NEWSLETTER

22nd September 2023

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends (John 15: 12-13)

OUR CHRISTIAN THEME THIS HALF-TERM IS

GENEROSITY

This week it has been very windy and many of the children have enjoyed chasing the leaves at lunch time!

It is especially lovely to hear how imaginative some of our children have been during lunch. This weeks' lunch time stars were given to Rowan for independently making his own kite out of leaves and string and to Logan-Jack for making a musical instrument from small fallen branches – what fantastic work well done!

Thank you to all the parents/ carers that attended the "Welcome to EYFS" Meeting with Mrs Deacon on Thursday this week. We are so proud with how well all our new Reception children have settled in. This week they have had their first PE lesson and first time playing on the school field – we have included a few pictures in this Newsletter – keep up the excellent work Reception!

Please can we remind all parents/carers that if you have any questions or concerns about your child/ren then the first port of call is the class teacher. On a Friday between 3.15pm and 3.45pm we have an open-door policy where you can speak to the teachers without making an appointment.

Thank you to all the children who came into school today wearing their denim in support of Jeans for Genes Day.

During our Celebration Assembly Miss & Mrs Pinder kindly attended to explain to the children all about this very worthy cause.

All donations made will be added to the money donated next week at our MacMillan Cake sale and then split equally between the two charities. The amount raised will be announced in the Newsletter dated 6th October 2023. As always thank you all for your generous support!

All our School Clubs have commenced this week – we still have a few places left so if your child/ren are interested then please speak to the School Office regarding availability. The clubs will run for the Autumn Term finishing the week ending 8th December 2023.

As the weather has now become quite autumnal please remember to send your child/ren into school with coats – don't forget to make sure they are labelled to assist with returning to the correct child – many thanks!

We have been advised by Patricia's in South Woodham Ferrers that they now have Latchingdon CofE book bags back in stock. All other items of our school uniform will be available in the next few days.

Reminder – Individual Photographs are being taken on Monday 25th September 2023 – don't forget to brush your hair!

Reminder - the Flu Immunisations will take place in school on Wednesday 27th September 2023.

Next Friday 29th September 2023 we will be holding a Macmillan Cake Sale from 2.30pm. If you are able to donate any cakes then please send into school with your child/ren on the morning of 29th – thank you!

We have had a complaint from a resident outside the school saying somebody parked in their driveway.

Please can we all be considerate to others when parking

Thank you.

Helping Hands Box

Life is continuing to be expensive, with prices still high everywhere.

We all have days where we need some extra help and so we will continue stocking our "Helping Hands Box" which can be found in the school office foyer, with essential food items etc..

If you can donate the odd item great, if you need something then please feel free to come and take it.

We all need to look out for each other.

House Teams

As announced in last week's Newsletter Latchingdon CofE Primary School has now introduced House Teams.

All the children and staff have been allocated to one of the new House Teams:

Yellow, Orange, Red, Blue and Green.

The children will be awarded team points in class and each week the winning team will be awarded a cup in Celebration Worship.

We really hope the children encourage each other to succeed and we will be using the teams when we organise events such as Sports Day.

Winning House Team

Week 18th September 2023 to 22nd September 2023

BLUE

Free School Meal Vouchers

We have been advised by the Department of Education:

"This term, support will continue for families in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) on roll in Essex schools via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Household Support Fund. However, there will be some minor changes to allocations and timings of payments. This has been done primarily considering the fact those families in receipt of FSM will be receiving additional support from the government's cost of living payments.

Funding is taken from the DWP Household Support Fund and is calculated by financial year. Two payments from the 2023 to 2024 financial year have already been made to schools, and this was in May half-term 2023, and then July 2023 for the summer holidays.

The final payment for schools this financial year will be in December 2023. As a result of this, there will be no half-term payment this October 2023 or during the Spring term 2024.

We are yet to hear whether there will be any further funding after this, but, of course as always, we will share details on this when available."

Letters sent home / info on website for w/e 22nd September 2023

The following letters have been sent out and/or put on the school website (under Key Information/ Information Hub/ Letters Home).

- LETTER TO ALL PARENTS: Harvest Festival (dated 21/9/23)

Headteacher Stickers

This week Mrs Kemp has given Headteacher Stickers to the following children:

Thea – Hedgehogs
Archie – Badgers
Elouise – Foxes
James -Foxes
Esme F – Foxes
Erin – Badgers
Gowsh - Otters

Parental Permission Form 2023-2024

A text has been sent to the parents/carers of all children we have not yet received a completed Parental Permission Form 2023-2024.

