

# The Hermitage Schools

## Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

It is hard to believe we have completed the first half term of the year already. It has flown by and already the children have achieved so much. I am so proud of them all and the way they settled back into school routines and adapted to their new year groups with ease. Our very youngest children in Nursery aged 2, 3 and 4 years old and Reception cohort aged just 4 and 5 years old, leading the way with confidence, resilience and behaving as if they have been in the school system for years. A credit to all of you for helping them return or start school with ease - thank you all.

We have started to welcome prospective parents on site for tours in the hope their children will get a placement in year R and Year 3 next September. Our Year 6 children stepped up to the challenge in their new positions of responsibility, sharing the child's perspective of 'life at The Hermitage Schools' with our visitors during their tours. Our Head and Deputy Head Boys and Girls and House Captains have been great ambassadors for the schools, responding to questions and assisting our visitors. Many other children from each class within the Infants and Juniors have also adopted new roles of responsibility this term with School Council, Eco Council, Wellbeing Ambassadors, Friendship Friends, Librarians, Sports Captains and Prefects, to name a few. Children are eager to help and model to all our school values and rules.

A great number of trips have started already with children enjoying enrichment opportunities and further modelling our school values and desired behaviours. Compliments from the general public and staff on these various sites have been showering our pupils with praise, from Year 2's trip to Windsor Castle, The Orchard trip to Pizza Express to Year 5's local visit to Winston Churchill School Planetarium and our Year 6 librarians visiting Knaphill Library for training. We really are proud of all that they have achieved to date and cannot wait to share with you all at parents' evening and during book looks next half term. Look out for dates on our new website [The Hermitage School - Inspire, Learn, Achieve](#)

We look forward to working with you this year to enable your child to become the best that they can be and make maximum progress.

*Kind regards*

*Clare Spires*

*Executive Headteacher*

# Communication

In school, we always strive to get the right balance of communication with our parents. Some parents report there is too much, some say there is not enough and others struggle to know where or who to communicate with.

We welcome and value direct communication from each and every parent, whether a question, feedback, constructive criticism or praise. We ask that for all reasons you email or phone us on the communication methods noted below or come to the school office to book a meeting directly with us. We endeavour where possible to respond to all communication within 48 hours ( working days).

Although Whatsapp and social media can be great sources of support if you need a reminder from other parents in your child's class or year group - such as "What day is PE again?" "When does their library book get changed?", it is not a good communication tool for sharing concerns and questions that cannot be resolved through sharing with other parents alone. The school is the best place to get a response, support or answer and, therefore, we ask that you use the methods for communicating with us below.

[infantoffice@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:infantoffice@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk) - mark emails FAO: followed by the name of the staff you wish to contact and it will be forwarded on to them.

[junioroffice@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:junioroffice@hermitage.surrey.sch.uk) - mark emails FAO: followed by the name of the staff you wish to contact and it will be forwarded on to them.

**Seesaw** - Each parent has a login to communicate directly with their child's class teacher. Please do not expect a response outside of the teacher's working hours.

**Office Telephone** 01483 472047

Or come directly into the school office where our team will be only to happy to help.

A full list of staff can be found on our schools' website [The Hermitage Schools - Inspire, Learn, Achieve](#) and we are only to happy to help.

Kind regards,

*Clare Spires*

*Executive Headteacher*

# Nursery & Reception

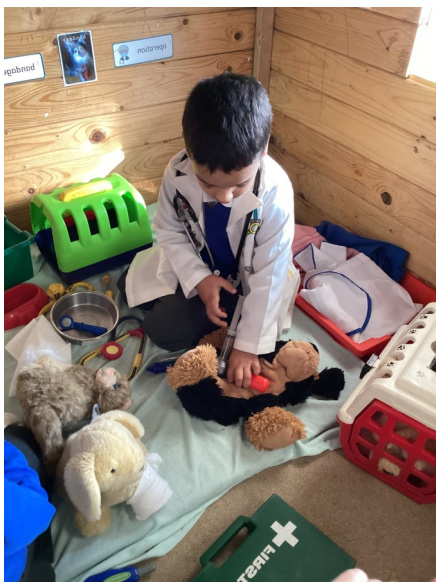
In Early Years, our young learners in Nursery have been diving into the exciting topic of "Shall I tell you about Me?" while in Reception we discussed the topic of 'What is marvellous about me?'. This engaging theme has allowed them to explore their identities and emotions in a fun and creative way!

