



Roots to grow,
Wings to soar

Newsletter

Autumn Term

16th October 2026

FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Value: Community and Responsibility

Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been another busy week and I have particularly enjoyed having so many children pop in to share their work with me. I've handed out lots of Headteacher stickers to recognise their resilience, creativity and all-round brilliant effort and progress in their learning. It is so lovely to see the children thriving in all sorts of ways, taking pride in what they do and showing such enthusiasm for their learning. These little moments are always the highlights of my week.

Thank you also to all who joined us for our Harvest Festival celebration at St. Mary's on Thursday. We were thrilled with the generous contributions for Buntingford Food Bank which our Pelham Praise children helped to carry over and display at the church for our service.

Smartphone-Free Childhood: An Important Update for Parents

Following discussions among our consortium of local primary school heads last year, we recently welcomed representatives from Smartphone Free Childhood (SFC) to discuss the growing movement towards a smartphone-free childhood and the potential impact of early smartphone use on children's mental health, wellbeing, social development and ability to concentrate. As a group of 21 local primary schools in and around the Bishop's Stortford area, we have agreed to work together to support a smartphone-free childhood and align our approach with the commitments already being made by our local secondary schools. From September 2027, pupils will not be permitted to bring smartphones into school.

Why are we making this change?

Research has shown the potential impact of smartphones on children includes:

- Poor mental health, including anxiety and low self-esteem.
- Issues with attention, concentration, sleep and online bullying.
- Exposure to harmful or inappropriate content and potentially dangerous individuals.
- The addictive nature of smartphones, which can reduce time spent playing, interacting face-to-face and developing important social skills.

As a parent myself I have seen, and continue to see, the impact smartphones can have on children. I also understand how challenging it can be to say no when children see their friends and peers with these devices and naturally want to have one too. The pressure on families can be significant, and it is one of the reasons why working together as a group of schools is so important. By taking a shared approach, we hope to make it easier for parents to have these conversations and feel confident in the decisions they make for their children. We recognise that our local context differs from that of more urban schools, where children may be more likely to walk to and from school independently in Years 5 and 6. Smartphone use among our primary-aged

children is not currently as prevalent in regard to school, however we are aware of increased use at home from a much earlier age, so this remains an important consideration as we look ahead and think about the choices families make as their children grow.

Before purchasing a smartphone for your child, we encourage you to be aware of these forthcoming changes and to consider the wider implications of early smartphone use. SFC will be running a **parent workshop after school on Thursday 12 November 2026**, offering an opportunity to find out more about the smartphone-free childhood movement, explore the issues, look at alternatives and ask questions. Our shared aim is to create a focused, social and supportive environment where children can learn, develop friendships and enjoy being children. We hope families will take this opportunity to learn more in considering how best to support our children as they navigate an increasingly digital world.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Harvest Festival at St. Mary's yesterday. It was lovely to see so many parents and families join us and the children read and performed prayers, poems and songs so confidently. We are also incredibly grateful for all the generous donations that we received from families for the Buntingford Food Bank. It made a wonderful display as part of our service. It was the first time our very eager new Pelham Praise children had the opportunity to shine. They were very excited with their roles on the day which included bringing and arranging the food over to the church, handing out orders of service on arrival and readings as part of the service.

Have a lovely weekend,

Sarah Cook
Headteacher

Woodpecker Class

This week in the mud kitchen, the children have been busy using vegetables to make their very own onion soup. They carefully prepared the ingredients and watched as their soup cooked on the BBQ for an incredible six hours! This was a fantastic opportunity to talk about how food changes when it is heated and to develop an understanding of the cooking process.

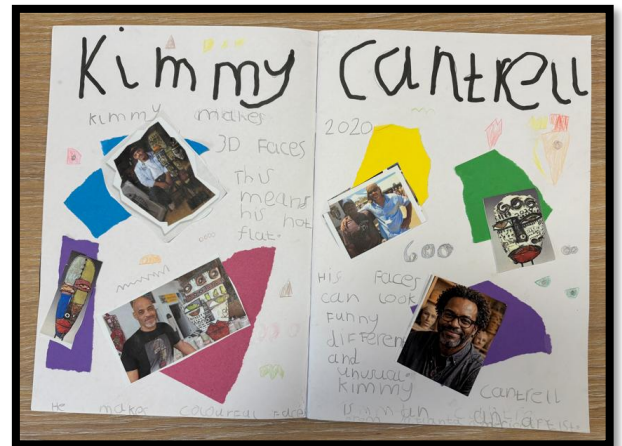
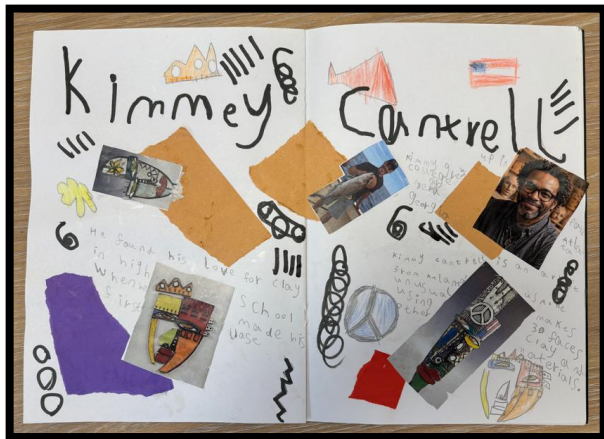
In maths, we have been exploring the number 3. The children have been learning to recognise when a collection contains three objects and had a go at making their own collections of three objects. To bring our learning to life, we enjoyed a special picnic with the Three Bears. The children had to make sure that each bear had one item each, helping us practise sharing fairly and understanding that three bears needed three items altogether.