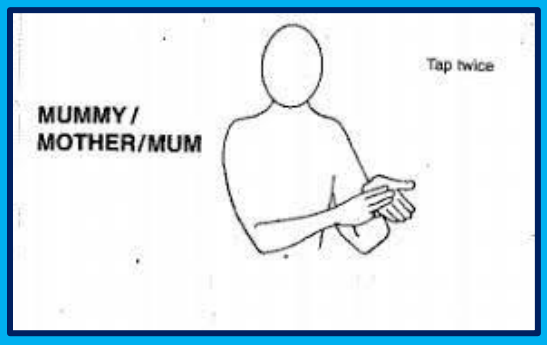
Please ensure these are returned by Monday 25th September 2023.

Latchingdon CofE Primary School must have a completed form to enable the children to attend our Harvest Festival at Christ Church on Tuesday 26th September 2023.

Thank you.

Makaton

Sign of the Week – Mummy



Book Swap

We now have a rack of books in the school office foyer for our parents/carers to take a book to read and, if able, to replace with a book you have already read and no longer have need of.

Happy reading!

High Class Sport

Multi Sports Club

High Class Sports still have spaces in their Multi Sports Club open to all children in KS2 (Foxes, Otters & Badgers) on:

Thursdays from 3.10pm to 4.00pm to 7th December 2023

The cost is £3 per session

To sign your child/ren up please visit:

High Class Sport - Bookwhen

A massive well done to Isabel in Red Squirrels class who last weekend was part of a dance show at the Towngate Theatre in Basildon.

After a full day of rehearsal on Saturday she had another full day and show in front of a packed out audience on Sunday! She was in 4 dances and she was the main lead in the first!

Congratulations Isabel!

If your child/ren have taken part in any shows or tournaments or received any other Certificates or Awards then please do share will us as we love to hear and congratulate the children.

#LatchingdonLovingtoLearn

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024

We are delighted to advise you that the school website has been updated with the Curriculum Overviews for this academic year.

The overview gives a broad outline of all the topics that the children will be learning about in their lessons this year.

Red-Squirrels-Curriculum-Overview-2023-2024

Hedgehogs-Curriculum-Overview-2023-2024

Foxes-Curriculum-Overview-2023-2024

Otters-Curriculum-Overview-2023-2024

Badgers-Curriculum-Overview-2023-2024

We are looking forward to going to Christ Church next Tuesday 26th September 2023 for our Harvest Festival.

We are this year collecting for the Dengie Food Pantry, based in Southminster & Burnham, which supports local families in times of hardship.

If you are able to send in an item for our collection we would like:

- Biscuits
- Jars/packets of macaroni cheese sauce
- Canned meat/fish (no hotdogs)
- Fray Bentos pies
- Sugar
- Jars of coffee
- UHT milk (blue & green)
- Custard
- Tinned rice pudding
- Spaghetti hoops
- Tinned tomatoes
- Tins of ravioli
- Washing up liquid
- Bathroom spray
- Kitchen spray
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Shower Gel
- Deodorant
- Washing powder

We thought it might be nice for the children to bring items in their team colour so that we can create a rainbow of donations.

There will be a box for donations in each classroom, if you could send them in with your child/ren, we can then sort them by colour

Thank you in advance for your continued support!

Worship Group

Our Worship Group is made up of a group of KS2 children who attend a meeting once a month with Mrs Kemp and Carol Treadwell from Latchingdon PCC.

This week they met for the first time this academic year and amongst their discussions they selected the hymns and poems to be used during our Harvest Festival next week.

Their next meeting will be held during

Jeans for Genes Day

Friday 22nd September 2023

Thank you for all your generous donations – the children love dressing up and looked fabulous!

Full details of amount raised will be announced in Newsletter dated 6th October 2023.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Year 6 to 7 Secondary Admission Round for September 2024

As you may be aware, the new secondary school admission round opened on Tuesday, 12 September 2023, for parents of current Year 6 children to apply for a secondary school (Year 7) place for September 2024.

The statutory national closing date for applications is:

31 October 2023

Applications can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. 99% of parents in Essex applied online last year.

All the application information is available on the website above.

The website also has a copy of the Secondary Education in Essex 2024-25 booklet which contains details of all secondary school admission policies.

