



Roots to grow,  
Wings to soar

# Newsletter

Spring Term

16th January 2026

## FROM THE HEADTEACHER

### Value: Courage

Dear Parents,

With the term now well under way, Spring Term is always one of the busiest regarding the children's learning and progress having settled now into their classes and routines. It is lovely to see them so focused on their learning. With such variable weather this week, although we do like to be outside in all weathers, we have also had some indoor play this week too. Please do remember to bring coats (named!) every day - and make sure hats and scarves are named too!

#### **Attendance Matters**

We are reviewing the current statistics for attendance and lateness at our school, as we do regularly throughout the year. This is in line with requirements for schools to closely monitor the attendance patterns and arrival times of pupils. Some families may receive a letter, again this is in line with our policy. Each situation is unique and there are many and varied reasons for why attendance might not be as strong as expected. We also know all families want their child's attendance to be strong and we want to work together on this. Please do continue to ensure you are doing everything you can to ensure your child's attendance at school is the best it can be. Thank you.

#### **School Council**

This week, our School Council met to share ideas and talk about ways to make our school an even better place to learn and play. Ms Todd was so impressed by how thoughtfully the children spoke, listened to one another, and represented their classes. Their ideas really do help shape decisions in our school, and I'd like to thank our School Councillors for their hard work and commitment. I'm also pleased to say that we now have a suggestion box in school for all children to use. The School Council went around the classes this week to let everyone know about it. This is a space where pupils can share their ideas, thoughts, or concerns at any time. Every suggestion will be read and carefully considered, because children's voices matter here. We are very proud of how confidently our pupils are learning to express their views and take an active role in school life.

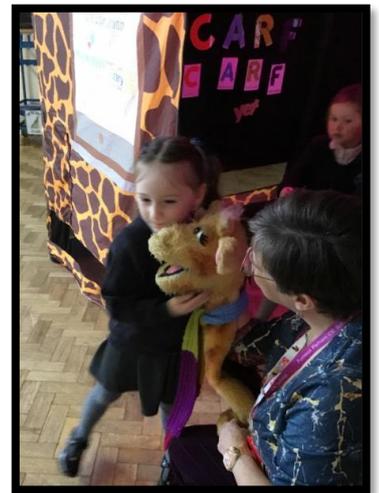
#### **Skylark Indoor Athletics at Birchwood**

Some of Skylark Class went to join other schools at an indoor athletics event. Ms Todd and Mrs Hagger said that they were great role models in representing our school and that the event was a great success. There are many more exciting sporting events coming up over the rest of the year.

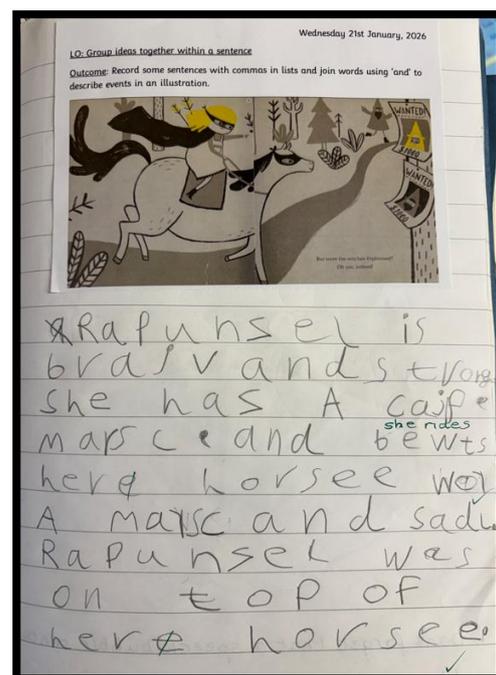
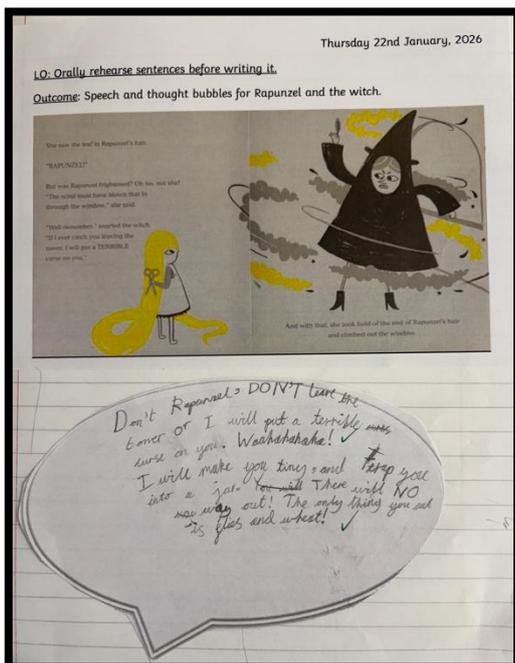
Wishing you a lovely weekend,

