



High Halden Church of England Primary School

Newsletter 4



Friday 17th October 2025

Autumn Term

'Rooted in God, we grow together'

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As we come to the end of Term 1, I wanted to take a moment to celebrate what has been a fantastic start to the school year. Our Bumblebees have done ever so well completing their very first term in school — what an achievement! They've settled beautifully into school life and have been busy learning new sounds in phonics and exploring capacity in maths, with plenty of fun filling and emptying containers. They've also been making the most of their outdoor area — enjoying their newly topped-up sandpit, creating imaginative concoctions in the mud kitchen, tending to our guinea pigs, and having great fun with the bikes and scooters, which have been a big hit! I'm confident they're ready for a well-deserved half-term break!



Across the school, there has been so much exciting learning taking place. When I've been wandering around, it's been wonderful to see the children so engaged and enthusiastic in their lessons. The Butterflies enjoyed a fascinating visit from Dr Digby, who brought their history topic on Mary Anning to life with a morning of fossil exploration. They also took a trip down to the pond area, where they discovered a variety of pond life — including some salamanders! Our Grasshoppers have started learning the clarinet this term. They are now pros at putting them together and are beginning to master making a sound — which is not as easy as it looks! They also enjoyed a visit from Rev Sue, who helped the children learn about what happens at a Christian wedding. The class had great fun acting out the ceremony (and thankfully, the blushing bride wasn't late!). The Dragonflies have impressed us all with their incredible sewing skills. It was wonderful to see how focused they were when creating their Mayan-inspired pencil cases and mobile phone holders. Meanwhile, our Year 6 pupils have successfully completed their Tiger Troop training, proudly demonstrating the skills they've learned to their parents on Wednesday afternoon. Everyone has been working so hard across a wide variety of subjects — well done, children! It's been a truly successful first term of the academic year.

A big thank you to all our staff for working their socks off too! Every one of these creative and inspiring lessons takes time, care, and a great deal of preparation. I'm sure they'll also enjoy a well-earned rest before the lead-up to Christmas begins! You'll find a list of key dates for our events in Term 2 included towards the end of this newsletter. I'm sure there will be a few more added as the term goes on, but these should help with your planning in the meantime.



We've sent home a copy of the Life Skills Progression for each year group today. Over the holiday, you might like to work on some of the skills that will help your child develop further in these areas. If you'd like to share any achievements, please feel free to send photos to the school office or your child's teacher — we'd love to celebrate them.

Have a lovely half-term break, and thank you for your continued support. I hope you all enjoy some quality family time together.



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Attendance

Attendance percentage

School	97.0%
National	95.8%
Local Authority	95.6%

Look at our whole school attendance... I don't think it's ever been this high at this point in the year! Well done to you all-this is a great achievement!

Some of you will know that as a school we've been working hard to improve our whole school attendance for a number of years. I really hope this continues across the remainder of this year.

We know that regular attendance and punctuality are key to helping children achieve their very best — academically, socially, and emotionally. 💡

Children who attend school consistently are more likely to:

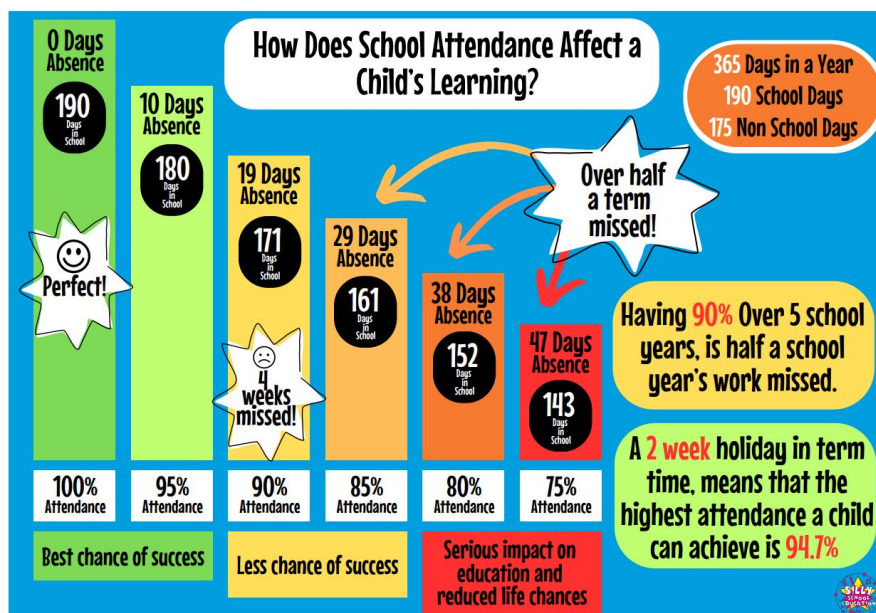
- ✓ Make better academic progress
- ✓ Develop strong friendships and confidence
- ✓ Feel part of the school community
- ✓ Transition smoothly to secondary school



As we move into the time of year when coughs, colds, and other illnesses become more common, we'd like to remind families of the importance of keeping us informed if your child is unwell.