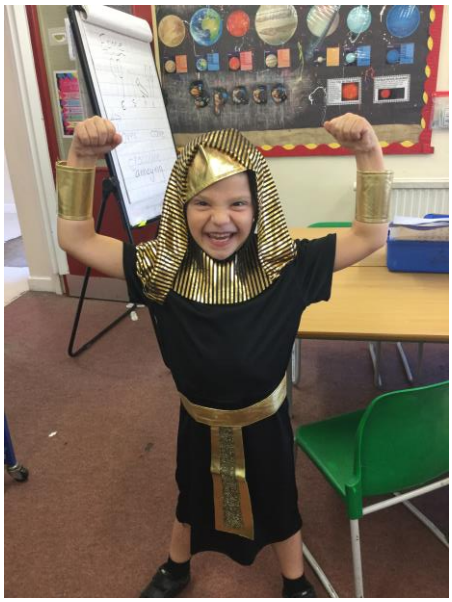
Egyptian Day

Friday 15th September 2023

As part of this term's theme of "Lives Near & Far" all KS2 (Foxes, Otters & Badgers) are learning about Egypt in Ancient Times.

Last Friday the children enjoyed an Egyptian Day with lots of fun activities.

Thank you to all the staff that helped organise all the different events and to the children who dressed up – you all looked amazing.



Latchingdon C of E Primary School

Vine

Diocese of Chelmsford
Vine Schools Trust

Tours for Prospective Parents

If your child is due to start Reception Class in Primary school in September 2024. As you are considering Primary schools, we would be very happy to show you around our school and answer any questions you may have.

We are a small, friendly church school. We are very proud of our children and their achievements.

We invite you to look around our school by appointment, on:

Tuesday 7th November 2023

Or

Wednesday 15th November 2023

Between 9am and 11.30am

Please contact our School Office on 01621 740328 to book a time slot on one of the above dates.

Learning to Love, Loving to Learn

MUSIC LESSONS

Mr Pritchard, our Music Teacher, holds music lessons on a Tuesday morning for children in Year 2 or above.

He currently has spaces so if you are interested in your child/ren learning to play the piano, keyboard or guitar then please contact him directly on:

steve.p.musicteacher@gmail.com

INDIVIDUAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Monday 25th September 2023

The children will be having individual photos taken on the above date. We have also been offered photos to be taken with pre-school age siblings as well as siblings within the school.

If you have a child **under school age** that you would like to be photographed with an older sibling already at Latchingdon CofE Primary School then please can you arrive at the office no later than 8.30am. Please ensure you have all children with you – your child will not be marked in as late. You will be asked to wait in the school hall. Please can you wait quietly as we want to have the minimum of disruption within the school at all times.

If you have a **child with siblings already at Latchingdon CofE Primary School** then they will be photographed together during the morning and do not need to be in school any earlier than normal.

The children in Foxes and Otters class should come to school in their normal school uniform – teachers will text nearer the time regarding PE arrangements for this week.

School Council 2023-2024

Congratulations to the following children who have been elected as this year's School Council Members.

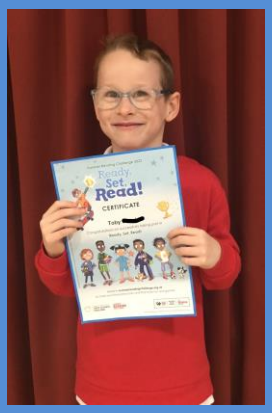
They will be attending their first meeting on Monday 25th September 2023 when they will be presented with their School Council Badges.

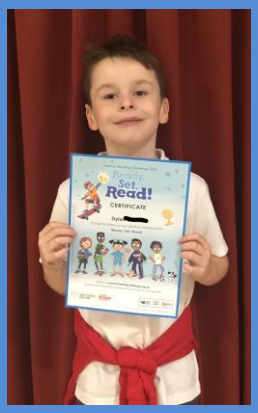
Isabel – Red Squirrels
Gracie – Red Squirrels
Elsie-Mae – Hedgehogs
Chloe – Hedgehogs
Esme F – Foxes
Rhys – Foxes
Thomas – Otters
Nancy – Otters
Erin – Badgers
Freddie – Badgers

Well done to you all!

The 2023 Summer Reading Challenge

Well done to Dylan & Toby in Foxes class for completing this year's Essex Libraries Service Summer Reading Challenge. They both received a medal & Certificate – keep up the excellent work!





