



# MAY 2024

## News on the Ninth



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### Nursery

We have been learning about different types of minibeasts. We found beetles, woodlice and centipedes under logs and we have caterpillars in our classroom. The caterpillars are growing bigger every day, and we are very excited to watch as they change into butterflies while learning the story, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' during Talk 4 Writing.



### Reception



Reception have had a very busy start to the half term! We were excited to receive a delivery of some caterpillars which we have been watching closely and predicting how they might grow and change. This has inspired lots of mark making in both classes as we have been drawing caterpillar life cycles and writing about the changes we have noticed. We have also explored habitats for different minibeasts in the garden and orchard. We are looking forward to seeing what happens next as our caterpillars continue to grow.



We have also begun our new Talk 4 Writing text: The Paper Dolls. We have been retelling the story using story language, creating story maps, and even making paper dolls of our own.

### Year 1

Year 1 went to the Orchard for an outdoor learning day. We learnt to tie Clove Hitch knots and made art out of natural materials. We also looked at the types of trees that are in the orchard which carried on from our learning at Epping Forest. The afternoon was very muddy due to the rain, but Year 1 used the weather to set challenges for each other in the afternoon.



## Year 2

In year 2 we have been very busy in our literacy lessons learning the text 'The Tear Thief'. The children have been retelling the story creating actions and have begun to adapt the story to create their own characters too!



In music, a few children have played some songs they have been learning on the keyboard to the rest of the class. The tunes were enjoyed by everybody!



## Year 3



In Geography, we have been learning about the countries of the United Kingdom. We have learnt what the capital cities are, any other important cities, the mountains, hills and rivers of the UK.

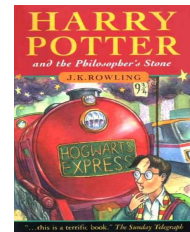
In Computing, we have been learning about desktop publishing. This has involved learning how to add text to Microsoft Publisher and Word, changing the font, increasing the font size, adding colour to the font and adding pictures. We then created posters about a UK country, about the facts we have learned and using what we have learned in

Geography and Computing. Here are some of our posters!

## Year 4

We have been learning about digital images and how a lot of images on the internet are edited in some way. We have learnt how to remove parts of an image, merge parts of two images together and apply a number of effects.

In science, we have completed our unit about sound and are now starting to learn about habitats - so will be visiting the Orchard soon. We have also started to read Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone so we can use events from the story in our own writing.



## Year 5

Year 5 took part in the Welwyn Garden Dance festival on 27<sup>th</sup> March at Campus West Theatre. After weeks of choreography and rehearsals the children shone on the stage. Year 5 thank Miss Attfield (a trained dancer) for her choreography skills.



## Year 6

We have been working very hard over the last few weeks in preparation for our SATs whilst also enjoying the new topics in other areas of the curriculum.

In Science, we have begun learning all about electricity. We named all the appliances we use in our everyday life that require electricity, either mains or battery operated. Then, we were given a task to illuminate a bulb with only one bulb, one wire and a cell. Some of us managed to do this but we realised we would need 2 wires to make a safe and complete circuit.

In Geography, we have started to learn all about our local area – Welwyn Garden City. We started the topic by using iPads to locate Welwyn Garden City in the whole world – to do this we had to find Europe, then the UK, before finding England and searching for nearby cities (like London) to help us find Hertfordshire and Welwyn Garden City. We then had lots of fun looking at an O.S. Map of St Albans and Hatfield. We looked at what lots of the symbols meant, located our school and named human and physical features in our town.



## Anti-Abuse Curriculum

In order to embed the Anti-Abuse Curriculum into our teaching, each half term we are focusing on one theme which we will discuss in our classrooms during snack and discussion time. This half term, we are focusing on **Body and Relationship Safety**. Some objectives link closely with our PSHE topic – Relationships. Here are just some of the things we have been discussing across the school:

- I know that I may not touch anyone without their permission (consent).
- I know that no-one has the right to say unkind things to me intended to make me feel bad about myself.
- I understand that we cannot like everyone, but we should treat everyone with respect. If I feel I cannot like someone else, I know that does not give me the right to disrespect or abuse them.
- I know how to get support if I am in physical danger and can support other people to get help if they are in this situation.
- I know that there are parts of my body that are private and should usually only be touched by me or, if I am sick or hurt, by doctors, nurses or parents/carers who I know are trying to make me better (and that this should be witnessed by another person of my choosing).
- I know that no-one should ever expect, pressure or force me to allow them to touch or have photographs of me.
- I know how to say no or how to get help if someone is pressuring me.