If your child is going to be absent from school, it is your duty to contact the school each day they are off. If we haven't heard from you, please expect us to get in touch to check why your child is not in school — this helps us to make sure all children are safe and accounted for.

There are also a number of common illnesses where children can still attend school, as long as they are well enough to participate in learning. To help families make this decision, [our school website](#) has a range of useful resources. You'll find a booklet entitled "Is My Child Too Ill for School?", which outlines guidance for most common childhood illnesses and how long children should stay off school, if at all. Thank you for helping us to keep our school community healthy, safe, and learning together.



Flourish Together Federation Governing Body Update

The governors were delighted to meet for the first time this academic year and to welcome everyone back after the summer break. The meeting began with a focus on keeping children safe, ensuring all governors are up to date with safeguarding and the code of conduct. Safeguarding remains a top priority, with governors confirming which staff have refreshed their training and are now designated safeguarding leads.

Mrs. Butcher shared an update about SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities), including funding for the year ahead and how the new *Communities of Schools* approach will help shape how schools work moving forwards. Governors thanked the SENDCo for her continued hard work and support across both schools.

The minutes from the last meeting were agreed, and governors were pleased to welcome Daniela as a new co-opted governor. The make-up of the governing board was reviewed and plans made to fill remaining vacancies. Governors also agreed a new action plan for 2025–26 and approved updated meeting procedures, including options for virtual meetings and secure recordings.

The new Federation Strategic Plan, *Nurture, Grow, Shine*, was discussed, along with the Federation Improvement Plan, as governors shared ideas and set next steps for future meetings.

Governors also approved the monitoring visits policy, confirmed monitoring pairs for key areas such as SEND, Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Finance, and received an update from the finance committee. Policies were reviewed and agreed, and governors identified training opportunities for the year ahead.

The meeting ended positively, with everyone focused on helping every child across our Federation to Nurture, Grow, and Shine



The Big Draw – Term 2 Theme Day <https://www.thebigdraw.org/>

We are excited to launch Term 2 with our whole-school theme day, “The Big Draw”.

This special day, planned by Mrs Morris, will be packed with creativity and fun as children explore the joy of mark-making and artistic expression. Throughout the day, pupils will take part in both collaborative art projects and individual drawings, inspired by the work of well-known illustrators and artists. Together, we’ll create a whole-school art piece that celebrates imagination and teamwork.

At the end of the afternoon, we’ll gather some of the children’s artwork in the hall to create a table-top gallery, where parents will be invited to come in and admire the wonderful range of work produced across the school. This will also give the children the chance to see and appreciate the creativity of other classes — a lovely way to celebrate our artistic talents as a school community! We hope you will join us straight after school in the main hall.



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ABC Christmas Card Competition

Ashford Borough Council are running a Christmas card competition for children aged 4 – 11 years. The winner will receive a £30 Waterstones voucher and 10 printed cards to send to family and friends, and the two runners up will each receive a £10 voucher, plus 10 printed cards. All winners will be invited to have tea with the Chief Executive and Mayor of Ashford.

The competition guidelines and further details can be found here:

<https://www.ashford.gov.uk/christmas-card-competition/>

Good luck!



Design Ashford Borough Council's Christmas Card!

Year 6 Canterbury Cathedral Visit

Our Year 6 pupils have been given the wonderful opportunity to take part in a Cathedral Schools Day at Canterbury Cathedral, one of the most significant and historic Christian sites in the country. This special event will take place on Thursday 6th November and we are thrilled to have secured a place, as it is always in high demand.

Cathedral Schools Days are a unique chance for our pupils to come together with children from other schools. Pupils will participate in a range of workshops and prayer space activities in the morning, and a Worship Service in the afternoon

- all set within the awe-inspiring setting of Canterbury Cathedral.



Diocese of Canterbury
CHANGED LIVES → CHANGING LIVES

Whole School Poster Design Competition



Design a Poster – Win a Prize!
Open to all year groups.

Get creative and design a poster for our School Book Fair for your chance to win a voucher to spend at the fair!

