



Summer 2026 Newsletter



A message from Mrs Bartley

As we come to the end of another school year, I would like to take a moment to reflect on what has been a wonderful year for our school community. The children have achieved so much, both academically and personally, and it always an honour to watch them grow in confidence, resilience and kindness. None of this would be possible without the support of our parents and families and I would like to sincerely thank you for the encouragement, partnership and trust you have shown throughout the year.

No doubt everyone will have their own highlights from the year, but there are a few moments that stand out particularly for me. The school productions, from our Nativities to the outstanding end-of-year performance, which showcased the confidence and enthusiasm of our children. I am always incredibly proud of how they rise to the occasion and perform with such joy and commitment. Equally special is the children's singing, which is truly excellent. Hearing their voices every day reminds me what a special place our school is. It is a genuine privilege to experience that pure joy daily.

Another highlight is seeing how our older children look after and nurture the younger members of the school. Their kindness, patience and sense of responsibility create a community where everyone feels valued and supported. These moments often happen quietly and away from the spotlight, but they are a wonderful reflection of the caring culture that exists throughout our school.

For me, one of the greatest rewards in education is witnessing the progress children make in learning to read. There is something magical about seeing those first tentative steps with letters and sounds develop into fluent and confident reading whatever age and however long it takes. It is a journey that requires hard work and perseverance from children, staff and parents alike, but the results are worth it. Watching children discover the pleasure and power of reading remains one of the most satisfying aspects of my role. It has certainly been a busy and, at times, exhausting year, but it has also been an incredibly rewarding one. As we look ahead to the summer break, I hope everyone has the opportunity to rest, relax and spend time with loved ones. I am immensely grateful to our dedicated staff, our wonderful children and our supportive families for all they have contributed. I wish you all a very happy, safe and enjoyable summer holiday.

Attendance Matters

Attendance across the school this year has been 94.8%. While this may sound like a strong figure, it places us 130th out of 210 primary schools in the county, which is disappointingly below the average. As a school, we are ambitious for all our children and know that we can do better. Every day in school really does count, and we would like to see this reflected in our attendance figures next year.

A school attendance rate of 94.8% means that, on average, children have missed just over 5% of their teaching time. Whilst two pupils have achieved excellent attendance and have been in school every single day, for others the amount of learning lost has been much higher. Even a small number of days missed can quickly add up over the course of a school year.

It is important to remember that every school day has value. While some days may appear less academically demanding than others, these are often the occasions when children develop equally important skills such as teamwork, communication, resilience and creativity. They also miss out on the social experiences that come from learning, playing and spending time with friends. School is about much more than lessons alone, and children benefit enormously from being present every day.

As you begin planning for the next academic year, we ask that holidays and routine medical or dental appointments are booked during school holiday periods wherever possible. We fully understand that children will sometimes be genuinely unwell and need to stay at home to recover. However, if a child is simply "feeling under the weather", they can often successfully soldier on and enjoy a normal day at school.

Together, let us make attendance a shared priority next year. With the support of parents, pupils and staff, we would love to see our attendance rise to 96% and beyond. Every day really does count, and every day in school is another opportunity for children to learn, grow and thrive.

PTA Father's Day Breakfast

On the Friday before Father's Day, the PTA organised a special breakfast for fathers and their children. They prepared delicious bacon sandwiches and a range of drinks, including squash, tea and coffee.

The children also wrote down their favourite things about their dads. It was lovely to see the smiles on the fathers' faces when they received their special gifts.

The hall was filled with laughter and happy conversations.

Before everyone arrived, the PTA had carefully set up checkered tablecloths and napkins to make the breakfast feel extra special. When the event ended, the dads left with big smiles on their faces and the children headed to class happy and full. After the PTA tidied everything away, it looked as if they had never been there at all!

By Bessie and April

Science Week

From 15th to 19th June, we celebrated Science Week.

Throughout the week, the children took part in exciting activities designed to inspire curiosity and a love of science.

On Monday, the Wildlife Trust visited to teach us how to care for nature and protect local wildlife. On Tuesday, an ecologist showed us how to identify signs of animals and helped us create hedgehog holes to make gardens more wildlife-friendly. We even learnt that hedgehogs can travel up to three miles in one night!

