



Spring!

News on the Ninth

May 2021

Email: admin@commonswood.herts.sch.uk

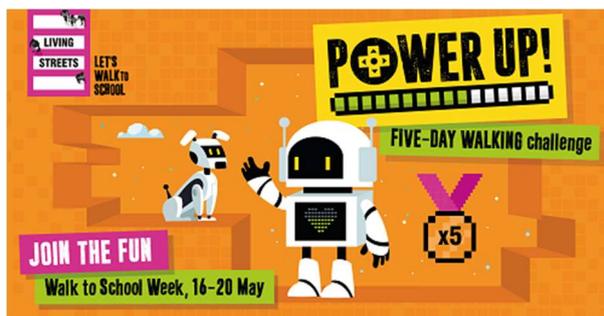
Telephone: (01707) 880420

Welcome to this month's newsletter. Please take note of any events and dates which are coming up soon.

Building work

The work to replace the roof at the Infant end of the school continues. This has included a great deal of grounds work to improve the drainage system. As always, the children have adapted well to the minor levels of disruption. We are expecting the work to be completed by the end of June.

Walk to school week



We want to encourage active school journeys which can help towards children achieve 60 minutes of activity every day. Government guidelines recommend that children and young people should get 30 minutes of their daily physical activity in the school day and 30 minutes outside of school. In a recent study, children that exercised before school had improved concentration levels in school. With regular physical activity children improve cardiorespiratory fitness, build strong bones and muscles, control weight and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.

This year, Hertfordshire's **Walk to School Week is 16th-20th May**. Please encourage your children to walk, cycle, scoot or use any other forms of sustainable travel they can think of during this week as we will be taking part in the five-day walking challenge.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee



This year, Her Majesty the Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, seventy years of service, having acceded to the throne on 6th February 1952 when Her Majesty was 25 years old. We have lots of fun and excitement planned to celebrate this wonderful occasion at school. Throughout the Jubilee week, we will have some special visitors here to lead workshops and activities which will enrich the children's learning and provide some very memorable experiences. Each year group will also be performing something special at a whole school tea party on the field. Fingers crossed for a sunny week that week! There are also souvenir badges for £1 and bears for £6 available for you to purchase via School Gateway.

New tablets and devices



A local computer company have donated some devices for our children to use at school and at home. The School Council met Tony from Computer Friendly to say thank you. Also in the photo is Marios Artemi, County Councillor for Welwyn Garden City South, who put us in touch with this company; we are very grateful.

Raising money for Ukraine, from Austin and Oliver in Year 5

We wanted to support the children in Ukraine, so we came up with some fundraising ideas. We wrote a letter to Mrs Manning and then had a conversation to agree what to do. In the end, we decided to have a non-uniform day at the end of last term. We have raised £621.50 to help the Ukrainian refugees.

Picture News



Commonwood School has been chosen to be an advocate for Picture News. We use Picture News with all our pupils. The Early Years Picture News and The Primary Picture News gives our pupils opportunities to talk about real-life issues and events which capture their interests and curiosity. The discussions help them relate to what's happening in their community, their country, and the world in a careful and considered way.

Wrap around care

Breakfast and after school club places are in great demand, so if you require places for you children, please ensure you book their places as early as possible.

Phonics

Thank you to all of the parents who attended the phonics workshops. Links to the Little Wandle website will be sent out to you

School Council

An exciting time was had by our oldest school councillors who attended the Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey. Sadly, our Queen was unable to attend the service. However, we were all very excited to see the future king, Prince Charles and his son, Prince William who attended. The Prime Minister, Mr Johnson, spoke about the importance of the Commonwealth family.



School Council by the Queen's seat

School council news



On 4th March, the school council had a visit from Natasha who works for the charity Asthma and Lung UK. The children asked her lots of questions about asthma, it's medication and how we can help. We found out that fundraising helps by funding nurses who run a helpline, paying for research and changing policy (to try and make sure that when politicians make decisions, they think about the effect on our air quality).

School council are going to become Clean Air Champions for the charity, do an assembly to raise awareness, run a competition and of course do some fundraising. Further details will be announced later in the year.

Nursery



Nursery have enjoyed looking for signs of spring. We have found and learnt the names of different types of spring flowers. We noticed that lots of the trees have blossom on them and the trees have begun to grow their leaves again. We have begun to learn the story, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' during Talk 4 Writing. Remembering that we can eat lots of healthy, colourful food we made our own fruit kebabs, which reminded us of rainbows!

Reception



We have enjoyed learning about minibeasts and have become experts in different types of insects through our homework and our exploration in the orchard. We were even visited by a beekeeper who told us all about honeybees and their hives. Now, we are very excited to have some caterpillars in our classroom! We have been looking after them and observing them closely, asking questions and making predictions about how they might change. We wonder how long it will take to find out if we were right!



