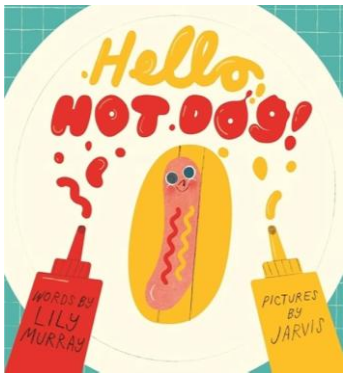
Reading for Pleasure at James Cambell Primary School

At James Cambell Primary School, we are committed to fostering a lifelong love of reading. This term, we were delighted to elect our new Reading Ambassadors from Key Stage 2. These enthusiastic pupils will be working closely with me to promote reading for pleasure across the school and inspire others to discover the joy of books. As part of their role, they will support our younger learners by reading with Key Stage 1 pupils during our weekly Big Read sessions, helping to build confidence and excitement around reading. In addition, our Reading Ambassadors will be creating a monthly book vlog on Class Dojo, where they will share book recommendations and reviews with our school community. We are excited to see the positive impact they will have in encouraging a love of reading throughout our school.

A selection of classes have also taken part in a World Record attempt this half term. We logged in to a global record attempt for the most people reading online in 12 hours. I am eagerly awaiting an email informing me of the outcome of the record attempt.

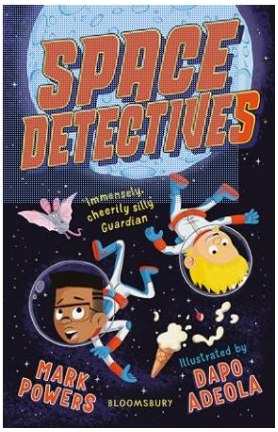
Book recommendations:

<u>Early Years and Key Stage 1: Hello, Hot Dog! By Jarvis</u>



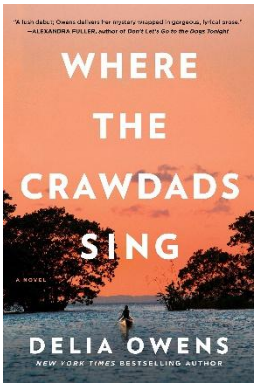
Hot Dog is having a lovely snooze on a comfy bread roll when he sees a bottle of ketchup approaching and realises he's about to become… LUNCH! Having no legs, making a run for it isn't an option but Hot Dog won't meet his fate quietly and formulates a (rather complicated) plan. After revising his next step to make the best use of his rolling abilities, Hot Dog thought he'd be out of danger but, bizarrely, it's a squirt of mustard that finally saves him!

<u>Key Stage 2: Space Detective by Mark Powers</u>



One minute, Connor and Ethan are serving ice cream - the next, they're wiping purple spit out of their hair as a huge, sharp-fanged slug-monster roars and waves its claws at them. That's what you get for trying to play the hero and return a stolen bag. Although spending the summer aboard the exotic space station, Starville, is fun, what they're really hoping for is a mystery to solve so they can establish themselves as the first Space Detectives. If the thought of meeting a Snargletoothed Grizloid or a swarm of Neptunian Bat-Rats doesn't worry you, then this is a book you'll definitely enjoy.

<u>Adults: Where the Crawdads Sing by Delia Owens</u>



For years, rumours of the 'Marsh Girl' have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the

locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life - until the unthinkable happens.

Attendance & Punctuality

Attendance has been mostly good throughout the autumn term. However, towards the end of term, we can see that children begin to feel tired. It is important that parents continue to set a positive example by establishing good habits and ensuring children attend school every day. Unless your child is genuinely too unwell to attend, please encourage them to come to school so they do not miss valuable learning opportunities and can continue to socialise and enjoy time with their friends.



Arriving at school on time is essential so that children can settle into the school day and benefit from the very beginning of their learning. At the end of this term, we will be sending home punctuality letters so that parents are aware of the number of late sessions their child has accumulated this half term. We understand that occasional lateness can happen due to emergencies or unexpected circumstances. However, frequent lateness involving the same children is a concern. If you are experiencing recurring difficulties with mornings, please come and speak to us so we can work together to find a solution.

Key dates for next term

Monday 2nd November	Staff inset day (non-pupil day)
Tuesday 3rd November	First day of term
Tuesday 3rd November	Year 6 height and weight checks
Monday 9th November	Road Safety Week
Friday 13th November	Children in Need
Monday 16th November	Anti-Bullying Week
Monday 16th November	Odd Socks Day
Monday 16th November	6A Science Museum trip
Thursday 19th & Friday 20th November	Parent's Evenings
Monday 23rd November	Year 5 Wonderdome workshop
Friday 27th November	6C Science Museum trip
Monday 30th November	6B Science Museum trip
Thursday 3rd December	Year 3 British Museum trip
Tuesday 15th & Wednesday 16th December	Year 5 Bikeability Programme
Friday 18th December	Christmas jumper day & Christmas dinner
Friday 18th December	Last day of term