On Wednesday, we measured trees and learnt how to estimate their age. Thursday brought our Science Fair, where children proudly shared their creative projects. Some experiments even included exciting reactions! On Friday, we joined a Zoom call with polar scientist Peter Fretwell and learnt about wildlife living in the polar regions. It was a fantastic week full of discovery and learning.

Those who stayed at school during Residential

On 22nd June, many children from Swaffham Prior and Swaffham Bulbeck travelled to France for the residential visit. However, some children stayed at school and enjoyed a week full of fun activities.

On Monday, we spent time in the school hall because the piano teacher was using the classroom. While we were there, we took part in lots of exciting Taskmaster-style challenges. These included guessing the highest-rated children's film, drawing with our feet or mouths for Mrs Strange to guess, catching a biscuit using only our face muscles, throwing teabags into cups, and creating funny songs.

Everyone had a great time working together, being creative and trying new challenges. It was a very fun week for everyone who stayed at school!



Residential trip to Normandy

From 22nd to 26th June, Year 5 and 6 visited France. The trip gave the children an opportunity to learn about a different culture, practise their language skills and explore important historical sites. During the visit, they learnt about William the Conqueror, World War II and life in France. They also visited a cheese factory, explored the D-Day beaches and experienced a 360-degree cinema. Temperatures reached an incredible 42°C, but despite the hot weather, everyone had an amazing time.

The trip was full of memorable experiences that the children will never forget.

Learning in Eyfs

In maths, we have been learning ways to make ten. We've been using our brains to think really hard and our fingers, as well as ekenreks and tens frames with cubes to help us practise. In PE, we got bean bags and threw them underarm into some hoops. The small ones were harder to aim at because they are little.

Winter and River, Reception

Learning in Swifts

When Swifts went to Burwell museum, it was raining really hard and we got a bit wet, but we still learnt lots. We saw a model farm and the baker's bike from Swaffham Prior, and we even got to explore the windmill and see how it works. We had a great time!

Amy, Y1

We've learnt about Australian Aboriginal artist Minnie Pwerle in our art lessons. She used lots of shapes and lines and she was inspired by nature and used plants for lots of her lines and shapes as well as different colours. We used oil pastels to make patterns in different shapes and patterns to look like plants. In maths we have been learning about volume, which is how much is in a container, and capacity - how much a container can hold - in maths. We've had lots of fun exploring with water outside to help us.

Ellie, Y2

Learning in Bees

In geography, we've been learning how to mark a map with symbols and use a key. We compared the small village of Swaffham Prior with the huge city of San Francisco using maps, and found a lot of differences. We've also learnt how to use grid references.

Tadgh, Y3

In English we finished our persuasive leaflet about San Francisco. We had to use exaggeration, alliteration like 'spectacular San Francisco' to persuade people to visit. We had to do some research first about the tourist attractions such as the painted ladies, which are actually pastel painted houses in a row, and the cable cars which are like a tour bus which take you around the city.

Krithi, Y4

Learning in Butterflies

We're working very hard on our production of The Wizard of Oz, learning our lines and learning the songs as well as making props like a throne and the tin man's axe, and scenery like leaves and poppies. It's been amazing seeing how quickly people can learn their lines, especially Dorothy who has one hundred and twenty one lines!

The teachers have worked really hard too, especially Miss Bellwood, who has helped us with the actions and stage directions to get the best performance we can.

Abby, Y5

Year 6 have all been to their move up days at their secondary schools. At Soham, we found out our form groups and we made paper towers to see whose tower was the most stable and the tallest, so we developed our teamwork skills. We also did two lessons: French where we ordered ice creams, and art where we did marble printing in a tray with foam in it. Before I went in, I thought I would get lost and I was a bit scared but my form tutor was kind and reassuring. By the end of the day, I found my way around easily and left feeling positive.

April, Y6

At the Bottisham move up days, we were given a tour by students from Year 9 and 10. We also met our form tutors and after that we had an assembly where they showed us the choir. In maths, we learnt how computers count in binary which only uses ones and zeros. I was amazed how big the school is and how different it is to primary school. Although I felt a bit nervous at first, by the end I felt confident that I knew what was expected and excited to go back in September.

Molly, Y6