

Autumn 1 Term 2026



Message from the Head Teacher

The children have made a super start to the year and have settled very well into their new routines and environments. We were very pleased to see our transition events including stay and plays, holiday drop ins, meet the teacher events and settling phone calls engaged with so well by our community.

This term, we have developed several learning spaces across the school including our new library which has been funded by the PSA, Key Stage 1 outdoor learning area and Opal zones. We have also developed a number of our inclusion spaces and we have expanded the resources within our reading curriculum. This term, our new website will be launched which will be an important resource for our community for finding out information about the school, celebrating the pupils' achievements and discovering how you can support learning in each year group. Our year group pages will include a range of information for parents as well as the recorded welcome talks from each year group.

As part of our community connections, the children enjoyed representing our values avatars creating scarecrows for Harvest Festival. The PSA have held some successful events this term including the Sponsored Bounce which raised over £2000 and also the first school disco which the children really enjoyed. It was also lovely to see so many parents visiting us for parent's evening this week to hear how their children have settled and how they are beginning to progress this year.

Our first Community Forum of the year focused on creating 'Belonging' and we had some really positive conversations about how we can continue to develop the school as somewhere children, parents and community feel strong connections and belonging. We have worked with local schools RBA and SWA on developing pupil experience and the children have enjoyed reading with visiting pupils from RBA. Our governors have had 3 meetings this year with a focus on how best our board can support the school to continue to thrive in the year ahead.

Our pupil leadership teams are underway and we started the year with a visit from Alistair Strathern to talk to our captaincy team about being an MP. We held a democratic whole school vote for our House Team and enjoyed hearing the children's ambitious manifestos! We have had a number of children become Lion Learners this term nominated by their teachers for showing strong learning behaviours. We can't wait to see more children nominated next term too. It has also been lovely to see the children recognised by their teachers and given subject postcards for their hard work across the curriculum as well as seeing many children earning house points, value stamps and Head Teacher Awards.

We have seen some successful trips and visits this term with year 3 visiting Celtic Harmony to learn about the Stone Age through immersive hands on experiences. We also had a team of dancers attend a local dance festival to perform a dance routine as well as a sports festival attended by some of our Year 4's. The Orchard also enjoyed a community visit to Rose's Café and held their 1 year celebration which all the teachers visited.

We are very proud of our recent awards and recognition as a school, including being identified as a Lead School of Music, receiving the Platinum Opal Award, receiving distinction level in the Green Flag Award and achieving the Platinum School Games Award. Our breakfast club has also been given the Kellogg's award as the school for Central England and we will be taking some children to the Houses of Parliament after half term to attend the awards ceremony.

Next half term, we are looking forward to the first of our Project Based Learning weeks where the whole school will be supporting healthy habits as part of Healthy Me Week. As a whole school we will be focusing on the big question, 'How can small healthy habits make a big difference?'. We'll be launching the week with a Healthy Habits Conference on Monday 9th November, with visitors helping children explore different aspects of physical and mental wellbeing. We also have the PSA mufti day on the Friday, with children (and adults) invited to wear either active wear/sportswear or pyjamas, linking to physical activity, rest and sleep. In November, we have anti-bullying week with a focus on the value of kindness and celebrating how our differences make us unique.

Thank you to our parents for supporting the children to settle so well into the new school year and for continuing to work in partnership with us to create a wide range of experiences for the children. We are really looking forward to next half term and we hope all of our children and families have a lovely half term.

Polly Ross

Notes for Autumn 2

- Please remember to add your child's name to school uniform and property.

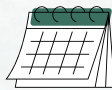


- Forest school Autumn 2
 - Monday - Cedar
 - Tuesday - Holly
 - Thursday - Hawthorn
 - Friday - Elm
- School lunches are now available to book for Autumn 2



Upcoming dates

- Thursday 5 November - PSA Meeting
- Friday 13 November - PSA Mufti Day
- Thursday 19 November - EYFS Early Reading Workshop
- Friday 20 November - EYFS Early Reading Workshop
- Tuesday 1 December - EYFS Festive Show



