Roots to grow,
Wings to soar

Newsletter

Autumn Term 6th November 2026

FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Value: Courage & Generosity

Dear Parents and Carers

It has been lovely to welcome the children back to school after the half-term break. I hope you all enjoyed a restful week and had some time to recharge. The children have settled back into school life this week and it has been wonderful to hear what they have been up to. It is that time of year when Christmas comes early in a school – we started practicing our Carols in worship and the excitement from staff and the children about the Nativity has begun!

As the weather becomes noticeably cooler, thank you for ensuring that your children come to school dressed appropriately for the changing temperatures. Warm coats and suitable outdoor clothing are becoming increasingly important, particularly as we continue to make the most of our outdoor spaces. This includes long socks or tights and ideally trousers (although I know many of the children are hardier than me and prefer to wear shorts!).

A reminder about safety after school

We would like to remind all parents and carers that, once the school day has finished, children **must not** be allowed to climb on the school play equipment. Outside of school hours, when children are not being supervised by school staff, they are not covered by our school's insurance. We therefore ask that children are kept off the equipment when waiting to be collected or once they have left their classrooms.

We would also ask that children do not climb or play in the bushes by the entrance path when entering or leaving school. This area is particularly close to the road, and we are concerned about the potential dangers this presents. Your support in reinforcing these messages with your children is greatly appreciated as we work together to keep everyone safe, especially at the end of the day when light is limited.

Thank you for your support from the School Council

A huge thank you to all the parents and families who have supported their children in learning a new skill and sponsoring them to do so. It was all for a very good cause, but it also provides wonderful encouragement and support for our School Council, who work hard to organise these events for the benefit of our school community. We really appreciate your generosity, enthusiasm and involvement.

The children have also thoroughly enjoyed buying their poppies this week in support of Remembrance. If your child has purchased a snap band, we have asked that these are kept in their trays and taken home at the end of the day. I'm sure you can imagine the excitement these can create, and we want to avoid any unnecessary distractions during valuable learning time.

A love of reading

I would like to let you know that we will no longer be awarding reading certificates in Friday's Celebration Assemblies. As a school, we have a clear expectation that all children read regularly at home to support and enhance the learning taking place in school. We believe that reading should become a natural and enjoyable part of everyday life, developing into a lifelong habit that children value for its own rewards.

Our aim is to nurture a genuine love of reading, where children choose to pick up a book because they enjoy the stories, discover new interests and experience the pleasure that reading brings, rather than simply to work towards a certificate or reward. Teachers will, however, continue to recognise and encourage home reading through the awarding of Class Dojos. This allows us to acknowledge the children's commitment to reading regularly at home whilst keeping our wider focus on developing a genuine enjoyment and appreciation of reading. We are grateful for your continued support in making reading at home a regular and valued part of your child's routine.

Looking ahead – a very busy half term.
We have an incredibly busy and exciting half term ahead, with lots of wonderful opportunities for the children to learn, celebrate and share their experiences with our school community.

Some of the highlights we are looking forward are:

- Woodpecker and Kingfisher's Nativity performance
- Skylark's candlelight Carol Service at St Michael's Church in Bishop's Stortford
- Decorating Day
- Christingle Service at St. Mary's
- Key Stage 2 Sharing Assembly
- Reception Class's exciting trip to Audley End
- Carol Service at St. Mary's

There is certainly lots to look forward to, and we are already busy preparing for these special occasions. We look forward to sharing the children's hard work, achievements and festive celebrations with you.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend.

Sarah Cook
Headteacher

Woodpecker Class

We have kick-started our new topic of Celebrations**,** exploring two exciting festivals: Bonfire Night and Diwali. We began by talking about Bonfire Night and discussing how we can keep ourselves safe when watching fireworks. We then took our learning outside, where the children enjoyed taking part in a Bonfire Night role-play activity. We also got creative and produced some beautiful firework pictures, exploring different colours, patterns and marks to represent fireworks lighting up the night sky! We explored Diwali, learning about how it is celebrated and why it is known as the Festival of Light. The children discovered some of the traditions associated with Diwali and enjoyed creating their own colourful Rangoli patterns. One of the children's favourite activities this week was our pumpkin hammering challenge! The children were given golf tees and child-friendly hammers and had to carefully tap the golf tees into pumpkins. This was a fantastic activity for developing fine motor skills, hand strength and hand-eye coordination. By gripping the hammer, controlling their movements and carefully aiming at the golf tees, the children were strengthening the small muscles in their hands and fingers. These muscles are incredibly important for developing the control needed for future writing, pencil grip, using scissors, fastening buttons and other everyday tasks.





Kingfisher Class

Kingfisher Class have been exploring and enjoying poetry this week! We have focused on performing poetry and have practised performing various nursery rhymes to each other. We have been working on: Tone, pitch, volume, actions, facial expressions and rhythm. If you are a member of our class, hop onto our Dojo to see one of our performances!

We have been feeling very relaxed in our provision this week, as the children have been treating us with wonderful 'homemade teas' with oranges, lavender, and tea leaves. They of course transformed our area into a wonderful tea shop and we also have a bakery! The children made and played with their own delicious-smelling playdough, exploring the smells and textures of cloves, cinnamon, star anise, porridge oats (and lavender sprinkles) whilst working on their fine-motor skills. In maths and phonics, the children have impressed us with their focus and progress, particularly in subtraction. Well done Kingfisher!







