

Parents' Newsletter

Love, Respect, Honesty, Perseverance



Friday 20th March 2026

Dear Parents

Welcome to the last of our newsletters for this term; as we move towards the Easter break can I take this opportunity to wish everyone a restful celebration with family and friends. Meanwhile, there is lots to pack into the coming weeks and the year 3 and 4 production. Can we remind those coming to the production that each and every visitor needs their ticket and productions are not always suitable for very young audience members as they are often nearly an hour and any background noise can be very off putting for our young performers who have worked hard to learn lines but are often a little shy with a full hall. All siblings who are at school will have had the opportunity to see the dress rehearsal.

As you will be aware there is an ongoing nationwide campaign to improve school attendance at all phases of education. Your child's class teacher will have discussed this on Parent's Evening. We are determined to support families in giving their children the best chance of school success by being at school every session that they are able to attend. We therefore would like to remind parents that term time holidays will not be authorised other than in highly exceptional circumstances as laid out by the DfE.

We also would like to say if there are ever any circumstances in which we might help a child be in school, maybe you have trouble with transport or an appointment yourself that makes timings difficult, please do be aware we will help wherever we can. Also, if your child is recovering from an illness and maybe not ready for a full day but could manage a half day, every session missed is a missing puzzle piece and half a day is better than a complete day missed. With this in mind, we can also support with the administering of medication, you just need to come to the office and leave it with us and fill in a brief form. Please know that we very much just want to support you in supporting your child's education.

Warm Regards

Bridgette Gough

Farewell to Mrs Karen Root

It is with a heavy heart that we announce the early retirement of Karen Root, who has been an invaluable member of our school community for the past 20 years. Since last summer, Mrs Root has been undergoing cancer treatment, and after much consideration, she has made the difficult decision to retire.

Throughout her time at our St. Andrew's, Mrs Root has served as a Higher Level Teaching Assistant. She has been integral to our Year 6 team and preparing children for secondary school. Promoting a love of maths with so many of our children. She has also made a significant impact as a swimming teacher, helping even the most hesitant swimmers to grow in confidence, overcome their fears and believe in their own abilities. Her dedication and passion have impacted the lives of countless pupils, and her contributions will not be forgotten.

Mrs Root has always been a team player, a real asset and support to our staff too, and her absence will be profoundly felt. We cannot thank her enough for her years of service, and we know that everyone will miss her dearly. We wish her all the best for the future.

Love Life and Learning

Exciting Writing Project: Embracing Our Environmental Theme

We are thrilled to share that our school recently embarked on a vibrant writing project centered around an environmental theme, as part of our action plan accompanying the sustainability policy that all schools were asked to embrace from this academic year. Over the past fortnight, our pupils have explored selected texts that have served as inspiration for their extended writing.

Each class has engaged with these carefully chosen stories, which highlight various aspects of our environment and the importance of caring for our planet. It might be a nice idea for you to discuss these texts at home, as I'm sure your children will be eager to share their thoughts and findings with you. To foster this dialogue, we have included a short synopsis of each text below.

The Forest by Marc Martin - A poignant parable about the unforeseen consequences of deforestation, illustrating how the loss of trees impacts wildlife and ecosystems.

The Journey Home by Frann Preston Gannon - Follow a polar bear on his quest for a new home as the ice melts, highlighting the effects of climate change on Arctic habitats.

Dear Earth by Isabel Otter - Tessa writes a heartfelt letter to Earth, inspired by her grandfather's stories, expressing her hopes and dreams for a better future.

Dinosaurs and All That Rubbish by Michael Foreman - An ecological fable about a man's pollution and the dinosaurs who teach him a lesson about taking care of the planet.

Flood by Jackie French - A sensitive tale of a cattle dog separated from his family during a devastating flood, showcasing the resilience of animals and the impact of natural disasters.

Two Summers by John Heffernan - A young boy experiences the joys and challenges of life on a farm through nature's cycles, learning valuable lessons about sustainability and stewardship.