One of the highlights of our journey has been creating self-portraits. Children have expressed their unique personalities through colourful artwork, celebrating what makes each of them special. To further enrich their understanding of feelings, we read the beloved book *'The Colour Monster'*, both in Nursery and Reception which introduces different emotions and helps the children identify and articulate their feelings.

As part of our emotional learning, the children in Reception made their own mirrors to observe and practice different facial expressions. They also has been encouraged to make a 'Chatter box' at home which helped them to share their interest and likes with their teachers and peers in school.

In addition to exploring feelings, we discussed family dynamics. The children shared who lives in their homes and the special relationships they cherish with family members.

Overall, this topic has not only empowered our children to celebrate their individuality but also to appreciate the diverse experiences of their classmates. It's been a wonderful journey of self-discovery, and we can't wait to see where their curiosity takes them next!



# Year 1

We have had a wonderful first half term in year 1. Settling into our new classrooms and becoming confident with new rules, structures and teachers.

Our topic of "Marvellous Me!" has given us the opportunity to identify how we are all unique. From ourselves to our families, our homes to our hopes and dreams. We enjoyed getting to know the Secret Giant in "Grandad's secret Giant" and writing our own stories.

We have been geographers finding out where we live in the world and how the world is divided into continents and countries.

As scientists we have studied Sensitive bodies under our Animal topic and have used our senses to discover the wonder of our world through sight, sound, smell, touch and taste!

As artist we have studied line and how it helps us to create art, from texture to different medium to taking it outside to make wild art.



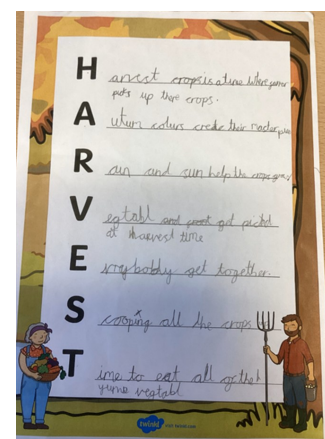
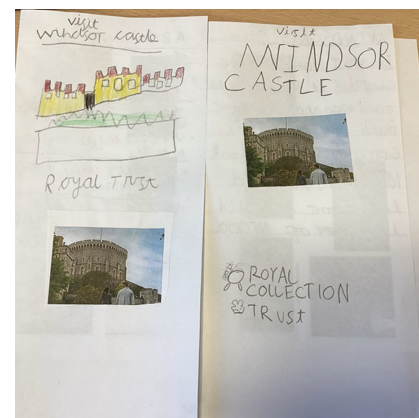
# Year 2

Year 2 have settled in so well and are enjoying their topic of Castles!

They have been exploring the book Rapunzel by Beth Woollvin and have planned and written their own alternative ending to the story.

The children have been sharing their mathematical knowledge of place value and using this to solve calculations. The children also spent a lot of time learning their harvest songs and writing Harvest poems.

They also went on their first school trip of the year to Windsor Castle where they were able to see St Mary's Dolls House and the State Apartments. They were also very respectful whilst entering St Georges Cathedral and observing where Queen Elizabeth II was laid to rest. After half term, the children will be using their knowledge of castles to begin to plan and make their own castles.



# Year 3

We can't believe that we have already approached the end of our first half term in Year 3. It has been so lovely to see how quickly the children have settled into life at Junior School.

This half term our history topic was the Stone Age, the children have had so much fun learning about life in the Stone Age without technology as we know it. They had a go at doing some amazing Stone Age art. This was a huge success, and every child was so proud of their artwork!

In Science, we are focusing on Rocks, fossils and soil. So far, we have had a go at making sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rocks using sweets, we have tested permeable and impermeable rocks using various liquids. We have made dinosaur fossils using play dough and PVA glue. We have also looked at different types of soil and their textures from 3 different areas, testing how they hold their shape and the differences between them. The children have enjoyed the hands-on lessons where they can apply their knowledge. There will be further activities planned for the upcoming half term and we can't wait to share what we have been up to in the coming days.