If your child/ren completed this challenge or have received any other Certificates or Awards then please do share will us as we love to hear and congratulate the children.

#LatchingdonLovingtoLearn

RED SQUIRRELS

This week Red Squirrels class have had their first PE lesson as well as the first opportunity to play outside on the school field – Oh what fun they had!

Teddy Bears' Picnic

Friday 22nd September 2023

As part of this terms theme of "Lives Near & Far" all EYFS/KS1 children are learning about English toys in living memory.

Today the children in Red Squirrels and Hedgehogs classes have held a "Teddy Bears' Picnic".

Thank you to the parents/carers who were able to attend to talk about toys that they played with as a child.

Please see next week's Newsletter for some pictures!

Gardening Club

Well done to all last year's members of the Gardening Club for looking after the vegetables they planted.

This week Lucas & Ralph from Otters class have picked the tomatoes & delivered them around to all the staff – they were delicious – well done!

MacMillan Cancer Support

Friday 29th September 2023 from 2.30pm

This year we will, again, be fundraising for MacMillian Cancer Support.

The MacMillan Cake Sale has been arranged between 2.30pm and 3.10pm on Friday 29th September 2023.

If you can donate cakes towards this event, please send into school with your child/ren on the morning of 29th September 2023 (please remember we are a nut free school so cakes should not contain nuts or nut products – thank you).

You can collect your child/ren from their classroom to join you and they are free to leave with you once you have enjoyed a yummy cake!

The cakes and soft drinks (no hot drinks) will be available for a donation – please feel free to give whatever you are able, all donations, however small, will be gratefully received.

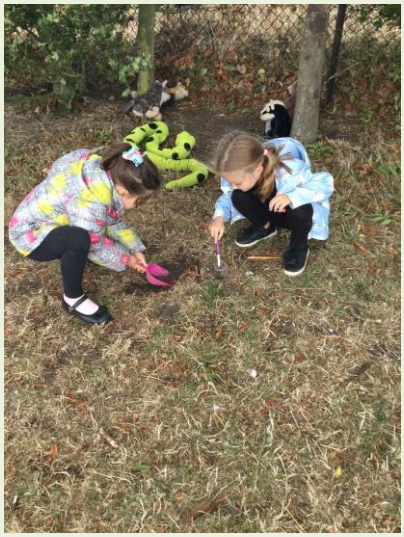
We are also supporting Jean for Genes this year so the proceeds from both these events will be added up and split equally between the two charities.

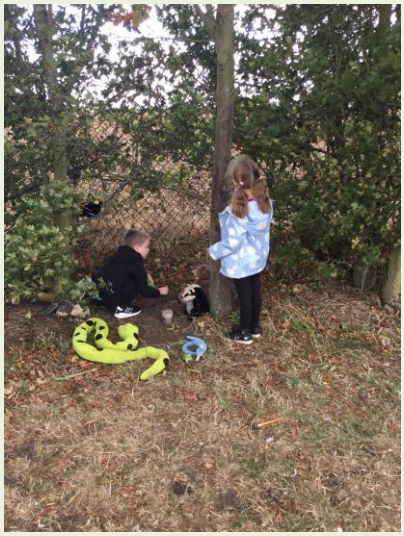
We thank you for all your generous support.

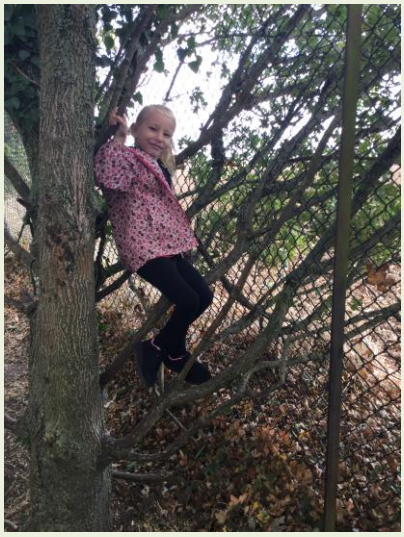
FOREST SCHOOL

All the children in Hedgehogs class had a fantastic time at their second Forest School lesson – thank you to the leaders Beck Fitzpatrick & Jena Breach

Thank you again to Ms Dullage our volunteer helper.







POWERED BY
PRIME

Hot Chocolate Friday with Mrs Kemp

The following children have been on the gold star and randomly chosen to have Hot Chocolate with Mrs Kemp.