## RE Day



On Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, the children enjoyed a visit from John Hardwick for an R.E. Learning Day. As it was St George's Day, John's teaching was based around 'What makes a true champion'.

John taught us about the qualities of sportsmanship using a mixture of music, songs, juggling stories, Bible stories and puppets in an exciting, engaging and interactive way.

We looked at the Olympics and learned how to be a good sport by looking at the value of sport and sporting values such as perseverance, being a team player, having **direction, dedication, and determination**.



### The Great Big Dance Off

Last month we entered a team into a national dance competition for schools called The Great Big Dance Off. Our 3 minute dance entry was on the theme of being brave and speaking out against bullying. The children danced beautifully and had a wonderful time.



### School Council visit to Westminster Abbey

We were lucky enough to obtain a few tickets to the Commonwealth ceremony at Westminster Abbey, so we put the names of our School Council representatives into a hat as this was the fairest way to decide who went.



We had enough time to take in a few sights along the way.

We saw all of the Commonwealth flags.

The building was amazing with lots of gold and stain glass windows.



We took part in the ceremony.



Some very important people attended too. We had a lovely day and the children made us proud.

### Online Safety

May's Online Safety focus is 'Self Image and Identity'. At home, please could you have a discussion with your child regarding this area.

In EYFS and KS1, it could be discussing what to do if something happens that makes them feel sad, worried, uncomfortable or frightened.



In Lower KS2, we have been discussing how people can represent themselves in different ways online and not to fully trust everything as how it appears. In upper KS2, we have been discussing how to make responsible choices about having an online identity.

## Online Gaming



Playing games with their friends online is incredibly popular with children. The most popular online games which children are using in the juniors are Minecraft, Roblox and Fortnite. All of these games have the option of communicating with other players – by voice or text.

It is not uncommon for children to report that they have received mean / hurtful comments from unknown players, friends of friends and even their friends. All these games offer parental controls to restrict and monitor 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.

Also, 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. When playing online 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. Visit <https://www.internetmatters.org/> for how-to guides regarding eSafety for most devices and games.

## Summer Term Clubs

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<b>KS1</b>	KS1 multi skills Free club 20 places Exit from Nursery		KS1 Art Club Free club 10 children Exit via Office	KS1 Forest school club Free club 15 children Exit Nursery
<b>KS2</b>	KS2 Yr 5/6 Athletics club Free club 20 children Exit via office	KS2 Theatre club Free club 25 children Exit via office	KS2 Dance club Paid – Elite Training Academy 25 children Exit via school office	KS2 Yr 5/6 Lego school club Free club 20 children Exit via office
				KS2 Tennis club Free club 12 children Exit via nursery
				Years 2 – 4 Gardening club Free club 10 children Exit via office

## Emotion of the month

This half term we are teaching children to understand the emotion of surprise!

Surprise can be either positive or negative, depending on the context and the individual's interpretation of the situation.



1. **Positive Surprise:** Surprise can be a positive emotion when it results from something unexpected but enjoyable or beneficial. For example, receiving a thoughtful gift, achieving an unexpected success, or encountering a pleasant surprise can evoke feelings of happiness, excitement, and delight.
2. **Negative Surprise:** Conversely, surprise can also be negative when it arises from something unexpected and unpleasant or threatening. For instance, receiving bad news, experiencing a sudden loss, or encountering a frightening situation can evoke feelings of shock, fear, or distress.

In both cases, **surprise is characterised by a sudden shift in one's expectations or understanding of a situation.** Whether it is perceived as positive or negative depends on factors such as personal beliefs, previous experiences, and the specific circumstances surrounding the surprise event.



## National Walking Month

May is National Walking Month, this campaign encourages 20 minutes of walking per day throughout May. Could you try walking the children to school? It's an easy way to get active and reduce air pollution in your area.

## Community Matters Donation

A huge thank you to John Lewis who have given us £950 as part of their Community Matters Donations. We will be putting this very generous sum towards an exclusive mud kitchen area for Reception children to use as part of their outdoor learning. We will let you know what this looks like when it has been built.

## Staffing changes

A warm welcome back to Miss Hockey, who has returned from maternity leave. It's lovely to see her back.

At the end this school year, we will be saying farewell to Mrs Manning, who has been with us for 10 years. We are delighted to announce that Mr Burt, our current Assistant Head, will be taking up the post of Deputy Head from September.

## Medical Appointments

Where possible we would appreciate appointments being made outside of school hours. However, where this is not possible, please could parents provide at least 48 hours notice of medical appointments (planned) so that we can advise the teachers prior to the appointment as teachers are unable to check their emails during the school day.

