



Swaffham Prior Newsletter

October 2022

The 10 Keys to Happier Living—Action for Happiness

This half term, we have launched our '10 keys to happiness' programme which helps children to learn and develop skills to improve wellbeing.

The children have learned about **Giving - doing things for others** and **Relating - connecting with people**. Children were encouraged to 'give a compliment' when they saw someone being kind. We were inundated with compliments showing how kind and caring our children are! This week, children were thinking about how they connect to others around the school.

On Tuesday Esmeel picked up things
in the corridor and put them on
Hedgehogs pegs.
Thank you Esmeel.
Miss Cranress

I saw Barney holding open a
door for all the children
coming in from lunch on
Monday.

Huge root a card
for
Miss Frost

Harvest

We celebrated our Harvest Festival with a service in the church led by Reverend Sue. She talked to the children about the importance of water for growing, drinking and hygiene. Reverend Sue also shared her experiences of her visit to Tanzania to look at the way they harvest rain.

The children sang our harvest songs with gusto, 'Water of Life', 'Everybody praise him' and 'Harvest Samba'. Each class brought with them something special to share linked to water. Butterflies class read poems and prayers they had written, Bees re-enacted how the water cycle works, Swifts performed a musical rain poem and Hedgehogs shared their rainbow creations.



Key Dates

- 01.11.22 Back to School
- 01.11.22 Bags 2 School collection (9am)
- 04.11.12 Shoebox collection
- 31.10.22 & 2.11.22 Parent Consultations—more details to follow
- 14.12.22 & 15.12.22 Nativity
- 19.12.22 Trip to Pantomime-Cinderella
- 19.12.22 Carols and Festivities at the Denny
- 20.12.22 Last Day of Term!
- 05.01.22 Back to School

Flu Vaccinations

Following the cancellation of our flu vaccinations earlier this month, we can confirm our new date is **Friday 25th November**.

No further action is required if you have already completed the online consent.

Rugby Tournament

Year 5/6 children had 4 weeks of specialist coaching, from Roy, before heading to the small schools Tag Rugby Tournament at Cambridge Rugby Club. The children showed amazing sportsmanship, courage and determination, despite being up against some tough teams. Even when they felt nervous, they gave it their best efforts and did the whole school community proud!

"We may not have come first, but we almost beat the winning team!" *By Lottie and Edward.*





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Class Updates

Hoglets and Hedgehogs Class have settled in very well since they started in September. They have been busy learning the rules, routines and expectations of school and have made lots of new friends. In Sounds Write, the children have learnt the sounds a, t, m, o, s, i, p and n. They have used their new knowledge to read and spell words such as mat and sit. In maths, we have been doing a deep dive into numbers up to 3 as well as sorting objects into different groups and comparing things that are the same and different. In our Marvellous Me topic, we have talked about our homes and families, learnt about our school and our village and met people from the community who help us.

Swifts Class have had a fantastic half term. In English, we have been learning to write in full sentences. We learnt, planned and wrote our own version of 'The Three Little Pigs'. We included conjunctions in our writing - and, so and but. We have been counting in tens in maths and using Base 10 manipulatives to support our understanding of tens and ones in two-digit numbers. In Art, we learnt about the artist Lowry and how to use pencil and charcoal to add tone to our drawings of Big Ben. In History, we learnt facts about the 'Gun Powder Plot' and the children were fantastic at learning the Great Fire of London dance.

Bees Class have had a busy start to half term. In English, we have been using the text 'Stone Age boy' as inspiration to write a character and setting description of a Stone Age person. We have been working hard in Maths to understand length and perimeter. We have also used manipulatives such as place value counters and grids and Base 10 to support our learning with our place value unit. In art, we have been looking at the use of line by artists to show edge, shape, form, light and dark culminating in the use of charcoal to create cave drawings linked to our Stone Age unit. Our history unit has been greatly enjoyed as we have explored the life of Stone Age people.

Butterflies Class have had a busy half-term. In English, we have been using 'The Explorer' by Katherine Rundell, to learn the features of adventure stories. In the final week of term, we have used these features to write our own adventure stories, focusing on building suspense, using powerful vocabulary and writing correctly punctuated sentences. In Maths, we have been investigating and manipulating numbers up to 10 million, and we have begun to learn long multiplication and division strategies. Our History unit has been a class favourite, as we have learnt who the Maya civilisation were and why they declined despite being so successful.

Class Cafes

Thank you to all parents/families who attended our class cafes this half term. All cafés have had a reading focus and it has been wonderful to share our learning with you. We hope they have helped you to understand how reading is taught in school and given you ideas about how to support your child/ren at home. Our next class cafes will be held during the Spring Term.

Visitors

As part of their 'People who help us' topic, Early Years had visits from the Cambridgeshire Fire Service, a recovery vehicle from Manchetts and a digger from Mead Construction.

