



February / March – Spring 2

Dear all,

Despite the term being exceptionally short, we have managed to pack a considerable amount of activity and enrichment into these weeks. The children have had access to a huge range of opportunities that extend well beyond the classroom, and I am pleased to report on the breadth of experiences they have enjoyed.

World Book Day and Science Week have both taken place, providing children across the school with engaging and stimulating learning experiences. Beyond these whole-school initiatives, we have also facilitated a Year 5 residential visit, which offers invaluable opportunities for children to develop independence and resilience whilst learning in a different environment. Additionally, our sporting provision has been enhanced through a Volleyball enrichment day and various sporting events, ensuring that children have the chance to develop their physical skills and discover new interests.

As we move towards the Easter break, I am delighted to share that work will begin on our school council project during the holiday period. The children have been instrumental in identifying the need for improved facilities, and we are pleased to announce that a new bike and scooter shelter will be constructed. This project represents an excellent example of children having a genuine voice in school improvements, and further details regarding this initiative can be found elsewhere in the newsletter.

Looking ahead to the summer term, the improving weather will bring additional benefits to our school community. The children are always particularly enthusiastic about having greater access to our meadow space, and the warmer months provide excellent opportunities for outdoor learning.

Before we break for Easter, I would encourage all parents and carers to carefully review the summer term dates that are included in this newsletter. Please take time to note anything of particular relevance to you and your child or children, ensuring that you are fully informed of key dates and events.

Wishing you all a restful and enjoyable Easter break.

Kind regards,
Mr S England
Headteacher



Our school events are now shared on the website calendar.

<https://www.ashwell.herts.sch.uk/cal>

Easter Break

30th March – 10th April

- **13th April – INSET DAY**
- **14th April – Beginning of summer term**
- **15th April – Reception Screening (height etc)**
- **20th April – Y2/5/6 NSPCC Workshop**
- **23rd April – Y3 Intergenerational Project**
- **24th April – Year 5 Class Assembly**
- **28th April – Y4 Maths Challenge**
- **30th April – Year 4 Pedestrian Skills**
- **4th May – Bank Holiday (School Closed)**
- **7th May – Choir @ Ashwell Music Festival**
- **8th May – Year 1 Class Assembly**
- **10th May – Ashwell @ Home**
- **11th – 14th May – Year 6 SATs Week**
- **14th – 15th May – Year 4 Celtic Harmony Trip**
- **18th May – Walk to School Week**
- **18th May – Year 6 GOAL Session**
- **19th May – Year 2 Scooter Training**
- **19th May – Y5/6 KNEX Challenge**
- **21st May – Year 2 Class Assembly**

Half Term

25th May – 29th May

- **1st June – INSET DAY**
- **2nd June – Y4 Multiplication Tables Checks**
- **5th June – Reception @ Wimpole**
- **8th June – Year 1 Phonics Screening**

Parent Volunteers



A huge thank you to everyone who has volunteered in school this term. We are incredibly grateful for the support we receive from parents and our local community. It makes a huge difference to our staff and children.

School Meal Price Increase

We have recently heard from HCL that from 1st April 2026 there will be price increased to KS2 school meals.

New Prices

Nursery £2.71 (unchanged)
Key Stage 2 £3.60 (increase of 10p)



Staff Organisation 2026-27

This time of year, in school is always busy, and we appreciate that once we enter the summer term, children, parents and staff begin to cast one eye to the next academic year. We are currently in the process of working with Governors to set the 2026-27 school budget and alongside this we will also begin to explore our staffing structure for the 2026-27 academic year before turning our attention to focus on transition within the school. As ever, we will endeavour to communicate staffing organisation for 2026-27 as soon as we are able to finalise it. This is likely to be just after the summer half term.

Year 5 Burwell House

From Monday 23rd March until Wednesday 25th April, Year 5 visited Burwell House on their residential. During their stay they took part in a range of activities some of which included, producing their own TV news broadcast in a TV studio, orienteering and a range of other outdoor games. They were really luck with the weather and have had an amazing experience.



Half Term & Easter - Holiday Camps

There will be a Premier Camps Multi-activity Holiday Club at Ashwell School on the following dates:

- Monday 16th – Thursday 19th February
- Monday 30th March – Thursday 2nd April
- Tuesday 7th April – Friday 10th April

More information is available at:

<https://www.premier-education.com/holidaycamps>



Nursery Admissions



The admissions information for our Nursery and Reception – September 2026 Intake is on our website [here](#).

Please note that we are now full in all year groups across the school other than Year 6 where there are 3 spaces and Year 4 where there is 1 space.

All admissions are via:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions

Nursery – Current

*PLACES STILL AVAILABLE for our September 2026 Nursery Cohort.

[On-Line Application Form](#)

[Nursery - September 2026 Intake](#)

[On-Line Application Form](#)



Year 5 – Burwell House

School Council Project

This year, our school council have been busy working on how to improve the dated and neglected area at the front of the school. They came up with an idea to create a multifunctional space that accommodated better storage of bikes and scooters to continue to encourage children to travel to school in a more active and environmentally friendly way whilst also keeping it as a space for children to use for gardening and for parents to sit and wait at the end of the school day. Last month, our Year 6 reps pitched their project ideas to the Henry Colborn Trustees in the hope of securing funding to see their ideas become reality. The trustees were incredibly impressed and as a result, committed to funding the project alongside a contribution from the school's PTA. Work will begin on the area during the Easter break.