Sarah Cook  
Headteacher

**Woodpecker:** Last week in our phonic session, we learnt the sound 'oa'. The children were highly engaged as they used junk modelling to create boats that could float. They showed excellent concentration and spent a long time carefully designing and building their models. On Monday, we took the boats outside to test whether they would float or sink. The children enjoyed investigating the results and discussing why some boats floated while others sank, developing their curiosity and early scientific thinking. We also had the life bus visit us and the children took part in a workshop called 'Keep Trying'. They learnt the importance of practising, trying their best, and not giving up. We talked about using the word "yet" — instead of saying "I can't do it," we now say, "I can't do it yet." This helps support a positive growth mindset and resilience.



**Kingfisher:** It has been another busy week in Kingfisher. The children have been enjoying our class read 'The Giant and the Joneses' by Julia Donaldson and it has been an opportunity for them to listen to an alternative kind of fairytale. It is full of wonderful descriptions and language. Did you know that 'bimplestonk' was Giant for beanstalk and humans are called 'iggly plops'? Everyone was excited to share their toys on Thursday afternoon when we began our new History topic 'How have toys changed?' What a variety we had to play with. And we had a long discussion about the different materials that are used to make toys today. The general consensus was that softer was better!



**Nightingale:** We have had another successful week swimming and have continued to practise Rugby skills in P.E They also enjoyed their time with the life bus on Monday. The children have been continuing to develop their understanding of multiplication and division and this week they learnt about remainders for the first time. The children are developing many strategies to problem solve using their times table knowledge. In history the children have been archaeologists working from photographs of stone age sites to make suggestions of how people in the past used to live. They have been thinking hard about similarities and differences to today. They also have had the opportunity to go on a virtual trip to the prehistoric Lascaux caves in France and look at the amazing cave art and sketch some of the art they saw. In Science they have been investigating changing state with ice experiments.

Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2016

LO: To describe melting and freezing

- I can describe the conditions needed for melting and freezing.
- I can describe the property changes as a material melts or freezes.
- I can name the start and end states when melting and freezing materials.

Key vocab: Freezing, Freezing point, melting, melting point, temperature, thermometer

Question: How does temperature affect the rate of melting?

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Results table for melting process:

Time (mins)	Has the ice cube melted?			
	Control (no water)	Cold water	Warm water	Hot water
1	18°C	12°C	10°C	17°C
2	18°C	10°C	9°C	14°C or 10°C
3	19°C	9°C	6°C	11°C
4	19°C	4°C	6°C	10°C
5	19°C	8°C	5°C	
6	18°C	8°C	5°C	
7	19°C	7°C	5°C	
8	17°C	8°C	5°C	
9	16°C	8°C	4°C	
10	11°C	9°C	4°C	

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016

LO: To write the introduction of a newspaper

- I can write an engaging headline
- I can write an introductory paragraph
- I can include the 5 W's

# MAMMOTH NEWS

Storage sightings

People have seen storage sightings in sports

On January 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:25 AM people have spotted 20 Guinness Eagle sightings records seen. The Eagle sightings which were seen 1/50 which said that having eagle might be some for your good and

## ODINTONS

"Our father said hell punish us when we get home" said the boy. The Hunter said we will survive

**Robin:** We have been developing their teamwork and communication skills by working together in group activities and games in PE. They have learnt the importance of listening to one another, sharing ideas, and supporting their teammates. The children have also enjoyed experimenting with colour, shape and composition in Art. They used a variety of media to create their own interpretations of different elements from Palaeolithic cave paintings. This linked across the curriculum with History, where the children investigated the remains of Skara Brae and used their researching skills to learn more about life in the Neolithic period. In science, we conducted an investigation into how temperature affects the rate of melting. We enjoyed working together. Finally, Robin have been working hard on their multiplication fluency, the class have shown excellent improvement and should be very proud of themselves!

**Skylark:** Skylark have been enjoying finding out more about the differences between cold-blooded and warm-blooded vertebrates during our science lessons this week. We've focused on their different characteristics, and they've been working on some super illustrated fact files to record their learning. We've been continuing to explore Persuasive writing in English and have practised the technique of presenting an argument backed up with evidence to support the idea. The children put a great deal of creativity and thought into their arguments and I'm looking forward to reading their final letters next week. In PE, we practiced different types of rolls and then worked on putting them into a sequence along with balances.