# Year 4

Year 4 have had a fantastic start to the autumn term, and we are so proud of the way most of our children have embraced our school values. It has been wonderful to see so many pupils demonstrating our school rules of being Ready, Respectful, and Safe. The staff have been delighted to reward these positive choices with house points, and some pupils have already received 5 star certificates during our achievement assemblies! Well done, Year 4—keep up the excellent work!

In Science, the children have been exploring the topic of 'Solids, Liquids, and Gases.' Last week, they took part in an exciting experiment using thermometers. The pupils placed water at different temperatures, including ice in bowls, made predictions about what the temperature would be, and then measured the actual temperature using the thermometers. It was fantastic to see them discussing their results and comparing them to their predictions. We are so impressed with the enthusiasm and curiosity displayed, and it's clear that we have some budding scientists in Year 4!



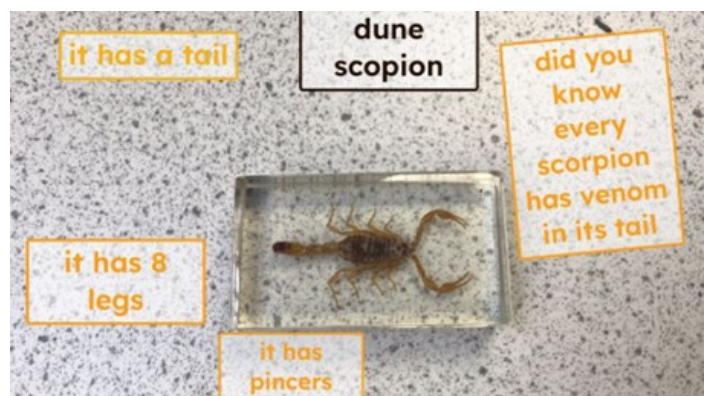
# Year 5

This half term Year 5 have had many educational experiences. As part of our topic of Space, we visited the Planetarium. This was thoroughly enjoyed and enhanced their learning. They also had the opportunity to use their computer suite and library. Alongside this, the children created space mobiles out of plasticine and paper which helped consolidate their understanding of the names and location of the planets. Finally, the children showed impressive cutting and dicing skills whilst making their own soup.



# Year 6

This half term, Year 6 have had great fun in science. They have learnt all about how to classify animals, plants and microorganisms. They enjoyed classifying some rather large invertebrates and designing posters with lots of facts about bacteria.



# Orchard



We haf to roll the  
dough. We haf  
put tomato on the sauce.  
We put on the cheese.  
We put the pizza in the oven.

The Orchard children went to Pizza express, where they learnt about the ingredients and then how to make a pizza. Afterwards, we wrote a recount in our English lessons. The children all had a wonderful time!



Some of The Orchard children went to Nower wood in the morning. They took part in pond dipping and some minibeast hunting. The children loved being outside and found some interesting creatures

# Sports News

On Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October, some children from The Hermitage Junior School, Miss Foster and two parents took part in Woking Swimathon. They were raising money for local charities. The charities include:

Woking & Sam Beare Hospices

Samber-RDA (this charity in particular supports The Orchard children with their horse-riding sessions)

Citizens Advice Woking

GASP Motor Project

Woking Youth Theatre

In total the Hermitage team managed to swim just under 400 lengths in an hour! A fantastic team effort. It is now too late to donate: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/rotary-swimathon>



On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> October, some of the girls from netball club took part in a tournament at Greenfield School. They played four matches in total against other local schools. Our most exciting match was one against Barnsbury where we lost but the final score was 4-3. Each match their netball improved, and they should be proud of how they played as a team. We are looking forward to more matches in the future!

Our school year has taken off with a number of sporting opportunities, both in terms of the school PE curriculum as well as some out of school fixtures that our sports' teams have attended.

Our Year 4 boys travelled to a local football tournament at St Dunstan's School, where they were able to experience representing the school for the first time and were introduced to WASPS tournaments. They performed gallantly, with six matches in total, which were all incredibly close.





# Library

On Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October The Hermitage Junior school librarians visited Knaphill library. It was a great opportunity for them to see how a public library is run, and they came away with lots of ideas that they want to implement in our school library.