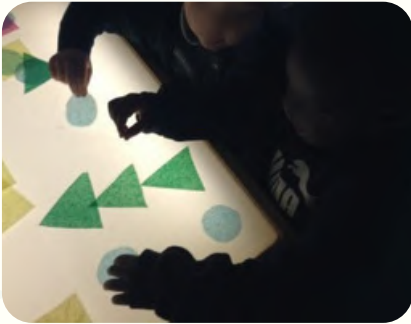
WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO

Cherry Class

We are incredibly proud of how beautifully the children in Cherry Class have settled into Nursery this half term. They have quickly become familiar with our rules and routines and have impressed us with how well they are joining in during carpet times. We have been focusing on building friendships, developing independence, learning to share and take turns, and beginning to use our words to resolve disagreements.

We have enjoyed sharing stories such as *The Perfect Fit* and *Find your Happy*, exploring what makes us all special, the importance of kindness and how to recognise and manage our feelings. We have also been exploring Autumn, noticing changes in our environment and learning about Harvest. The children particularly enjoyed practising their chopping skills and making vegetable soup!

Next half term, we will continue to develop our independence, communication skills and friendships. We will learn about making healthy choices, explore different celebrations and traditions, and begin introducing our school values superheroes. In Cherry Class, we will work together to earn values stamps as a whole class, celebrating the ways we demonstrate our school values in our everyday learning and play.



Reception



In Reception, we have been learning how to move around the different areas in Peach, Pear and Plum classes, and developing the skills we need to use in different areas. We have practised writing our names in a range of ways. We have been excited to do our phonics sessions and learning the sounds that letters make, and how to use these to begin to read and write words. In Maths, we have been learning about how different numbers are represented, and practising our counting skills too.

$$\begin{array}{r} 5 + 1 = \\ 1 \quad 3 \quad 2 \end{array}$$

Next half term, we will be thinking about the habits we can develop to lead a healthy lifestyle during Healthy Me week. We will be using stories during Anti Bullying week to think about how to show kindness, and also about how our differences make us unique. We will continue to learn more sounds, and will be applying this knowledge to begin to read and write simple words. In Maths, we will continue to develop a deep understanding of numbers and our understanding of how to make amounts.



WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO

Year 1

Year 1 have had a fantastic start to the year! We have enjoyed exploring lots of wonderful books, including *Peace at Last* and *Lost in the Toy Museum*. In English, we have been learning about sentences and practising saying our ideas aloud before writing them down. Our big focus has been understanding finger spaces and why they are so important, making sure we leave a space between each word to help our writing make sense.

In maths, we have been developing our understanding of place value, exploring amounts and practising counting forwards and backwards. In history, we have been discovering how toys have changed over time. The children loved exploring our very own toy museum and looking closely at some old toys! In RE, we have been learning about different places of worship and exploring where and how people from different religions worship. In science, we have been learning about the human body and finding out more about ourselves.

We are so proud of how the children have settled into Year 1 and look forward to sharing more of their learning with you!



Year 2

What a wonderful half term of learning we have had in Year 2! Our learning has taken us on a journey across the United Kingdom, where we have explored its countries, landmarks, flags and traditions through exciting hands-on Project Based Learning.

As part of our project, we have designed and created our own models of famous landmarks, developing our understanding of the buildings and places that make the United Kingdom so special. We have explored how skylines can be represented in art, using our knowledge of mixing primary colours to create our own skyline landscapes inspired by the different cities we have discovered.

We even became bakers for the day, making our own Scottish oat bites! These activities have allowed us to combine our geographical knowledge with art, design, creativity and practical skills, while sharing ideas, solving problems and celebrating our discoveries together. We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and imagination the children have shown throughout this project.

In English we have been exploring a range of word classes and thinking carefully about how words work together to make our writing more interesting and engaging. We are beginning to develop our vocabulary choices, experimenting with more adventurous words to express our ideas and bring our writing to life.

In Maths, we have been developing our understanding of place value, exploring how numbers are made up of tens and ones and working confidently with numbers up to 100. We are now beginning our next topic of addition and subtraction, where we will build on these skills to solve calculations and mathematical problems.

We are looking forward to another exciting term of learning, with our Healthy Me PBL week on the horizon where we will be thinking about how we can look after our minds and bodies through building healthy habits.



WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO



Year 3

Year 3 children have settled into their new classes so well and have made a brilliant start to the school year, showing enthusiasm, curiosity and a wonderful attitude towards their learning.

In English, we have been exploring instructional writing by learning how to write clear, step-by-step instructions to make yummy jam sandwiches! The children have been developing their skills in using imperative verbs, sequencing their ideas and ensuring their instructions are easy to follow. Our outdoor learning has given us opportunities to explore place value and number bonds in a fun, practical way, helping us to develop our mathematical understanding beyond the classroom. During our Science Project-Based Learning Week, we became rock detectives! We explored different types of rocks and investigated how they are formed, developing our scientific knowledge and curiosity about the world around us.

There has also been plenty to celebrate in maths, as Elm Class secured their first ever Times Tables Rock Stars (TTRS) trophy victory! The children have worked incredibly hard to improve their



times tables fluency, and this achievement is something to be very proud of.

In Music, we have been discovering the exciting worlds of blues and jazz. We explored famous blues artists, listened to different styles of music and had opportunities to learn about and play musical instruments, developing our confidence and musical skills along the way.



Year 4

Year 4 have made a fantastic start to the new school year! The children have settled beautifully into their new classes, embraced the challenges of their new year group and continued to demonstrate our school values through their learning, friendships and teamwork. Our pupil leadership roles are now underway, with children taking on responsibilities as House Team members, Lunch Leaders, Play Leaders, Sports Ambassadors and Reading Buddies. We look forward to introducing even more exciting leadership opportunities next half-term!

This half-term, we have enjoyed immersing ourselves in our Roman theme across English and History. The children particularly enjoyed a virtual visit and exploring Roman artefacts from the London Mithraeum. In English, we have been developing our persuasive writing skills, with the challenge of convincing Mrs Slingsby, our History Lead, to let us try on the Roman armour from our museum!

Our PBL project has focused on habitats and protecting wildlife. The children designed their own habitats to support animals and insects that may need extra help over the winter months in Chicksands Woods and our own school woodland. We have also loved our Forest School sessions in Chicksands Woods, developing our outdoor skills and enjoying learning in the natural environment.

We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, curiosity and positive attitudes Year 4 have shown so far. We look forward to another exciting half-term of learning, leadership and discovery!



SCHOOL UPDATES

Orchard Class

Well, what a busy half term we have had in Orchard Class. This half term we have been learning all about Food, Glorious Food! We have learnt about where our food comes from in the world, farming, we have been sketching and creating clay models of peppers and looking at the works of the Italian artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo to inspire our own pieces of art. In science, we have been learning all about the functions of teeth and how the digestive system works. We've even had our own dentistry sessions in the ARP! Some of us have started going into our mainstream classes which has been really successful.

We have also been attending whole school assembly, the school disco and school trips. We will be doing our first Orchard Visit into the community on Thursday 22nd of October when we will be visiting Rose's Cafe at Duck Lane.

We are very much looking forward to next half term when we will be learning about the Savage Stone Age!

Enjoy your half term!

Mrs West and Team Orchard



Sports News

It has been a fantastic and busy half-term for PE. Some of our older children have attended our first sports festivals of the year, representing our school and demonstrating brilliant enthusiasm, teamwork and sportsmanship. A particular highlight has been our attendance at a new dance festival, where a group of Year 3 and 4 children learnt and performed a dance routine in front of an audience of other local schools. They did a fantastic job, showing confidence, commitment and creativity throughout the experience. We are so proud of how brilliantly they represented our school! Our Sports Ambassadors have been trained and are ready for action! They are eager to take on their new responsibilities and begin delivering physical development activities for some of our younger pupils. This is a wonderful opportunity for our ambassadors to develop their leadership skills, encourage others to get active and help foster a love of physical activity across the school. There have been lots of sporting achievements both in and out of school this half term, and it is wonderful to see so many children embracing opportunities to be active, challenge themselves and develop their skills. Whether taking part in school events, attending clubs or pursuing their own sporting interests, every achievement is worth celebrating.