Abdullah – Red Squirrels

Sonny – Hedgehogs

Travis – Foxes

Harrison – Otters

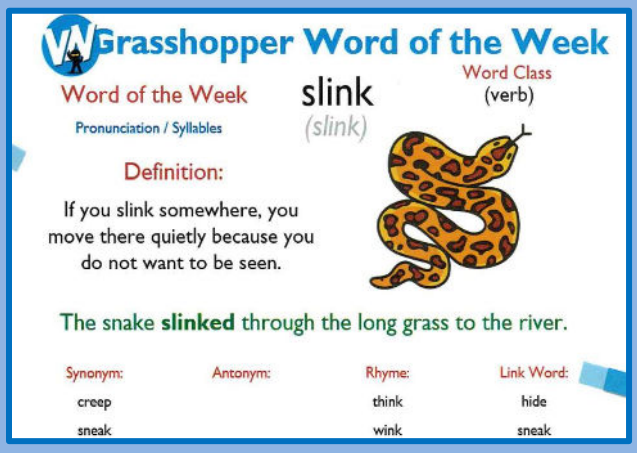
SzeLong - Badgers

Congratulations to you all!

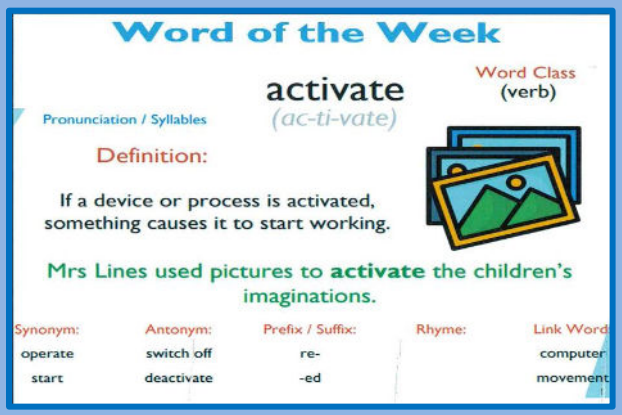
Word of the Week

Wednesday 20th September 2023 to Tuesday 26th September 2023

KS1 (EYFS – Year 2)



KS2 (Year 3 – Year 6)



Please promote the use of the word of the week at home with your children by talking about the word, its meaning and other similar words. If you hear your child using any of the words correctly at home please do let their teacher know, on Seesaw, so we can celebrate this in school.

Thank you for your continued support.

Maths Champion

Maths Problem of the Week

Answers Problem dated 15th September 2023

KS1 Answer = 26 balloons - WINNER – Amber - Hedgehogs

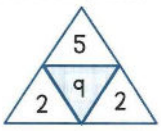
KS2 Answer = 16 – WINNER – Girush - Badgers

Well done to you both!

KS1 (EYFS – Year 2)

The Problem

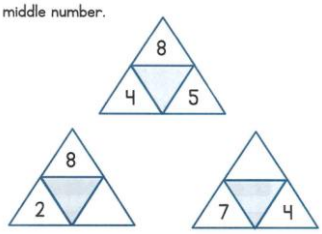
Here is a number puzzle.



The number in the middle is found by

- Multiplying the two bottom corner numbers together
- Then add on the top number

These three diagrams all have the same middle number.



Work out the missing numbers.

KS2 (Year 3 – Year 6)

The Problem

Sarah has some cookies in a jar.

In January she eats $\frac{5}{8}$ of the cookies.

There are 12 cookies left in the jar.

How many were in the jar at the start?

If you would like to solve your KS problem, please put your completed answer, labelled with your name and class, in the **'Maths Competition' box in the main School Office Foyer by 8.40am on Friday 29th September 2023.**

A 'Maths Champion' of the week, will be announced in Celebration Assembly each week. Good luck!

Please see our website for full details of Dates to remember. Details of any events will be sent out nearer the time.

Please note that all events are for the children/staff only unless specified.