# Free airTEXT Service

## Free airTEXT service for residents

Thursday, 26/09/2024 | SCC Schools Bulletin

**Air pollution alert via text, email or voicemail. Please share with parents and carers.**

Six borough and district councils in Surrey are offering a free service called airTEXT to warn residents about upcoming air pollution. You can [sign up](#) for alerts by text, email, or voicemail which launches at the start of October 2024.

The six areas that are launching the services initially are:

- Elmbridge Borough Council
- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council
- Spelthorne Borough Council
- Runnymede District Council
- Mole Valley District Council
- Tandridge District Council.

These alerts use information about weather forecasts and pollution sources to predict air quality up to three days in advance. The forecasts are issued twice a day and are compared to actual pollution levels to improve accuracy. The alerts are triggered when a significant portion of an area is expected to have high pollution levels and include information about nitrogen dioxide, particulates, ozone, and other pollutants. This is particularly helpful for those with chronic health conditions such as asthma and other respiratory conditions, so they can decide whether to adjust their activities. For more information on health advice and recommended actions that individuals may wish to consider taking at different levels of air pollution, please check out the Defra UK Air [daily air quality index](#) (DAQI).

Eastwood Leisure Centre Swim School

# Crash Courses



**BOOK  
NOW**

Intensive daily courses during the holidays

The benefits of swimming are huge and major improvements can be made by participating on our week long crash courses.

The intense nature of the course with daily lessons ensures children find it easier to gain new skills, so their confidence grows day by day.

Crash courses can

- Boost a child's ability
- Help to progress through the stages of the learn to swim programme
- Help to build confidence
- Improve and reinforce swimming technique
- Develop essential water skills

**5 x daily 30 minute classes**

**28 October to 1 November**

**Stage 1-4**

**£48.75.**

**These lessons are for anyone aged 4 years and over.**

**To book a space, please call reception at 01932 960994.**



\*terms and conditions apply



# 10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators TEACHING CHILDREN FIRE SAFETY

Fire safety is especially important around Bonfire Night, as fireworks, bonfires and sparklers add extra risks for families and young children. Every year in the UK, thousands of accidents occur due to improper handling of fireworks and neglecting fire safety measures. This guide offers practical tips for keeping children safe when handling everything from fireworks to space heaters.

## 1 BONFIRE NIGHT AWARENESS

Bonfire Night is exciting, but it comes with several inherent risks. Educate children about the dangers of fireworks and open flames. Teach them that only adults should handle fireworks and that bonfires should never be approached. Keep children at a safe distance (at least five metres away) from bonfires and explain why supervision is crucial during these events.



## 2 SUPERVISE FIREWORK USE

Fireworks should only be handled by responsible adults who are following UK laws and guidelines. Make sure to buy fireworks that meet British Standards and adhere to all instructions that come with them. Keep children a suitable distance from any firework activity and designate an adult to supervise the event. Ensure no one goes near fireworks after they've been lit.



## 3 SPARKLER SAFETY

Sparklers are often captivating for little ones, but they can burn at extremely high temperatures – over 1,000 °C! Only allow children over the age of five to use sparklers, and make sure they wear gloves. Teach them to hold sparklers at arm's length and never wave them near others. Once a sparkler has burned out, extinguish it fully in a bucket of water – which you should prepare beforehand and always keep nearby.

## 4 ORGANISED DISPLAYS ARE SAFER

If possible, families should attend an organised fireworks display rather than holding one at home. These tend to be far safer as they're run by professionals adhering to strict safety regulations. Organised displays also provide a controlled environment where children can enjoy the event from a safe distance, reducing the risk of accidents.



## 5 KEEP FIREWORKS AWAY FROM THE HOME

If you are hosting your own fireworks display, set them off well away from homes, sheds or fences to avoid starting accidental fires. Choose a wide-open space with no flammable materials nearby and keep a means of putting out fires to hand in case of emergency – such as a bucket of water, a hose or a fire extinguisher. Afterwards, ensure that all fireworks are fully extinguished and never attempt to relight one if it doesn't go off.



## 6 BONFIRE SAFETY

If you're building a bonfire, place it well away from trees, buildings, fences or anything else flammable. Make sure it's structurally sound and not at risk of collapsing. Only burn natural materials like wood and leaves, avoiding petrol or other accelerants. Children should be kept far away from the bonfire, and it should always be supervised by adults. Be sure to fully extinguish the bonfire before you leave it.