"I liked the fire engine because I liked sitting in it." *By Bella*



Butterflies class welcomed Natsu, who led a traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony. Year 5/6 children were able to try traditional Japanese green tea and sweets.

"It was an interesting experience to see how a Japanese Tea ceremony works." *By Gracie*





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Attendance Matters

I am sure you are aware that good attendance at school is a national priority but it is also our school specific priority. Clearly, the pandemic has had an impact and there are ongoing illnesses to contend with. However, I cannot emphasise enough the impact that attendance and punctuality have on our pupils' achievement. To highlight just one example, the Phonics assessment in Y1 had a pass mark of 33 last year. A child with 85% attendance will have missed 15% of these lessons and therefore are substantially disadvantaged and less likely to pass.

This year, we will be sending out standard letters so that parents can keep a track of their child's attendance and offering support to promote good attendance. We know that after the last few years, there are lots of family events and holidays which have been rearranged but attendance at school remains an absolute priority. Therefore, in the majority of cases, we are unable to authorise holidays or attendance at events and they may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice or other legal action. Where there are medical issues, a protocol may be put in place to support the child and their attendance. More information is available on the government or Local Authority websites: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence/legal-action-to-enforce-school-attendance>. Most importantly, we want to work with parents to ensure our children get the education they possibly can so please contact us for support anytime.

ATTEND TODAY
ACHIEVE TOMORROW



Days off school add up to lost learning

175 NON SCHOOL DAYS A YEAR 175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments					
190 DAYS FOR YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION EACH YEAR	10 days absence	19 days absence	29 days absence A term missed	38 days absence	47 days absence
180 DAYS OF EDUCATION	171 DAYS OF EDUCATION	161 DAYS OF EDUCATION	152 DAYS OF EDUCATION	143 DAYS OF EDUCATION	
100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	75%
Good Best chance of success. Gets your child off to a flying start	Worrying Less chance of success. Makes it harder to make progress		Serious Concern Not fair on your child. Court action!		

Top Tips for Regular Attendance

- Positive framing—positivity breeds more positivity
- Celebrate the small things with your child
- Look on the bright side—reassure them
- Breakdown the times into manageable chunks
- Establish consistent routines
- Talk to us—if there's an issue we can help
- Trust us—most children will have a very positive experience when they are in school. If we have concerns, we will contact you.

Notification of Absence

Please can we remind parents if you wish to take your child/children out of school, bar medical appointments, a **Request for Leave of Absence Form must be completed** in advance and given to the office marked for the attention of Mrs Bartley.

This form can be found on the school website (Letters – Leave of Absence Form) or a hard copy can be obtained from the office. All holidays are considered unauthorised and should be taken during school holidays (term dates are on the school website). There is lots of evidence which demonstrates the impact even short term absences have long term on attainment.

Medical Appointments and Sickness

We would strongly encourage parents to arrange medical appointments outside of the school day to reduce the impact on learning. If you child has to have a medical appointment within school hours please, **in advance of the appointment**, forward a photo of the appointment letter/screenshot of reminder via email to the office or present hard copies to the office. This will greatly help staff in the planning of your child's learning.

If your child is unwell, with sickness or diarrhoea, your child should remain off school for 48 hours following the last bout of illness. If you have any questions or queries relating to sickness please call the office.



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October 2022



NOTICES

As the weather becomes increasingly more inclement, please make sure your child has a coat and wellies with them everyday. We want the children to be out enjoying themselves whatever the weather.

Reminder: Water bottles should only have water in them and snack is fruit or vegetables only.

DANGER

Please keep the road outside school as clear as possible. If you need to drive, park off the main road where possible. The road gets very busy and we do not want anyone to get hurt crossing the road.



Nursery

Hoglets is our EYFS class which admits children aged 3 and up. Nursery children can attend from 8.45am to 11.45am daily for 15 funded hours. It is a great opportunity for them to make a smooth transition from a nursery setting to school as well as to make new friends. There are a few spaces available. Contact the school office (01638 741529) to arrange taster sessions.

Bags 2 School

The next Bags 2 School collection will be on **Tuesday 1st November** (after half term). Bags have already been sent home; please look out for them in your child's book bag. If you need anymore, spare bags can be collected from the office.



Shoe Box Appeal

This year we are supporting Teams4U's shoe box appeal, who each year, run a nationwide appeal to provide Christmas gifts to vulnerable children and families. More details can be found at <https://teams4u.com/shoebbox-guide/>.

If you would like to fill a shoebox or donate items to be included in a shoe box, please bring them into school by **Friday 4th November**.



Staffing

Goodbye and big thank you to Mel Deistler-Howe, who was part of our office staff. We wish her all the very best for the future.

Welcome to Emily Smith and Jess Shakeshaft, who will be joining Sue Burge as part of our office team. Emily will be in on Tuesdays and Fridays. Jess will be in on Thursday afternoons.