Academic Year 2023-2024

September 2023

25th Sept – Individual Photographs
26th Sept – 9.30am – Harvest Festival at Christ Church
27th Sept – Flu Immunisations – Form sent out 12/9/23 – Please send back by 18th September 2023
29th Sept – 2.30pm - MacMillan Cake Sale – Parents invited to join their children for cakes & soft drinks for a donation to MacMillan Cancer

October 2023

6th Oct – NON-PUPIL DAY
3rd Oct – 1pm – Year 5/6 Swimming
10th Oct – 1pm – Year 5/6 Swimming
12th Oct – Life Support Roadshow – Year 5
13th Oct – Life Support Roadshow – Year 6
16th Oct to 20th Oct – VISION & VALUES WEEK
17th Oct – 1pm – Year 5/6 Swimming
17th Oct – 3.30pm to 6pm – Parents Evening – Parents invited details to follow
19th Oct – 3.30pm to 6pm – Parents Evening – Parents invited details to follow
20TH Oct – 2pm – Grandparents Afternoon – Grandparents invited details to follow
23rd to 27th Oct – HALF TERM HOLIDAY
31st Oct – 1pm – Year 5/6 Swimming

November 2023

7th Nov – 9am to 11.30am – Tours for Prospective Parents – Reception 2024
7th Nov – 1pm Year 5/6 Swimming
14th Nov – 1pm Year 5/6 Swimming
15th Nov – 9am to 11.30am – Tours for Prospective Parents – Reception 2024

December 2023

1st Dec – 9.30am - Cinderella Pantomime in School
8th Dec – All Autumn Term Clubs finished – Spring Term Clubs will be announced when return after Christmas Holiday
12th Dec – 9.30am – Christmas Service at Christ Church
15th Dec – Christmas Jumper Day – All children invited to come to school in their Christmas jumper/top/dress
15th Dec – Christmas lunch – Booking details to follow
15th Dec – 2.30pm KS2 Egyptian Museum – Parents invited details to follow
18th Dec – EYFS/KS1 – Santa's Workshop
21st Dec to 3rd Jan 24 - CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

January 2024
4th Jan – First day of Spring Term
8th Jan – EYFS/KS1 – Mary Seacole Workshop

February 2024
19th to 23rd Feb – HALF TERM HOLIDAY
26th Feb – NON-PUPIL DAY

March 2024
4th March to 8th March – BOOK WEEK
7th March – World Book Day – All children invited to come to school dressed as their favourite book character
28th March – 2.30pm EYFS/KS1 Conquerors & Heroes Museum – Parents invited details to follow
29th March to 12th April – EASTER HOLIDAY

April 2024
15th April – First day of Summer Term
17th April – EYFS/KS1 – Seaside Experience Day

May 2024
6th May – BANK HOLIDAY
27th May to 31st May – HALF TERM HOLIDAY

June 2024
13th June – Dengie Sports Training Day – Details to follow
24th June to 28th June – CONTINENTS WEEK
24th June – Year 6 Transition Day – Ormiston Rivers Academy
25th June – 3.30pm to 6pm – Parents Evening – Parents invited details to follow
27th June – Dengie Sports Day – Parents invited details to follow
27th June – 3.30pm to 6pm – Parents Evening – Parents invited details to follow

July 2024
3rd July – EYFS/KS1 Trip to Southend – Details to follow
4th July – 12.30pm – Sports Day – Parents invited details to follow
11th July – 12.30pm – Reserve Sports Day – Parents invited details to follow
19th July – Last day of Academic Year 2023-2024
22nd & 23rd July – NON-PUPIL DAY
24th July – SUMMER HOLIDAY

Attendance – w/e 22/9/23

The winning class for the week ending **22th September 2023** is Red Squirrels class.

Year	Attendance %
R / 1(Red Squirrels)	99.15% - 0 late
1 / 2 (Hedgehogs)	97.53% - 0 late
3 / 4 (Foxes)	98.35% - 8 late
4 / 5 (Otters)	96.71% - 0 late
5 / 6 (Badgers)	97.88% - 2 late

Each Friday we hold a raffle for all pupils in school, on time all week. This week the raffle was drawn and the winning pupil was Hope from Red Squirrels class.

If your child is not in school, please remember to phone each morning before 9 am and leave a message **for safe guarding reasons we must have a reason.**

If you receive a text message, please contact the school to explain the absence. If we do not hear from you telephone calls will be made and if we are unable to contact you then a home visit may be appropriate.

If you child arrives late then please could an adult accompany them into the office to sign them in. Anyone arriving after the registers close (after half an hour) will be classed as an unauthorised absence unless we are aware of the reason in advance.

Safeguarding requires the school to know why a child is not in school. Every child legally must attend school and parents/carers have a duty to notify the school.