Nightingale Class

Nightingale have had a fantastic week in PE, enjoying both dance and football sessions. In dance, the children have been developing their coordination, creativity and confidence as they worked together to create and perform movement sequences. During football, they have been practicing key skills such as dribbling, passing and teamwork, showing great enthusiasm and sportsmanship throughout. In Maths, we have started taking part in White Rose Maths' Barvember' challenge. Each day throughout November, the children will tackle a new bar model problem, helping them to strengthen their reasoning and problem-solving skills. The class have embraced the challenge with determination and are enjoying using bar models to explore different mathematical concepts and strategies. We look forward to seeing their confidence and understanding continue to grow over the month!

Skylark Class

We have been enjoying learning more about using Bar Models to solve maths reasoning problems in Skylark this week. We've been taking part in 'Barvember' and have been exploring and completing the daily challenges as a class. Hopefully, the children will strengthen their knowledge of this fantastic visual problem-solving strategy during this month and will be able to apply it more confidently when working independently. We've also really enjoyed our new writing focus, looking at the book, 'Wisp - A Story of Hope' by Zana Fraillon and Grahame Baker-Smith. The book is a lovely story about a young refugee who discovers hope, despite his difficult circumstances. The children have been doing a great job of creating their own ideas for a hopeful and uplifting memory that could be added to the book. In Science, we had an interesting afternoon exploring the causes and effects of Global Warming and the impact this has on living things. We ended the lesson by discussing some of the things we could do individually and as a school to lessen out carbon footprint. We also started a new Geography topic this week and are going to be focusing on the enquiry question, 'What is life like in the Alps?' We used the Atlases to find where the Alps are in the world and marked them on our own maps of Europe. We also found out some interesting facts about the mountain range and learnt about how they were formed.



Woodpecker **Kingfisher** **Nightingale** **Skylark**

Iris



ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARDS

Woodpecker

Ollie for recognising lots of the phase 2 sounds.

Lila for a positive attitude towards her learning and always joining in with discussions.

Nightingale

Mia for her fantastic start at Furneux Pelham. Each day Mia comes into school with an excellent attitude to learning and we are delighted to have her in Nightingale.

Rosie for her consistently excellent presentation in her books, in particular her amazing work in RE this week.

Kingfisher

Dolcie for her attitude to learning and being so focused this week.

Freddie for reflecting on his choices and working really hard.

Skylark

Eddie for fantastic focus and effort in Maths lessons.

Oliver K for always working hard and behaving brilliantly.

HEADTEACHER AWARDS

William G for great effort and focus in Maths.

CREATIVE AWARD

Hanna for her beautiful poppy artwork using chalks based on the artist Georgia O'Keefe.

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Attendance this week – 96.64%

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 ether 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.

MENU w/c 9th November 2026	
Day	Menu
Monday	Chicken & Sweetcorn Meatballs Red Sunshine Eggs with Baked Beans (v) Green Jacket Potato with Cheese & Beans (v) Blue
Tuesday	Chicken Curry Red Cheese pinwheel (v) Green Jacket Potato with Grated Cheese (v) Blue
Wednesday	Roast Beef Red Quorn Pieces with Yorkshire Pudding & Gravy (v) Green Jacket Potato with Tuna Mayo Blue
Thursday	Quorn Burger (v) Red Veggie Bolognese (Ve) Green Jacket Potato with Baked Beans (v) Blue
Friday	Battered Fish Red Margherita Pizza (v) Green Jacket Potato with Salmon Mayo Blue

Monday 9th November	Bags 2 School
	Bikeability week
Thursday 12th November	SFC Parent Awareness Session 3.30 pm
Friday 13th November	Children in Need – add something spotty or yellow to your uniform for a donation.
Thursday 19th November	Last netball session for the term
Friday 20th November	KS2 Sharing Assembly
Thursday 26th November	Decorating Day (KS1 am, KS2 pm)
	FPSA Disco 5.30pm
Friday 27th November	Occasional Day
Tuesday 1st December	Reception Class trip to Audley End
Friday 4th December	FPSA Christmas Fair 3.30 – 5pm
Tuesday 8th December	Skylark – St Michael's Carol Service (eve)
Wednesday 9th December	EYFS/KS1 Nativity dress rehearsal 9.30 am
	Christingle 2pm @ St Mary's
Thursday 10th December	EYFS/KS1 Nativity performance 2pm
Monday 14th December	Panto @ South Mill Arts
Wednesday 16th December	Christmas Lunch
Thursday 17th December	Christmas service 2pm @ St. Mary's
Friday 18th December	Term ends at 1.30 pm

The Stortford **Smartphone Free Childhood** team will be showcasing child friendly phones in Jackson Square on Sunday 15th November (10am-4pm at the top of the escalators).

As they gain more independence, child friendly phones are a great way to keep in contact with your child, without the need to give them a full smartphone. Most of these phones are only available online so this is a good opportunity to have a look at them, and discuss pros and cons, before making any decisions.

If you can't make this date but want to follow for future dates you can either join their Facebook page here or message them at sfcstortford@outlook.com.



NOTICES AND INFORMATION

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

- **Children in Need – Friday 13th November. Children can add something yellow or spotty to their uniform for a donation. Payment can be made via Arbor or cash on the day.**