Year 1

As part of our learning about plants in Science, we went for a walk around the school to look for plants that grow naturally in our environment. We found buttercups, forget me nots, primroses, daisies, dandelions and used them in our learning when we returned to class.

Year 2



Year 2 have been enjoying learning about printing and patterns in their Art lessons this half term. As part of this they have had a lot of fun recognising patterns that are within nature and then using this to create a repeating pattern picture.

Year 3 Zoolab Workshop

We had a wonderful and informative visit from the people at Zoolab! Chris (the man from Zoolab) brought in many different and unusual animals for us to hold, stroke, see and talk about. We enjoyed seeing a tarantula, gecko (a very lary rare one that cost £5000!!), rats, a giant cockroach and a corn snake. We stayed very quiet and calm so that we didn't scare the animals and we asked some very well thought out questions. What a fun afternoon!



Year 4

Last Friday, year 4 spent the day in our orchard. During the morning we learnt to tie knots, make dens and cook over a fire. In the afternoon, as part of our science learning, we created telephones using string and plastic cups. We carried out a variety of experiments using them and were able to work out how they worked. We are all getting very excited now as we begin our Harry Potter theme in our English lessons.



Year 5



Year 5 have started their 'Mini Police' workshops this half term. The first session involved the children learning about how to become a police officer, the work they do in the community and aspects about antisocial behaviour and environmental issues the police have to deal with. All children were engaged and eager to learn from the visiting PCSOs and police officer. These workshops will be happening regularly throughout the term.

Year 6

Year Six have been working hard writing persuasive letters about the harmful effects palm oil production is having on the environment. The children have used lots of their own research and statistics and worked really hard. In Art, we are learning to develop our sketching skills and replicating Aztec art.



eSafety - Online gaming

The most popular online games which children are using in the juniors are Minecraft, Roblox and Fortnite. It is a parent's responsibility to check age restrictions on all games their children are playing to keep children safe online. All of these games have the option of communicating with other players – by voice or text. Already at school we have heard of numerous incidents of children receiving mean / hurtful comments from unknown players, friends of friends and sometimes, their friends. All these games offer parental controls to restrict the type of communication that can take place. By default, there is not usually much restriction set. If you haven't done so recently, please check the settings on your children's games.

Face to face, children can usually tell when a comment that they have made has caused offence or has been misinterpreted. They can then quickly apologise or clarify what they meant. Over internet games, where this reaction can't be seen, some children don't realise that they have caused upset, or think about how they 'come across'. We always recommend that children use devices in a room where they can be monitored – not only to keep them safe but also so they can be guided by an adult when their comments could be misinterpreted.

We have heard from some children that their parents are aware that they swear and use language which they wouldn't use in school. I'm sure you agree that, as a community, we don't want this to go unchallenged because if this behaviour becomes the 'norm' online, it will move to become the norm offline as well. If you are aware that your child is hearing inappropriate language from their friends, please help them to temporarily block their friends to help send a clear message.

Links: nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/#guides
nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/online-games/

Sports

U11 Sports Hall regional finals in Norwich



Congratulations to Ruby and Bella for being chosen to represent Hertfordshire in the Sports Hall regional finals in Norwich. Both taking part in track and field events. This is the highest level an Under 11 can compete at in this event so a huge well done from everyone!

U11 County indoor Athletics finals



Well done to our girls' team in The Indoor Athletics county finals! An absolute incredible performance by the girls, a very tough field of opponents pushing our girls to their limits. Even though we didn't finish in the top 3, we all learnt a lot which inspired us to work even harder. Congratulations to our first ever County Finalists!!

U11 East Region Schools Acrobatics & Tumbling Championships



Bella Marshment represented Commonswood at the Under 11 East Region Schools Acrobatics & Tumbling Championships. Bella had to attend extra gymnastic lessons to practice her routines. All the girls at the competition performed to a very high standard. Bella performed extremely well and finishing 3rd place with a final score of 24.1 with 2nd place finishing just above with a score of 24.18. From all at Commonswood Well done Bella keep up the hard work!

Under 11 Netball district Cup



On the 15th March we attended the annual district Netball cup. 9 different schools attended. The level of Netball was very high and our team displayed an impressive attitude throughout the competition. We won 6 out of 8 matches to finish in second place on 32 points with the winners 2 points ahead on 34. We will have matches arranged for after Easter and will continue our hard work in training.

Under 11 5 a-side Football district Cup



On the 16th of March Ridgeway Academy hosted the 5 a-side district cup. Our 5 boys had to play every minute without a sub which was a tremendous effort. Great teamwork and an impressive goal was achieved. Amazing effort and keep up the hard work.