Each week the Friday Assembly is led by members of Badgers Class. This week's leader was Girush.

Well done to you all!

Stars of the Week – w/e 22/9/23

Year	Name
R / 1(Red Squirrels)	Brooklyn & Hope
1 / 2 (Hedgehogs)	Sonny & Rowan
3 / 4 (Foxes)	Albie & Esme F
4 / 5 (Otters)	Catalina & Ralph
5 / 6 (Badgers)	Erin & SzeLong

Star Writers – w/e 22/9/23

Year	Name
R / 1(Red Squirrels)	Adam
1 / 2 (Hedgehogs)	Stanley
3 / 4 (Foxes)	Bonnie F
4 / 5 (Otters)	Ralph
5 / 6 (Badgers)	Henry

Good Manners – w/e 22/9/23

Year	Name
R / 1(Red Squirrels)	Isabel & Teddy
1 / 2 (Hedgehogs)	Leila & Gopish
3 / 4 (Foxes)	Esme N & Lola-Rose
4 / 5 (Otters)	Lucas & James
5 / 6 (Badgers)	Holly & Lacey-Mai

Lunch Time Stars – w/e 22/9/23

Rowan – Hedgehogs
Logan-Jack - Hedgehogs

Reading Challenge – w/e 22/9/23

Year	% children reading at home regularly
R / 1(Red Squirrels)	25%
1 / 2 (Hedgehogs)	81%
3 / 4 (Foxes)	67%
4 / 5 (Otters)	85%
5 / 6 (Badgers)	94%

October Special lunch

Thursday 5th October 2023

A prize for the lucky children with stickers on their trays

HOTDOG / VEGGIE HOT DOG IN A BUN,

CRISPY FRIES

&

BEANS/PEAS

Or

JACKET POTATO

&

HOT PANCAKE & TOFFEE SAUCE

Free for all Infant children and Free School Meals.

£2.40 for juniors

Please order at schoolmoney.co.uk

By Thursday 28th September 2023

Essex County Council

Basildon Council

Essex ACTIVAte Half Term

Active Essex

BOOK ONTO A FREE HALF TERM CLUB WITH ESSEX ACTIVATE!

Eligible children and young people are invited to book onto FREE, fun-filled activity clubs who are run by a network of locally, trusted organisations across Essex, brought to you by Active Essex on behalf of Essex County Council!

IS MY CHILD ELIGIBLE?

Essex ActivAte offer club spaces to primary and secondary school aged children (4-16 years), who are eligible for benefit based free school meals, or from 'low-income' working families, as well as children who may be vulnerable to inactivity or social isolation.

WHERE WILL THE CLUBS BE RUN?

Clubs will run in Braintree, Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping, Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Tendring and Uttlesford! Due to half term programmes being solely funded by Essex County Council, unfortunately there will not be any clubs running in Thurrock.

WHAT DO THE CLUBS PROVIDE?

Clubs provide a range of different physical, enrichment and food activities to support children's physical and mental wellbeing, as well as a delicious, nutritious meal!

HOW DO I BOOK ONTO A CLUB?

To book your child/ren onto one of our half term clubs, you will not receive a Holiday Activities voucher from your school, and you will need to book on through the Essex ActivAte website. Simply select your area, find what clubs are available and book your child on through the link provided. Depending on the club, you may need to book through our website, or contact them directly.

Find out more about October half term clubs and book on here.

ANN & SHARON'S
ART & CRAFT CLUB

Ann's Mobile
07932444719

Sharon's Mobile
07983385890

Find us on Facebook: *Ann & Sharon's Art & Craft Club*

We are an after school art & craft club running on:

Tuesday's at Tillingham Village Hall (We can collect children from Tillingham School) directly when school finishes until 4.45pm.

Wednesday's at Winterdale Manor Estate, Southminster road, Althorne, Essex CM3 6YH from 3.30pm to 5pm.

The clubs are based on primary school children, however, we do have some that are older.

Drinks and a snack provided.

We run term time only.

Cost per session £8.00

Essex County Council
Essex Music Education Hub

Essex Music School
Maldon Community Music Centre

Tuesdays 5pm – 7.30pm

Come and join us in making and learning music together in Maldon!

We offer 10 weeks per term across the school year including groups and ensembles, as well as offering an inclusive provision for home-schooled students, and bespoke musicianship classes for those starting their first steps in music.

We also offer 1-to-1 lessons in Piano, Guitar, Drums, Strings, Woodwind and Voice.