## 7 "STOP, DROP AND ROLL"



Ensure that children know what to do if their clothing catches fire. Teach them the simple "stop, drop and roll" technique, which can quickly extinguish flames. Practice this with them before events like Bonfire Night, so they feel confident if the need to use it arises. It can also be helpful to keep another means of putting out these kinds of fires on standby, just in case. An extinguisher or flame-retardant blanket are both sound choices.

## 8 SECURE CANDLES AND OPEN FLAMES



Beyond Bonfire Night, everyday fire safety is also crucial. Candles can be a common fire hazard, especially in homes with young children. Teach children not to touch any open flames, and ensure candles are placed in sturdy holders away from combustible materials. Never leave candles, incense burners or other such items unattended, and always extinguish them fully before leaving a room or going to bed.

## 9 EDUCATE ABOUT FIREWORKS HAZARDS

Make sure children understand the dangers of playing with fire or fireworks, and how to handle such things responsibly. Emphasise that fireworks are not toys and can cause serious injuries when improperly used. Demonstrate the importance of treating fire with respect and the consequences of misuse, which can help temper any curiosity and any resultant dangerous behaviour.



## 10 FIRST AID FOR BURNS

Even if you have the best possible precautions in place, accidents can still happen. Keep a first aid kit on hand. Ensure you know how to apply basic first aid to burns, so you can teach children those techniques too. If someone suffers a burn, run it under cool water for 20–30 minutes. Never use creams or ointments, as these retain heat and can cause further damage. Instead, seek medical help if the burn is serious.



## Meet Our Expert

James Whelan is an experienced health and safety expert who is a Chartered Member of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health. He provides services to educational settings and many other industries, helping them to maintain a safe working environment.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: <https://nationalcollege.com/guides/fire-safety>

@wake\_up\_weds

/www.thenationalcollege

@wake.up.wednesday

@wake.up.weds

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Gates Open 6pm  
Bonfire 7pm  
Fireworks 7:30pm



1st Knaphill  
**Scouts**

# *Spectacular* **FIREWORK**

# **DISPLAY**

## **Sat 2nd Nov**

**Adults £7 (Advance) £8 (Gate)**

**Children £4**

**Family (2 Adults & 2 Children)**

**£20 (Advance) £22 (Gate)**

**Burgers  
Bangers  
Hot Drinks**

**Stalls  
Kid's Funfair  
Kid's Tombola**

## **THE VYNE FIELD - REDDING WAY - KNAPHILL**

**All children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult  
Sorry, no sparklers or alcohol allowed at this event**

Tickets: [www.1stknaphillscoutgroup.org.uk/events/annual-firework-display](http://www.1stknaphillscoutgroup.org.uk/events/annual-firework-display)  
A limited number of tickets will be available on the night: Contactless preferred  
Discounts for advance purchases. Sorry, no public toilets on site.



## The Oaktree and The Hermitage Schools

### Term dates and INSET days for 2024-25

Autumn Term 2024		
Monday & Tuesday	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY
Wednesday	4 <sup>th</sup> September	First day of Autumn Term 1
Friday	25 <sup>th</sup> October	Last day of Autumn Term 1
	28 <sup>th</sup> – 1 <sup>st</sup> November	AUTUMN HALF TERM
Monday & Tuesday	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> November	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAYS
Wednesday	6 <sup>th</sup> November	First day of Autumn Term 2
Friday	20 <sup>th</sup> December	Last day of Autumn Term 2
Spring Term 2025		
Monday	6 <sup>th</sup> January	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY
Tuesday	7 <sup>th</sup> January	First day of Spring Term 1
Friday	14 <sup>th</sup> February	Last day of Spring Term 1
	17 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> February	SPRING HALF TERM
Monday	24 <sup>th</sup> February	First day of Spring Term 2
Friday	4 <sup>th</sup> April	Last day of Spring Term 2
Summer Term 2025		
Tuesday	22 <sup>nd</sup> April	First day of Summer Term 1
Monday	5 <sup>th</sup> May	May Day Bank Holiday
Friday	23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Last day of Summer Term 1
	25 <sup>th</sup> May – 6 <sup>th</sup> June	SUMMER HALF TERM
Monday	9 <sup>th</sup> June	First day of Summer Term 2
Tuesday	22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Last day of Summer term 2