Attendance

Each Friday in KS2, the class (or classes) with the highest attendance for that week, will be awarded an extra break session. The table below shows how many times each class has won.

Hazel		Beech	
Hawthorn		Birch	
Magnolia		Cedar	
Maple		Cherry	
Palm			
Pine			
Poplar			
Spruce			
Sycamore			

Covid update

From this week parents and carers of children aged 5 to 11 can book their child's first COVID-19 vaccination. Bookings can be made at the national booking service for some pharmacies and GP surgeries as well as weekend appointments at vaccination centres. Some GP surgeries will also be offering bookings directly. Vaccination centres have been made child friendly with a range of fun activities available and staff have decorated the centres to make them welcoming for children. Appointment slots have been made longer so that parents and carers have plenty of time to talk to vaccinators and ask questions. To find out more, go to <https://covid.healthierfuture.org.uk/vaccine-information-for-young-people>

Summer Term 2022 Extra-Curricular Clubs

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Multi sports	Multi sports	Dance	Dance	Dance	Dance
Football	Football	Cricket	Badminton	Netball	Netball
Cooking		Rounders	Cricket	Cricket	Cricket
		Cross Country	Rounders	Rounders	Rounders
		Football	Cross Country	Cross Country	Cross Country
		Netball	Netball	Netball	Netball
		Hockey	Hockey	Hockey	Hockey
			Athletics	Athletics	Athletics
			Football	Football	Football

Diary Dates

May	
9 th	KS2 SATs week
13 th	Year 6 Forest School day
16 th	Walk to school week
18 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Beech class parents to view books
19 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Birch class parents to view books
20 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Cedar class parents to view books
23 rd	Queen’s Jubilee week 2.50pm – 3.05pm Cherry class parents to view books
24 th	Bugfest for Nursery and Reception 2.50pm – 3.05pm Hawthorn class parents to view books
25 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Hazel class parents to view books
26 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Maple class parents to view books

27 th	Inset day children do not attend
30 th -3 rd June	Half term
June	
6 th June	Hazel and Hawthorn swim for 2 weeks
7 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Magnolia class parents to view books
8 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Palm class parents to view books
9 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Pine class parents to view books
10 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Poplar class parents to view books
14 th	8.30 -8.45am Nursery to share learning 2.50pm – 3.05pm Sycamore class parents to view books
15 th	2.50pm – 3.05pm Spruce class parents to view books
16 th	2.35pm – 3.05pm Alder class parents to share learning
17 th	2.35pm – 3.05pm Acer class parents to share learning
27 th June	Last week of clubs
July	
4 th	Year 6 To Legoland 8.00 am Start, Return 6pm
14 th	Secondary transfer day – Year 6 visit secondary schools. All children visit their new class
20 th	Nursery last day
21 st	End of term Reception collection time 12.25pm Years 1 and 2 collection time 12.25pm Years 3,4 5 and 6 collection time 12.30pm

SCHOOL TERM AND HOLIDAY DATES 2022/2023

Autumn Term

Thursday 1 st September	Staff Inset Day - Children do not attend
Friday 2 nd September	Staff Inset Day - Children do not attend
Monday 5 th September	Term commences
Monday 24 th October to Friday 28 th October Half Term	
Friday 25 th November	Occasional Day - Children Do Not Attend
Wednesday 21 st December	Term Ends

Spring Term

Thursday 5 th January	Term commences
Monday 13 th February to Friday 17 th February Half Term	
Friday 31 st March	Term Ends

Summer Term

Monday 17 th April	Staff Inset Day - Children do not attend
Tuesday 18 th April	Term commences
Monday 1 st May	Bank Holiday - Children do not attend
Monday 29 th May to Friday 2 nd June Half Term	
Monday 5 th June	Staff Inset Day - Children do not attend
Thursday 20 th July	Term ends
Friday 21 st July	Staff Inset Day - Children do not attend

Term time holidays have a negative impact on friendships and learning. Please avoid taking your child out of school during term time. Term time holidays are not authorised. Section 7 Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory age attends school.



Commonswood Primary & Nursery School is a Safeguarding School

We are an Encompass School working with external agencies to support children who are victims of domestic abuse.

'All schools have a clear responsibility placed on them by the Children Act 1989 and by guidance from the Department of Education to safeguard the welfare of all their pupils. In doing so schools are expected to consult with Social Services if they believe there is a possibility that a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect.'

If you have any concerns about children please contact 0300 123 4043.

Mrs G Seymour (Designated Senior Person), Mrs S Manning (Deputy Designated Person), Mr S Burt (Deputy Designated Person for eSafety & Mrs D Lindsay-Hill (Deputy Designated Person), Miss K Dean (Designated Senior Person)

Chair of Governors Mrs Julie Noakes