The Endangereds by Philippe Cousteau and Austin Aslan - An adventure featuring animal heroes fighting against climate change and human threats, inspiring young readers to become advocates for the environment.

We are incredibly proud of the work our pupils have been producing, and we have displayed some of their impressive pieces on our school shared writing wall, so when you are in for the next sharing session after school please find time to seek it out. Additionally, we have created an attachment showcasing a few examples of their writing, providing them with a wider audience for their efforts.

Headteacher's Cup

Joey Class: W1-Axel

W2-Jace

Aardvark Class: W1-Charlie

W2-Kit

Giraffe Class: W1-Iziah-Blu

W2-Juliette

Capybara Class: W1-Luna

W2-Carter

Koala Class: W1-Hugo

W2-Maddie

Jellyfish Class: W1-Lilia

W2-Alexa

Falcon Class: W1-Monty

W2-Theo



Birthdays in March

Ava G

Grayson

Jacob H

Elijah

Mark

Phoebe

Oscar M

Lucy

Millie

Charlie H

Alice K

Mya

Enola

Flinn

Parker

Violet

Lilia

Logan



Going For Green

Robyn

Sports Cup

Lucy & Kodi



Reflections Area, Pupil Voice and Collective Worship

Last week we examined the Learning for Life Behaviour 'Don't Give Up' and used the No Outsiders resource called Fishing. We delved into the inspiring story of Marina Gibson, a passionate fly fisher who dreams of joining Britain's premier

flyfishing club. Despite her enthusiasm, Marina faces rejection, prompting us to reflect on the importance of perseverance. We will also explore the story of Emmeline Pankhurst in the Little People Big Dreams series, which beautifully illustrates how determination is key to achieving our aspirations. The Collective Worship Committee took the reins on Thursday and linked this L4L B with Growth Mindset thinking, inspiring us all. Well done to the team.

This week we have been thinking about honesty and truthfulness within Worship times. We have listened to some great stories and linked the theme to the story of Peter. The children heard of how Peter, a friend of Jesus who, despite promising loyalty, succumbed to fear while Jesus was being questioned by religious leaders. We examined the fact that telling the truth is often not the easiest route but that which offers us a guilt free existence. I would love to recommend a read of Little Croc's Purse a super little picture book, by Lizzie Finlay, Little Croc discovers a purse filled with money, sparking exciting ideas among his friends about how to spend it. Ultimately, he chooses to return the purse, learning valuable lessons about sharing, saving, and spending along the way.

In The Wolf Who Cried Boy by Bob Hartman, a twist on the traditional fable, a young wolf, bored of his meals, plays tricks on his parents by falsely calling for help. When a real boy scout appears, his parents ignore him, highlighting the importance of honesty and the consequences of deceit.

This theme linked to our Reflections Area, themed upon being honest to ourselves and sharing worries and anxieties letting others in to support us. Our table has a jar ready to collect our pupils thoughts and feelings and our monitors are gathering these for me to review and see what we can do to help.

We have also started the pupil voice work outlined with the Parent Consultation Group aimed at looking for ways to ensure any anxiousness around school is kept to a minimum and worries within our pupils are considered in order that we keep improving for them and with them.

Parent Consultation Evening Questionnaire Results

Thanks to everyone who filled in our questionnaires during our parent consultation evenings. They were so positive and we are glad that we are largely meeting your expectations in most areas. Where we had comments that we want to do better for individuals we were grateful that people wrote their names to enable us to do so.

The attached document summarises this for you to view.

Easter Service – St Andrew's

We are looking forward to our visit to St. Andrew's on the Thursday 26th March, at 1:45pm. We really hope you can join us for the afternoon and if you're able to escort the children either to or from the Church please can you do message your child's class teacher to offer your support, this will support risk assessing the walk.

New Menu Additions following Taste Testing

Following the pupil voice work done with our Falcon class around school dinners the kitchen put together a tasting menu of some of their suggestions. The

children loved being asked to taste test the food with some clear winners, although everyone liked something. These choices have been included in our spring summer menu which was circulated for parents earlier this week.