Maldon Community Music Centre
Plume Academy, Fambridge Road, Maldon CM9 6AB

Website: www.essexmusichub.org.uk
Phone: 0333 013 8953

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ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many apps which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit www.nationalonlinesafety.com for further guides, hints and tips for adults.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about WHATSAPP

...MSG ME...

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

AGE RESTRICTION 16+ in UK and Europe; rest of the world 13+

With more than two billion active users exchanging texts, photos, videos and documents, as well as making voice and video calls, WhatsApp is the world's most popular messaging service. Its end-to-end encryption only allows messages to be viewed by the sender and any recipients: not even WhatsApp itself can read them. This privacy issue has been in the spotlight recently, as the UK's Online Safety Bill proposes to end such encryption on private messaging; WhatsApp is unwilling to do so and has reportedly considered withdrawing its service in the UK should this legislation go ahead.

EVOLVING SCAMS

WhatsApp's popularity makes it a lucrative hunting ground for scammers. Recent examples include posing as the target's child, requesting a money transfer because of a spurious 'emergency'. Plus a scam where fraudsters trigger a verification message by attempting to log in to your account, then (posing as WhatsApp) call or text to ask you to repeat the code back to them, giving them access.

CONTACT FROM STRANGERS

To start a chat, someone only needs the mobile number of the WhatsApp user that they want to message. If your child has ever given their number out to someone they don't know, that person could then contact them via WhatsApp. It's also possible that your child might be added to a group chat (by one of their friends, for example) containing other people that they don't know.

FAKE NEWS

WhatsApp's connectivity and ease of use allows news to be shared rapidly – whether it's true or not. To combat the spread of misinformation, messages forwarded more than five times on the app now display a "Forwarded many times" label and a double arrow icon. This makes users aware that the message they've just received is far from an original ... and might not be entirely factual, either.

'VIEW ONCE' CONTENT

The facility to send images or messages that can only be viewed once has led to some WhatsApp users sharing inappropriate images or abusive texts, knowing that the recipient can't re-open them later to use as evidence of misconduct. People used to be able to screenshot this 'disappearing' content – but a recently added WhatsApp feature now blocks this, citing increased privacy.

CHAT LOCK

Another new option allows users to store certain messages or chats in a separate 'locked chats' folder, saved behind a passcode, fingerprint or face ID authentication. The risk here is that this function creates the potential for young people to hide conversions and content that they suspect their parents wouldn't approve of (such as age-inappropriate material).

VISIBLE LOCATION

WhatsApp's 'live location' feature lets users share their current whereabouts, which can be helpful for friends meeting up or parents checking that their child's safely on the way home, for example. However, anyone in your child's contacts list or in a mutual group chat can also track their location – potentially letting strangers identify a child's home address or journeys that they make regularly.

Advice for Parents & Carers

...TYPING...

EMPHASISE CAUTION

Encourage your child to treat unexpected messages with caution: get them to consider, for example, whether the message sounds like something a friend or relative would really send them. Make sure they know *never* to share personal details over WhatsApp, and to be wary of clicking on any links in messages. Setting up two-step verification adds a further layer of protection to their WhatsApp account.

THINKING BEFORE SHARING

Help your child to understand why it's important to stop and think before posting or forwarding something on WhatsApp. It's easy – and all too common – for content to then be shared more widely (even publicly on social media). Encourage your child to consider how an ill-judged message might damage their reputation or upset a friend who sent something to them in confidence.

ADJUST THE SETTINGS

It's wise to change your child's WhatsApp settings (go to 'Privacy', then 'Groups') to specify which of their contacts can add them to group chats without needing approval: you can give permission to 'My Contacts' or 'My Contacts Except ...'. Additionally, if your child needs to use 'live location', emphasise that they should enable this function for only as long as they need – and then turn it off.

CHAT ABOUT PRIVACY

Some parents like to check in with their child about how they're using WhatsApp, explaining that it will help to keep them safe. If you spot a 'Locked Chats' folder, you might want to talk about the sort of chats that are in there, who they're with and why your child wants to keep them hidden. Also, if your child has sent any 'view once' content, you could discuss their reasons for using this feature.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools. She has written various academic papers and carried out research for the Australian government comparing internet use and sexting behaviour of young people in the UK, USA and Australia.

...HEY OSCAR...

National Online Safety®

#WakeUpWednesday

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