Kingfisher Class

Kingfisher Class have had a very busy week with lots of great learning happening in maths and English this week. At this stage so early in term, we are so impressed with the children's focus and outcomes. They are still greatly enjoying being outdoors with their learning as much as possible. We have welcomed a new visitor to our class this week, Miss Yang, who is with us on placement for her teacher training from Cambridge University. The children greatly enjoyed her story time this week!



Nightingale Class

This week, Nightingale have been diving into the wonderful world of poetry in English, enjoying the works of Michael Rosen and Kit Wright. Inspired by Kit Wright's *The Magic Box*, the children have been working collaboratively in small groups to create their own imaginative poems, filling their boxes with all sorts of wonderful and unexpected treasures. We can't wait to share some of their creative ideas!



We have also begun our new class book, *The Explorer* by Katherine Rundell, and just two chapters in, the children are already gripped! There's plenty of excitement, mystery and adventure ahead, and we're looking forward to discovering what happens next.



Skylark Class

Skylark have been writing their own suspense stories this week and enjoying creating their own sinister characters and spooky situations. We are looking forward to writing up the final drafts and sharing them as a class next week. In science, the children have been learning about day and night. They carried out a hands-on investigation with a globe and a torch, working in groups, to explore the suitability of a model and writing up their findings. In history, we linked into Black History month and found out about the Windrush Generation. We explored some of the reasons why people migrated to Britain during and after World War II, listening to oral histories and exploring propaganda posters.

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Attendance this week – 95.4%

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. **If you are going to be late and will need to order a school lunch, you can either make your own selection on Arbor before 8.15 am or ring the school office before 9.15 am. Orders placed after this time may not be accepted.**



Woodpecker

Kingfisher

Nightingale
Sam

Skylark



ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARDS

Woodpecker

Max decoding and reading words.

Daphne for her fantastic English work this week.

Nightingale

Aubrey for the effort he is making to improve his handwriting and developing his skills.

Archie for consistently working hard in Maths. He asks for help when needed but will always have a go before doing so.

Kingfisher

Iris for her incredible use of vocabulary in science.

Dolcie for superb independence in maths.

Skylark

Isla for her fantastic attitude, hard work and progress in Maths.

Will S for super resilience and communication this week.

HEADTEACHER AWARDS

Dougie for his superb and confident recount of his English story.

Beatrice and **Tommy** for their increased confidence when speaking in French.

Sebastian for demonstrating fantastic listening skills in his secondary school aptitude test.

READING AWARDS			
Woodpecker Ollie	Kingfisher Felicity	Nightingale Ruby	Skylark Caitlyn
CREATIVE AWARD			
Alice, Margaux, Louis and Rosie for their superb artistic skills when interpreting work by the artist Kimmy Cantrell in Art for Black History Month.			

MENU w/c 19th October 2026			
Day	Menu		
Monday	Chicken Curry Red Plant based sausages and gravy (Ve) Green Jacket Potato with Tuna Mayo Blue	Monday 19 th October	Parent Consultations 1.30 – 6pm
Tuesday	Plant Based Meatballs with Tomato Sauce (Ve) Red Mac n Cheese(v) Green Jacket Potato with Grated Cheese (v) Blue	Thursday 22 nd October	Skylark class trip – IWM Duxford
Wednesday	Roast Beef with Yorkshire Pudding &Gravy Red Quorn Fillet with Stuffing & Gravy (Ve) Green Jacket Potato with Beans & Cheese (v) Blue	Mon 26 th – Fri 30 th October	Half Term
Thursday	Chicken Pie & Gravy(v) Red Mild Bean Chilli (Ve) Green Jacket Potato with Baked Beans (Ve) Blue	Saturday 31 st October	Secondary admissions deadline
Friday	Battered Fish Red Margherita Pizza (v) Green Jacket Potato with Beans & Cheese (v) Blue	Friday 6 th November	Reception Open Morning 9.30 – 11 am
		Monday 9 th November	Bags 2 School Bikeability week
		Thursday 12 th November	SFC Parent Awareness Session 3.30 pm
		Friday 20 th November	KS2 Sharing Assembly
		Thursday 26 th November	Decorating Day (KS1 am, KS2 pm) FPSA Disco 5.30pm
		Friday 27 th November	Occasional Day
		Tuesday 1 st December	Reception Class trip to Audley End
		Friday 4 th December	FPSA Christmas Fair
		Wednesday 9 th December	Christingle 2pm @ St Mary's
		Monday 14 th December	Panto @ South Mill Arts
		Wednesday 16 th December	Christmas Lunch
		Thursday 17 th December	Christmas service 2pm @ St. Mary's
		Friday 18 th December	Term ends at 1.30 pm

