

Parents' Newsletter

Love, Respect, Honesty, Perseverance



Friday 11th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the first newsletter of the school year 26-27! We are delighted to report that the children are settling in exceptionally well. Whilst on lunch duty, I asked a child what they thought needed to be in my Newsletter; they said that everyone was being really good! - which I thought was super.

Thank you to staff for working so hard over the summer break to make the classrooms look so inviting and ready to enable learning.

Our EY class are already finding their feet, with children happily making friends with their Y6 Buddies, which has been a lovely sight, they are missing them this week! We take pride in how they are demonstrating care and compassion towards their charges; we think they are learning very quickly just how much energy little ones have! Their leadership and kindness serve as a shining example of our school's Learning for Life Behaviours.

There is a positive buzz throughout the school, with children eager to re-establish routines, as well as to learn new ones. To support our commitment to relationship-led education, the first week has been intentionally largely un-timetabled, allowing ample opportunity for children to become acquainted with their class teachers and learning support staff. This time is invaluable, as it lays the groundwork for strong, trusting relationships that will enhance their learning experience throughout the year.

We look forward to an exciting school year ahead and working in partnership with you all!

Warm regards,

Bridgette Gough

Headteacher

Love Life and Learning

Term-Time Holidays for those with SEND

I have recently held a one-to-one meeting with the Senior Attendance Lead for Essex to discuss guidance on term-time holidays for children with additional needs and relevant diagnoses. Parents have asked us to consider authorising absence for children in this category.

We have taken advice and, in line with statutory guidance, **Working together to improve school attendance: July 2026, pages 89 to 90**, the following has been shared: "Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance." As holidays fall within this definition, the school would be moving against statutory guidance to authorise absence.

I can also share useful information about SEND support in UK airports, including reasonable adjustments, although this may not be appropriate for all families. The Essex Carers Network provides further detail: <https://www.essexcarersnetwork.co.uk/uk-airport-special-assistance/>

We are aware that Parliament are once again being lobbied about this very issue and therefore this may change but at present this is the position both in Essex and nationally.

After School Football Club

[St Andrews Primary School After School Football Club | Pebble](#)

Collective Worship Theme – Small Acts of Kindness

To begin the school year, we thought it pertinent to emphasise the importance of being kind within our school community, thereby promoting the family feel we all want for all. We have drawn upon a range of resources, including a short film and some lovely texts. This led us to exploring empathy and imagining what it is like to be in someone else's position.

The film is linked below and the two texts selected to support.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WHTzsvKKB9E>

Thank you, Omu – Oge Maru

Dogger - Shirley Hughes

The theme links to our whole school Learning for Life Behaviour of 'Respect Yourself and Others'. Please do ask the children to talk to you about the resources and the message they shared. Thank you for the prayers from Armadillo Class.

Headteacher's Cup

Bear Cub Class: W1- Joseph

Octopus Class: W1- Whole Class

Starfish Class: W1- Sidharth

Sea Turtle Class: W1- Daisy

Hawaiian Goose Class: W1- Ben

Armadillo Class: W1- Georgie



Birthdays in September

Ada	Wilfred
Nicholas	James
Vienna	Henry
Amelia	Niya
Alysia	George
Bella S	Leon
Archie	Jacob
Sidharth	Joey
Sadie	Harrison
Isla	
Ewan	



Going For Green

George K

Allergy Information and EpiPen Provision

Please share all allergy information with school promptly. Prescribed medication may fail, and a single dose may not be effective, as the severity of an allergic reaction can change. For safety, two EpiPens are always needed in school to fulfil individual health plan requirements.

Promoting Trusting, Respectful Relationships

Building trusting, respectful relationships between home and school is essential for children's wellbeing and progress. We ask families to support open and honest communication with staff about absence, rather than encouraging children to withhold information or even lie to staff. This can be stressful for children and does not help them understand that teachers and support staff are trusted adults they can rely on if they have worries or concerns who are there for them. Our adults work hard to fulfil this role every day, and we want children to know that school is a safe place where they can speak honestly and be listened to with care.

Reflection Area - The Trilogy

In our school's Reflection Area, we invite pupils to think about the notion of the Trilogy and the three elements that make up the Christian concept of God, The Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The interactive element allows children to create Lego models from numbers of bricks divisible by three. It has been wonderful to witness so many busy hands engaged in this activity.