Values

The children have made a great start to the year by demonstrating our 6 school values: Respect, Kindness, Honesty, Determination, Enjoyment and Community. These values underpin everything that we do at Shefford Lower School, and we believe, by following these values, that were chosen by the school community, we can make the world a better place. It was lovely to celebrate these values this half term through the Scarecrow Festival, where each class worked to create one of the Values Superheroes! You can find out more about each of our Values and their superhero on our school website. Children earn 'values stamps' when they demonstrate one, or some, of the values, and work towards earning different leaf awards. In Nursery, we earn these stamps as a whole class, and for the rest of the school, each child has a set of leaves in their home school books, so you can see their progress. We would also love to hear about how the children are showing their values out of school, and there is a space to let us know about this in the home-school books too.



SCHOOL UPDATES

Family Support



Supporting Our Families

At Shefford Lower School, we know that supporting our children means supporting their families too! Our brand-new Child and Family Support webpage is full of helpful advice, practical tips and useful resources for parents and carers. It covers a range of topics, including children's wellbeing, anxiety, behaviour, friendships, family challenges and much more.

Whether you're looking for ideas to support your child at home, advice on navigating tricky situations or information about local services and organisations, our webpage is a great place to start. We hope it will become a useful go-to resource for families whenever they need a little extra guidance or reassurance.

We encourage all families to take a look, explore the resources and see what support is available. Remember, you don't have to face challenges alone, and we are always here to help!

Visit our Child and Family Support webpage:

<https://www.sheffordlowerschool.co.uk/Child-and-Family-Support/>

Mrs Parry & Miss Cooper



Safeguarding



Staying Safe This Halloween!

With Halloween fast approaching, we would like to share some helpful safety reminders to ensure our children and families enjoy a fun and safe evening.

When choosing Halloween costumes, please check for UKCA or CE safety markings, ensure they fit properly to avoid trips and falls, and remember that some costumes can be highly flammable. Face paint is often a safer alternative to masks, which can restrict children's vision.

If you are heading out trick-or-treating, please ensure children are accompanied by a responsible adult and remain visible by wearing reflective items or carrying a torch. Take extra care when crossing roads, particularly during the darker evenings.

We also encourage parents and carers to check all sweets before children eat them and to be mindful of potential choking hazards. When decorating pumpkins, battery-operated LED candles are a much safer alternative to naked flames.

Finally, please remind children to respect neighbours who may not wish to take part in Halloween celebrations.

OPAL

Can You Help Us Build Bigger Play?

We are looking for donations of loose parts to help inspire creative, adventurous and imaginative play at school!

We would love any unwanted items such as wooden planks, guttering, pipes, cable reels, milk crates, tyres, pallets, buckets, tubs, containers and wooden blocks or logs.

No donation is too big or too small! If you have any other safe, sturdy items that could be used for play, we would love to hear from you.

Donations can be dropped off at the school office, or please speak to Miss Cooper.

Thank you for helping us make playtime even more exciting for our children!



**DONATIONS BIG OR SMALL
MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE**

SCHOOL UPDATES

Community

It has been a busy and exciting first half-term, with lots of opportunities to celebrate our school values and strengthen our links with the wider community.

We began by celebrating Harvest Festival, with generous donations from our families being sent to the Need Project in Shefford to support those in need. Our House Team assemblies have also been a highlight, with pupils in Years 1-4 learning about the democratic process and voting for their House Captains and Co-Captains. This was followed by a special visit from our local MP, Alistair Strathern, who shared insights into his role and what being an MP involves.

We were delighted to take part in the Shefford Scarecrow Festival, proudly showcasing our school values through our very own Values Superheroes! Our PSA disco was another huge success, with children from across the school having a brilliant time together. We are also grateful for the continued support of our families with fundraising opportunities, including our Christmas card project and sponsored bounce event, which help the PSA raise valuable funds for our school.

We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm, generosity and community spirit shown by our pupils, families and staff this half-term. As we look ahead to Autumn 2, we are excited to build on these connections and look forward to working with Robert Bloomfield Academy and Samuel Whitbread Academy on future events and opportunities for collaboration.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to making our school such a wonderful place to learn, grow and belong. We look forward to another exciting half-term together!



Digital Safety

