

Friday 22nd May 2026

Good afternoon families,



What a glorious way to end the half term. With so much sunshine forecast for the week ahead, I hope you and your families are able to make the most of the fair weather. Since moving from Essex, my family and I have loved exploring the countryside and feel very fortunate to live in such a beautiful county.

I'm not quite sure where this week has rushed off to—another busy one filled with celebrations and success. In Reception, I was challenged to spot the differences between the emerging butterflies. The children spoke confidently about the items in the butterfly baskets, explaining how the fruit, sugar water and flowers were giving the butterflies everything they needed. In Year One, the children have continued to develop their programming skills, taking on the role of air-traffic controllers and creating and correcting code to avoid aviation disasters! Year Two have completed their dragon fact files which will now be collated into a book for the reading corner.

Wednesday afternoon is our singing assembly, and this week it was particularly enjoyable to see the impact of the hard work our choir—and Mrs Smith—have put into raising the quality of singing across the school. The choir helped everyone learn a new call-and-response song, complete with brilliant actions. I've popped the link below in case your child would like to share it with you over half term: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pDQcdmIlgkGk>

In recent weeks I have attended several governing body meetings and would like to take this opportunity to thank the governors for their continued voluntary support of the school. Their role is vital: governors provide strategic leadership, hold the school to account, and ensure decisions are always made in the best interests of our pupils. They offer invaluable challenge and guidance, support senior leaders, and give generously of their time, expertise and commitment. We have shared and reviewed the outcomes of the parent survey—please see Bryan Jenkins' commentary below:

The governors enjoyed the opportunity at the recent parent consultations to meet with you and gain your feedback about the school. It was pleasing to hear that children in all year groups really enjoy coming to school. It was also great to hear that you feel your children are safe, well looked after and making good progress.

Communications was highlighted as an area for improvement, and the staff are reviewing the best way to accommodate your collective feedback whilst being cognisant to strike the right balance in terms of frequency, volume and timelines of information. Hopefully you will have seen that links to information about the current curriculum being covered by each year group now form part of regular communications.

Your feedback is greatly appreciated by the board of governors and senior leadership team as we continually strive to provide the best possible start to your children's educational journeys.

You will also find a notice from Adam Coates (Chair of Governors) at the end of today's round-up. You will know from previous communication how important effective inclusion is to us as a school. This week, Mrs James and I met as part of our ongoing review cycle to monitor provision for all children in class. We were both delighted to see the progress of some of our youngest pupils, supported by high-quality teaching and adaptive practice from our excellent teachers and support staff.

I am also aware from a number of parents who have reached out that the children continue to respond positively to the My Happy Minds programme. I'm pleased to share that after half term we will be opening up the programme to families, giving you access to the resources, videos, stories and learning that align with what the children experience in school. This is an exciting development, and we want to make sure we get it right for our community. More information will follow next term.

Next term is set to be one of our busiest yet, beginning with a four-day week for the children (Monday 1st June is an INSET day). Please see the Summer Term Checklist included, with all relevant dates. The checklist we shared at Christmas was well received, and we hope this one provides everything you need for the term ahead.

I hope that you all enjoy the sunny weekend and we look forward to seeing you back in school for our final term on **Tuesday 2nd June 2026**.

Mrs Southgate

A note from Adam Coates (Chair of Governors):

We discussed at our Full Governing Board recently that it is just a little over a year since we completed the recruitment process and selected Mrs Southgate as our new Headteacher.

I felt this is a moment to reflect on the impact she has already made in our school. Stepping into this role has meant filling big shoes as well as being able to adapt quickly after moving from a different county where the education provisions can vary.

Mrs Southgate has embraced the challenge with energy and determination. She has gone to lengths to get to know as many pupils as possible, and her commitment is felt across the whole school community. From the outset, she has been clear that continuous improvement is essential if we are to move forwards and since replacing Mrs Barby last September, she has worked tirelessly to refine and challenge how our school operates with the best interests of every pupil at heart.

The Governors are confident that she will continue to strengthen our school and we look forward to working alongside Mrs Southgate and everyone in the school community, as we continue to develop, inspire and succeed for every one of our pupils in our nurturing environment.

Adam Coates

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