Dates for your diary

Alongside this week's Newsletter we are sending the diary dates for the coming year to support parents in planning ahead. We are aware that sometimes we may have to make changes when planning this far in advance but changes will always be highlighted in future postings to draw your attention to changes as soon as we can.

Summer Re-decoration Programme

It was a great to return to the school and be greeted by the smell of fresh paint! Over the summer break, several projects have been undertaken to refresh various areas within our schools, ensuring that both St. Andrew's and Feering are well-maintained and visually appealing. Feering also got a much-needed new carpet for our group/ music room, it looks so much better!

We recognise the importance of maintaining a fresh and cared for environment for our children, and we are committed to continuing this work throughout the forthcoming academic year.

Reading Volunteers Needed

We would like to announce an opportunity for parents and community members to support our early reading provision. We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers to assist with early reading for our Key Stage 1 (KS1) children, in addition to our ongoing support for Key Stage 2 (KS2). If you have just an hour a week to spare, we would be delighted to hear from you. Brief training will be provided to equip you for this rewarding role. A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is required to ensure the safety of our children. Together, we can foster a love of reading in our young learners!

School Visits and Visitors

We know just how much the children look forward to the range of educational visits we offer. They form part of our 50 Things list and are so often mentioned by the children as highlights of their year. Trips take an awful lot of planning and preparation on the part of our staff team. From Risk Assessments to travel quotes not to mention site visits and checks ahead of the visit. We therefore want every child to be able to take advantage of these opportunities. With this in mind, we are making the usual annual commitment to our parent body, that we will endeavour to keep the cost per child for the total of the year to be £40 or less. This is with the exception of Year 6 as they will be offered the opportunity to attend the residential trip, which, by its very nature is much more of a financial commitment. That is why for the residential we offer a payment plan to help. We hope that by giving this information now families can plan for this cost.

Second Hand Uniform Sale

So many of you have donated great quality uniform over the past week or so and we are looking forward to being able to offer this for sale. All monies raised go towards school funds and this offers a cost-effective way to purchase plenty of uniform for washing and wearing needs. This is particularly useful for our younger pupils who we know are prone to spillages and grassy knee stains!



Please join us on

Wednesday 16th September 2026

8.45am – 9.15am

Snacktember Initiative

We are pleased to once again announce the launch of the Snacktember Initiative, a month-long programme for school. This initiative aims to empower children and young people aged 5-16 years to choose healthier and more sustainable snack options. As a school we have always aimed for children's morning snack to be either fruit or veg and to not spike blood sugars too much, while helping them last until lunchtime.

Research from the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS), published in 2025, highlights a concerning trend: many young people are falling short of their recommended intake of vegetables, fruit, and fibre while consuming excessive amounts of saturated fat, salt, and sugars. On average, children and young people indulge in three snacks daily, making this a pivotal moment for influencing their dietary habits.

By guiding our pupils towards healthier snacking choices, we can significantly enhance their intake of essential nutrients and reduce the consumption of unhealthy ingredients. Together, we can cultivate a healthier future for our young generations during Snacktember and beyond. Let's make a positive change!



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Out and about....Supporting being out and about and getting active and being in the natural environment.

Puddle Magazine for Early Years and Primary Schools – September Issue

The September issue of [Puddle Magazine](#) is now available, packed with family-friendly ideas, local activities, events, days out, crafts and inspiration for the new school year.



Street Tag Schools Programme for all Schools

Epping Forest District Council, in partnership with Active Essex and Street Tag, are launching a free, app-based physical activity programme for primary and secondary schools from Monday 5 October 2026 to Monday 30 November 2026, funded by Active Travel England. [Street Tag](#) turns everyday walking, cycling, running, and wheeling into a fun game where families earn points for their school. The programme promotes active travel, healthier lifestyles, and community engagement, with prizes and rewards available.

Dandelion Parent/Carer Support

We are pleased to signpost a local support group for parents and carers of neurodivergent children. These coffee afternoons are there to offer, support, advice and a listening ear within a community context. They also offer a means to link up with other local professionals and organisations. There are local hubs run from Braintree and Halstead which run from 1:00 until 2:30pm and the attached flyer gives dates. The groups are designed to reach as many families as possible and we hope you find them useful.



Phonics Information Sessions for Bear Cub Parents and Carers

We are hosting an Early Reading (Phonics) support session on Thursday 17th October at 8.45am to help Early Years children's parents continue their child's journey to being a reader. We are holding these events at drop off time to enable as many parents as possible to attend. Please do try and make it if you possibly can, it will support your child so much.

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