## Parking

Please park considerately when dropping off and picking up from school, we have had complaints from local residents of cars blocking driveways and driving on the pavements. This is extremely dangerous and could cause a serious accident. Thank you for your co-operation.

To report inconsiderate parking in Welwyn Hatfield, you can contact the council and provide the vehicle registration of the vehicle(s) you are reporting. They will ask you some questions to ensure the criteria is met before sending an officer. You can reach them at **01707 357000** between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. For more details, you can visit [www.welhat.gov.uk](http://www.welhat.gov.uk) website.

## Please label all clothing

Each term we end up recycling unclaimed lost property. Please name everything. Hopefully we will be using the field soon and the amount of jumpers left on the field would amaze you.

## Free School Meals

### Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

All children can get a free lunch at school if they're in Reception class, Year 1 or Year 2. If you register, your school could get extra funding (called 'Pupil Premium') which will benefit your child. Have your National Insurance number or Home Office number to hand when you apply.

### Children in Year 3 or older

Your child can get a free school meal if you receive any of the following:

Income Support

Income based Jobseekers Allowance

Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

Child Tax Credit ( as long as you're not entitled to Working Tax Credit and you don't get more than £16,190 a year)

Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

Universal Credit (with annual earned income of no more than £7,400 after tax and not including any benefits you get).

Apply today if you receive any of these benefits. It takes 5 minutes to apply. Have your National Insurance number or Home Office number to hand when you apply.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/home>

If your child is currently in Year 2, and is eligible for Free School Meals, you will need to reapply when they go up into Year 3.

## Working together to improve school attendance

Being in school and having the best attendance possible underpins all the many benefits of school for your child, such as their learning, wellbeing and wider development.

For some children, attending school every day will be harder than for others. This is why we are committed to working together with families to solve problems and support your child's school attendance.

Please see the following Government advice: [DfE external document template \(childrenscommissioner.gov.uk\)](#)

### **What YOU must do:**

Telephone the school before 8.30am each day of your child's absence.

If you are not sure whether your child is well enough to attend school, send them in anyway as they often perk up on arrival.

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

Tell the school in advance, of any medical appointments and bring in appointment cards/letters. If possible, make appointments out of school hours to avoid missed learning.

***If you and your child are experiencing difficulties with school attendance, then talk to us as a first step so we can help.***

### **What WE will do:**

Check your child's attendance every day.

Phone home to discuss your child's attendance with you.

Invite you into school for attendance meetings if we are concerned.

If we cannot establish a reason for absence, then we may make a welfare home visit.



## **Messages from the Friends of Commonswood PTA**

### **Advertising**

Do you own a local business or know someone who does? The Friends of Commonswood PTA are looking to support local businesses who would like to advertise at our Summer Fair in July. We have over 400 pupils and our events are well supported by families, friends and the local community, last year's fair was a huge success and this year it's going to be bigger and better!

We have a variety of options from an advert in our digital brochure, a shout out on our social media pages in the countdown to the event and even signage on the Go Kart track we have running on the day. We can also accommodate signage at the event, if you are able to provide it.

To be contacted for a chat about options please email us at [commonswoodpta@yahoo.com](mailto:commonswoodpta@yahoo.com) with your contact information and we will be in touch.

### **Volunteers**

The Friends of Commonswood PTA have been working hard putting on social events, extracurricular activities for the children and supporting the school community over the last couple of years. A lot of this has relied on donations, volunteers and friends and families supporting our events for which we are very grateful, we really cannot do any of this without people offering some time to help us.



As well as all of this fun we have also raised money! To date we have raised over £15,000 which is a fabulous achievement. We want to use this money to benefit as many people as possible and so far we have replaced the wooden train in the infant playground, part funded school trips for all year groups, created the allotment, bought bulbs for bluebells in the woods, organised and run afterschool crafts and gardening clubs. But we now have a **HUGE** announcement for our latest purchase which will help all children and their families, watch out for more information from the school.

To keep these events running and raising money we need people like you to help by donating some of their time. You don't need to become a full member of the PTA, although you are always welcome to, just an hour at an event can really make the difference in it being able to run or not. The PTA members can't be in all places at all times, and we'd like to enjoy an hour at events like the fairs with our families too. There are lots of options to offer to volunteer at the summer fair, ranging from setting up the night before, entry gate, selling wrist bands and tokens, helping with the games stalls and bar duty and lots more! We also need first aiders for the event.