NOTICES AND INFORMATION

- FPSA Event – Paint and Sip taking place on Friday 13th November at 7.30 pm.
Last few places available

MATT OGILVIE COACHING

07887808110

mattogilviecoaching@aol.com

www.mattogilviecoaching.com

@mattogilviefootballcoaching

OCTOBER HALF TERM
FURNEUX PELHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL
SG9 0LH
9AM-3PM
£25 PER DAY OR £45 FOR X2 DAYS

TUESDAY 27TH OCTOBER FOOTBALL CAMP

WEDNESDAY 28TH OCTOBER MULTI SPORTS

Please bring a packed lunch, plenty of water and shin pads if participating in football camp.



EDGE OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES
EST. 2016

HALLOWEEN HOLIDAY CAMP
FUN • FRIENDS • CHALLENGES • CONFIDENCE

MONDAY 26TH OCTOBER TO FRIDAY 30TH OCTOBER

FULL DAY 9.30 AM – 4.00 PM £45 PER DAY	HALF DAY 9.30 AM – 12.30 PM £30 PER DAY
FULL DAY ACTIVITIES ARCHERY EDGE WARRIOR ASSAULT COURSE MOUNTAIN BOARDING ORIENTEERING TOMB BALL FOOTPOOL HIGH ROPES BIG ZIP	HALF DAY ACTIVITIES HIGH ROPES BIG ZIP GAMES ASSAULT COURSE RACES PLUS LOTS MORE SPONTANEOUS FUN!

SPACES ARE LIMITED – BOOK EARLY TO AVOID MISSING OUT!

07801 711701 | edgeoutdooractivitiesware@gmail.com | www.edgeoutdooractivities.co.uk

Paint & Sip

IN AID OF FURNEUX PELHAM SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

FRIDAY 13TH NOVEMBER
7.30 PM

A CHRISTMAS THEMED EVENING LED
BY LOCAL ARTIST ANNA SPICER
FIRST GLASS OF PROSECCO AND ALL
ART MATERIALS INCLUDED

£35 PER PERSON

FURNEUX PELHAM

VILLAGE HALL, SG9 0LL

TO BOOK WHATSAPP

07917 842852

OR EMAIL

foa@furneuxp.herts.sch.uk

RP PERFORMANCE and coaching

FURNEUX PELHAM NEW DANCE & THEATRE CLUB WEDNESDAYS 3:15-4:20PM

Build confidence, learn Dance Skills and
Grow through a Supportive and Positive
Class, lead and designed by Founder Rimini!

- Dance and Musical Theatre Training
- Builds Confidence, Friendships and Creativity
- Shows and Performance Opportunities

Furneux Pelham C of E School

DANCE AND MUSICAL THEATRE CLUB
3:15-4:20



BOOK YOUR FREE TASTER SPACE TODAY!

07833298384

rimini@rperformance.uk

rperformance.uk

fab science

PROFESSOR FAB'S
POTIONS CLASS

£38
per child
Siblings
discount
available

Half term camp

Wednesday 28th October
at Thorn Grove Primary School

Professor Fab and her
gaggle of wizarding
scientists will help you make
colour-changing potions,
fizzy explosions, pourable
clouds...and even invent
your own potion!

Camps run 10am to 3pm and are open
to all children aged 5-11 years.

For more information visit the Fab
Science website.

BOOK NOW AT: [FABSCIENCE.CLASSFORKIDS.IO](https://fabscience.classforkids.io)

fabscience.co.uk

campcoordinator@fabscience.co.uk

01279 295669

Essex Fire Museum Halloween Open Day 2026



25th and 27th of October
10:30AM To 4:00PM

Fire Station, Hogg Lane, Grays
RM17 5QS



Book Now
Free Entry



Museum@essex-fire.gov.uk



PLAY LEARN MAKE MUSIC TOGETHER!
GUITAR WORKSHOP
FOR KEY STAGE 2 GUITAR PLAYERS

A fun and inspiring workshop for young
guitarists to develop their skills, play together
and be part of a bigger musical community!

PLAY TOGETHER **BUILD YOUR SKILLS** **BE INSPIRED**

**SATURDAY
24TH OCTOBER 2026
10.00am – 1.00pm**

Bishops Stortford Music Centre
Based in Birchwood High School
Parsonage Lane, Bishop's Stortford
CM23 5BD

Open to guitar players in Key Stage 2
who have been playing for at least one term.

**SMALL STEPS
BIG MUSIC!**

FIND OUT MORE
bstortfordmusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk
01992 556732

LET'S KEEP MUSIC LIVE! with Hertfordshire Music Service