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2016

LO: To identify the warm blooded vertebrate group using their common characteristics

- I can describe the characteristics of birds and mammals
- I can compare the characteristics of warm blooded
- I can use a classification key to identify and classify vertebrates

Useful words: Characteristics, classify, classification key, vertebrates, bird, mammal, warm blooded

### Warm-blooded vertebrate

**Mammals**  
The vertebrate group is divided in the order from warm blooded group. They are grouped by their characteristics. Characteristics like having four legs, have four appendages, milk, warm blood and breath with lungs.

**Birds**  
Birds are part of the vertebrate group. They are grouped by their characteristics. They have feathers, they have beak, eggs, are warm-blooded and breathe in with lungs.

**Snake**  
Snakes are part of the vertebrate group. They are grouped by their characteristics. They have four appendages, they have beak, eggs, are warm-blooded and breathe in with lungs.

**Fish**  
Fish are part of the vertebrate group. They are grouped by their characteristics. They have four appendages, they have beak, eggs, are warm-blooded and breathe in with lungs.






BIRCHWOOD INDOOR ATHLETICS TEAM

## WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Attendance – 97.5%

Whole School Target Set – 96%

Please contact school **every day** of any absence. This can be done by calling **01279 777344** and leaving a message on the absence line.

If you are going to be late, please also advise the school office before 9.00am to ensure a meal is ordered in time.

## BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK



**Robin Class**

Jack



## ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARDS

### Woodpecker

**Ollie H** for making a fantastic start in Woodpecker class.

**Sienna** for showing lots of enthusiasm in her learning.

### Nightingale

**Hunter** for working hard with his spelling and reading.

### Kingfisher

**Hadley** for using his phonic knowledge to help him write a list in English.

**Finley** for using his times tables knowledge to help him count money.

### Robin

**Penny** for fantastic behaviour for learning and super times tables progress.

### Skylark

**Hanna** for great focus and effort in English writing lessons.

**Marley-James** for his great behaviour and contributions this week.

## READING AWARDS

### Woodpecker

Felicity

### Nightingale

Darcey

### Kingfisher

William

### Robin

Wynter-Rose

### Skylark

Rosa

MENU w/c 26 <sup>th</sup> January 2026		DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES	
Day	Menu		
Monday	Beef Burger (Red) Potato Frittata (v) (Green) Baked Potato with Cheese & Beans (v) (Blue)	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> February	Skylark O2 Young Voices
		Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Skylark Tudor Day
		Mon 16 <sup>th</sup> – Fri 20 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Half Term
		Wednesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March	Bags2 School Collection
Tuesday	Chicken Pie & Gravy (Red) Swedish Style Plant Based Meatballs (v) (Green) Baked Potato with Tuna Mayo (Blue)	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March	World Book Day
		Thursday 26 <sup>th</sup> March	FPSA Easter Disco
		Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> March	End of Term
		Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> April	INSET DAY
		Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> April	Term starts for pupils
Wednesday	Roast Chicken with Stuffing & Gravy (Red) Plant Based Shepherds Pie (Ve) (Green) Baked Potato with Grated Cheese (v) (Blue)	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> May	Bank Holiday
		Mon 25 <sup>th</sup> – Fri 29 <sup>th</sup> May	Half Term
		Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	Bags2 School Collection
		Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> June	Sports Day
		Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> July	Reserve Sports Day
		Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	KS2 Faith Tour
		Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	Leavers Service 2pm Church
Thursday	Quorn Dipper Taco with Sweet Chilli Sauce (Ve) (Red) Mac n Cheese (v) (Green) Baked potato with Baked Beans (Ve) (Blue)	Monday 20 <sup>th</sup> July	FPSA Summer Disco
		Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July	END of TERM
		Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July	INSET DAY
Friday	Fish Fillet Fingers (Red) Margherita Pizza (v) (Green) Baked Potato with Grated Cheese (v) (Blue)		

## NOTICES AND INFORMATION

### Navigating Smartphones & Tech as a Family



A free event from **SFC Stortford** for parents and educators, featuring candid stories and practical tools you can start using straight away.

- > Presentations
- > Panel discussion
- > Alternative phone display



The Bishop's  
Stortford High School  
Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March  
6.30 - 9pm

Book here:  
[tinyurl.com/  
5MARSFC](https://tinyurl.com/5MARSFC)