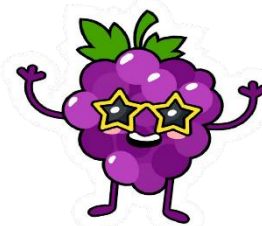
Today marked the first day of our new chicken noodle dish and the Y6's went out to gather some views from other Key Stage 2 pupils. I have added some of their reactions here that Y6 collected.

The sauce and the chicken and all the vegetables together were really good! It was amazing!' - BS

'I just loved everything combined - all the vegetables and chickens and the sauce!' – TJ

'They were really, really good - they were even better in the sauce! I really liked them in the sauce! And I loved the sweetcorn!' - AB

I hope that with the help of our very willing Y6 guinea pigs we can continue to encourage more children to try hot meals. These offer great value for money and with the tasty new additions we hope give a real alternative for parents from pack lunches. We also looked at portion size with the older children ensuring that they will be content for the rest of the school day if they choose to have a packed lunch. This again was a welcome adaptation for the Y5/6 pupils. That I know will be re reassuring for our parents.



Exciting Bikeability Courses Available This Easter!

We are happy to share with our community that Bikeability courses will be offered in several locations across mid Essex during the Easter Holidays! These courses provide an excellent opportunity for children to develop essential cycling skills in a safe and supportive environment.

Participants will learn vital road safety techniques, improve their cycling confidence, and enjoy the benefits of physical activity. Not only does cycling promote a healthy lifestyle, but it also encourages independence and responsibility.

We encourage all families to consider enrolling their children in these valuable courses. Please find the attached flyer for more details on locations and registration.

Let's make this Easter a time for fun, learning, and adventure on two wheels! Live link to booking page below.

<https://essex.cycleready.co.uk/PublicBooking>



Tuesday Share Sessions Re-Spin...

We are keen to remind you of our monthly sharing events, taking place on the first Tuesday of every month. The next gathering is scheduled for Tuesday, 14th April, straight after school.

This is a super opportunity for our children to immerse themselves in a rich learning environment, surrounded by books and engaging classroom displays.

During this time, pupils can explore their classroom environment and their books, to inspire conversations about their schoolwork. It's a fantastic way for them to feel a sense of pride and achievement in their learning. We encourage parents to join us, as your involvement is crucial in supporting your child's educational journey. Together, we can celebrate their successes and discuss ways to enhance their learning at home.

Additionally, this event provides a perfect chance to enquire about home-based tasks and to explore the Key Facts Sheets for maths and reading support activities for English. Your engagement not only strengthens the home-school connection but also reinforces the importance of education in your children's lives. We look forward to seeing you there.

Uniform

As we look forward to the summer term, we would like to remind everyone about the importance of wearing the correct uniform and PE kit. Our school uniform fosters a sense of belonging and pride, in addition the appropriate PE kit ensures that our children can participate safely in all activities.

Please remember that jewellery and acrylic nails are not permitted during school hours, as they can pose safety risks during lessons and playtime. We appreciate your support in reinforcing these guidelines at home, ensuring our children are ready to learn and thrive in a safe environment. Thank you.

St Andrew's Triumph at the Ramsey Cup Cross Country Event

We are thrilled to announce that St Andrew's has emerged victorious in the recent Cross Country Event, part of the series of Ramsey Cup Events offered this year! Our talented team showed determination and sportsmanship, bringing home the trophy. A heartfelt congratulations to all the athletes who represented our school with pride and enthusiasm. Your hard work and commitment truly paid off!

A special thank you to Mr Littlewood for helping with preparing the team and ensuring they were ready for this challenge. We are incredibly proud of everyone involved!

School vacancies

We currently have a few vacancies at the school for:

LSA – Part-Time 16.25hrs a week worked over 3 days (fixed term)

Midday Assistant - 6.25hrs a week, Monday - Friday

Cleaner - 10hrs a week, Monday - Friday

Further details can be found at : <https://www.essexschoolsjobs.co.uk>