Your poster should include:

Dates: 17th, 18th, 19th & 20th November

Time: 3:15pm – 3:45pm

Location: School Hall

**Hand in your poster to Mrs Prebble by
Friday 7th November**

Good luck – we can't wait to see your amazing designs!

A vibrant poster for a Scholastic Book Fair. It features a young girl with her hands behind her eyes, a cartoon character with a speech bubble asking 'What are you waiting for?', and another cartoon character with a speech bubble saying 'Come find us at your Book Fair!'. The text includes 'SCHOLASTIC TRAVELLING BOOKS', 'FREE BOOKS for Your school when You buy at the Book Fair!', 'A pop-up book-store with hundreds of books from JUST £2.99', 'Come to our BOOK FAIR', 'TIME: 3:15 to 3:45pm', 'DATE: 17th to 20th November', 'LOCATION: School Hall', and 'Find these characters and EVEN MORE BOOKS online' with a QR code.

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Come and Play!



We'd like to invite children and their families who are interested in joining our school in September 2026, to come and play!

17th November at 2:30pm - Storytime
26th November at 9:15am - Outside Play
2nd December at 9:15am - Dough Disco
11th December at 9:15am - Christmas Crafts

Call 01233 850285 or email office@high-halden.kent.sch.uk to book your space.

www.high-halden.kent.sch.uk



HIGH HALDEN CEP SCHOOL EYFS OPEN EVENING



An opportunity for new and prospective families to hear all about our wonderful school. Come and meet our Headteacher and Early Years staff as well as tour the school.

Thursday 13th November at 6:30pm



Is your child due to start school in September 2026?



We warmly invite you to come for a personalised family tour of our school.

At High Halden, families are always pleasantly surprised by:

- our spacious indoor and outdoor learning environments.
- how children are supported with nurture and care in a welcoming, family feel community.
- our happy, calm and fun environment full of enriching experiences.



Discover how our children grow in a school that is warm, supportive and alive with opportunities to flourish!



We'd love to show you around, answer your questions, and help you picture your child's exciting journey with us. Contact the School Office to book your individual tour.

01233 850285 or office@high-halden.kent.sch.uk

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GODINTON HOUSE AND GARDENS



HALF TERM WORKSHOPS GETTING BATTY AT GODINTON! THURSDAY 23RD OCTOBER

Start with a bat-tastic trail around the gardens, discovering amazing bat facts. Then warm up inside with a hot drink and make your own bat mobile using natural materials.

Workshop times:
10am - 12pm
1pm - 3pm

TICKET PRICE: £3 PER CHILD

Under 4s are free. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information and to purchase tickets please visit www.godintonhouse.co.uk

The Godinton House Preservation Trust - Charity No. 1002278

GODINTON HOUSE, GODINTON LANE,
ASHFORD, KENT TN23 3BP



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Forest School – Term 2 - Grasshoppers Class

Grasshoppers will take part in Forest School sessions every Wednesday during Term 2.

Please ensure your child wears appropriate clothing and footwear for the weather and school environment.



PE Sessions for Term 2

Class	Day/s to wear PE kit to school
Bumble Bees	Friday
Butterflies	Monday
Grasshoppers	Tuesday
Dragonflies	Tuesday and Friday

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KEY DATES 2025–26

TERM 2



Monday 27th October

Term 2 begins

Wednesday 29th October

**EYFS/Y6 NCMP
Health Screening**

Thursday 6th November

**Y6 Canterbury
Cathedral**

Monday 10th November

**Bumble Bees
Come & Learn**

Tuesday 11th November

**Remembrance Day in
school**

Thursday 13th November

**EYFS 2026 Open
Evening**

**Monday 17th-Thursday 20th
November**

Scholastic Book Fair

Tuesday 18th November

Y1/2 Come & Learn

Friday 21st November

**Children in Need
2025**

Tuesday 2nd December

Y5/6 Come & Learn

Thursday 4th December

Y3/4 Come & Learn

Friday 5th December

**Christingle Service
(online)**

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KEY DATES 2025–26

TERM 2



Friday 12th December

Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 12th December

**Pantomime Trip
(whole school)**

Monday 15th December

**Nativity Dress
Rehearsals**

Tuesday 16th December

**EYFS/KS1 Nativity
2pm**

Tuesday 16th December

KS2 Nativity 6pm

Wednesday 17th December

**Christmas Lunch
(whole school)**

Wednesday 17th December

**EYFS/KS1 Nativity
9:15am**

Wednesday 17th December

KS2 Nativity 2pm

Thursday 18th December

**Christmas Church
Service 2:30pm**

Friday 19th December

Last day of term 2

Monday 5th January

Inset Day

Tuesday 6th January

Term 3 begins