Please use the link below to sign up to an hour of volunteering at the summer fair, which is being held on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July. If you have any questions or would like to offer help you can always contact the PTA at [commonswoodpta@yahoo.com](mailto:commonswoodpta@yahoo.com)

<https://www.pta-events.co.uk/friendsofcommonswoodpta/?event=login&notLoggedIn=true&>

### This Month's Reading Recommendations

#### EYFS

Nursery – Let's Play, Little Rabbit by Jorg Muhle

Reception- Shark in the Park by Nick Sharratt

#### Key Stage 1

Year 1 – Goodnight Everyone by Chris Haughton

Year 2 – Don't Look in this Book by Samuel Langley-Swain

#### Lower Key Stage 2

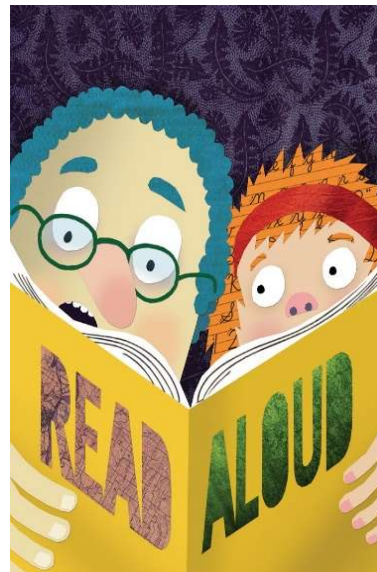
Year 3 – The Boy Who Grew Dragons by Andy Shepherd

Year 4 – My Brother is a Superhero by David Solomons

#### Upper Key Stage 2

Year 5 – Beetle boy by MG Leonard

Year 6 – The Nowhere Emporium by Ross Mackenzie



DIARY DATES	
May 2024	
10 <sup>th</sup>	8.40-9.30am New to Reception Sept 2024 parents meeting
13 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Year 6 SATS</b>
13 <sup>th</sup>	3.15-5pm KS1 PTA Event
15 <sup>th</sup>	1.00-3.00pm Year 3 to Monks Walk – Tag Rugby

17 <sup>th</sup>	7.30pm PTA Bingo night – The Grove pub
21 <sup>st</sup>	Nursery to Paradise Wildlife Park trip
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Year 2 Chiltern Open Air Museum trip
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Year 1 Outdoor Learning day
23 <sup>rd</sup>	3.15pm PTA Doughnut sale
24 <sup>th</sup>	INSET DAY Children do not attend
27 <sup>th</sup> May – 31 <sup>st</sup> May Half Term	
June 2024	
3 <sup>rd</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup>	Year 3 Swimming
10 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup>	Year 1 Phonic Screening
11 <sup>th</sup>	10-11.30am Mill Green Golf event
17 <sup>th</sup>	Last week of Clubs
17 <sup>th</sup>	‘WOW’ writing week
18 <sup>th</sup>	Reception to Aldenham Country Park
24 <sup>th</sup>	Reception/KS1 Sports day, parents arrive 12.55pm
25 <sup>th</sup>	Nursery Sports day, parents arrive 9.20am
25 <sup>th</sup>	KS2 Sports day, parents arrive 12.55pm
27 <sup>th</sup>	Contingency day for Rec/KS1 sports
28 <sup>th</sup>	Contingency day for Nursery/KS2 sports
July 2024	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Year 4 Paris Olympic Event
4 <sup>th</sup>	2pm New to Reception parent meeting
11 <sup>th</sup>	Secondary transfer day – all children visit their next class
13 <sup>th</sup>	12-3pm PTA Summer Fete
15 <sup>th</sup>	2.30pm Rocksteady concert
16 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 dress rehearsal
17 <sup>th</sup>	3.10-4pm Parents are invited in to view pupil progress in books and visit child’s next classroom
18 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 performances for parents 9am /2pm
19 <sup>th</sup>	9am Year 6 bell ringing
19 <sup>th</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Whole school multicultural days
22 <sup>nd</sup>	4-6pm Year 6 BBQ
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Last day of term for Nursery
23 <sup>rd</sup>	End of Term 12.30pm
3 <sup>rd</sup> Sept	Term commences for children

#### Term time holidays

We are unable to authorise term time holidays. Absence can only be authorised if a child is unwell. If however, the number of unauthorised sessions reaches 15 or more within 2 terms, the local authority may issue you with a Penalty Notice. The Penalty Notice requires parents to pay a fine of £60 within 21 days. If this is not paid within the time limit, the penalty rises to £120 which must be paid within 28 days.

Term time holidays have a negative impact on friendships and learning. Please avoid taking your child out of school. Term time holidays are not authorised. Absence requests can only be authorised if there are exceptional, unrepeatable circumstances. Section 7 Education Act 1996 places a duty on parents to ensure that their child of compulsory age attends 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**