Safeguarding

In school, we constantly remind our children that they can report any concerns they have about themselves or someone else to any adult in school. We encourage parents to report their concerns too. A reminder that our Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mr. England & Mrs. Andrews.

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility



EYFS – Ducklings Experience



Our EYFS children recently enjoyed a very special hands-on learning experience as part of their topic on life cycles. We were excited to welcome a group of duckling eggs into the classroom, and within the first week, the children were delighted to watch them hatch. Over the following two weeks, the children had the opportunity to closely observe the ducklings as they grew and developed. They learned about the different stages of a life cycle, as well as how to care for living animals. One of the highlights was watching the ducklings take to the water for the first time, as the children saw them instinctively begin to swim. This experience sparked curiosity, encouraged responsibility, and brought learning to life in a memorable and meaningful way for all the children.



Donate a Book to our Library

LIST UPDATED - Book donations continue to come into the school from our wish list.

A huge thank you to everyone who has already purchased a new book for the school library. To see our children's wish list and to donate a new book please see: <http://amzn.eu/OR6HXLA>



World Book Day 2026

A Wonderful Day of Reading Adventures!
 We had a fantastic time celebrating World Book Day 2026! The children spent the whole day immersed in stories, books, and exciting reading activities that brought the joy of reading to life. Throughout the day, children took part in a range of engaging activities—including World Book Day live lessons, Story Sack Spoons, “Read Around the World” sessions, where classes moved through different stories and reading experiences, as well as purposeful time spent on whole-school Reading Pauses, giving children a quiet moment to relax with a book, including special library cosy-read sessions. Lunchtime became a celebration in itself with reading-themed tea party decorations transforming the dining room into a magical book-inspired space! The day ended with one of the highlights, our Reading Buddy sessions, where year groups paired up to share books together—something the children always love. To round off the celebration, classes added to their creative door projects, decorating their classroom doors with themes inspired by their favourite books. They look fantastic! Overall, the children were enthusiastic, engaged, and full of excitement all day long. It was a wonderful celebration of stories, imagination and the joy of reading—thank you for helping to make World Book Day 2026 so special!

Attendance

Our current whole school attendance figure so far this year is 97.1%. This is slightly above this time last year and remains well above the national average.

May I remind parents to avoid booking holidays or medical appointments during school times wherever possible.

Class	%
Year 1	98.2%
Year 5	97.8%
Year 3	97.1%
Year 6	96.8%
Reception (Oak)	96.7%
Year 4	96.2%
Year 2	96.2%
Acorn (Nursery)	93.0%



World Book Day 2026 – Doors



HCC Young Carers Offer

From 1st April 2026, Hertfordshire County Council will be bringing support for young carers in-house, when the young carer contract with Carers in Hertfordshire comes to an end, integrating it fully within the council's services.

Support for young carers will continue. This includes assessments, help with managing caring responsibilities, regular reviews, ensuring the voices of young carers inform the support they receive and support in preparing for adulthood.

A new [Young Carers webpage](#) has been developed in collaboration with young carers and their families and includes information about the support available, team contact details, and 'a Day in the Life of' form to register a young carer online so that they can get the support they need.

Hertfordshire County Council will be contacting all registered young carers directly to welcome them, provide updated contact information, details on how to access support, and a link to the new webpage.

If you need to make contact with the team, please email youngcarers@hertfordshire.gov.uk or call 01992 658469



PTA Updates

Thank you to everyone who supported the PTA Mothers' Day Shop The children had an amazing time.

Future Events

- PTA Disco – 12/6/26 *Please note NEW Date*
- Fathers' Day Shop – 19/6/26
- Summer Fete – 17/7/26

You can view the PTA website to access information and their shop - <https://ashwellpta.co.uk/>

If you would like to contact the PTA:
info@ashwellpta.co.uk



Remember you can still support the school by using the link below when shopping online:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/ashwellschool/>

Year 1 Learning

This half term, Year 1 have been exploring the topic 'Seasonal Changes'. We began by keeping a weather diary for the week, then moved on to learning about the four seasons and the types of weather we usually see in each one. The children extended their understanding by comparing seasons around the world. For example, while it is winter in the UK in December, Australia experiences very different weather at that time of year. This led us to look at world maps and identify the equator. The children have particularly enjoyed using globes and atlases during their child-initiated learning.

In English, we have been reading Madlenka and Martha Maps It Out. These stories inspired us to write our own narratives about our community and the places that are important to us.

In Science, we have been developing our understanding of animals including humans. The children have explored different animal groups and learned about the common features that help us classify them. We then moved on to looking at animal diets, using the terms herbivore, omnivore and carnivore to describe what different animals eat.

Finally, we explored the structures of both humans and animals, including learning about the five senses and how we use them.



ANTON – Free Learning Platform

ANTON The free learning platform for all. ANTON makes learning easy and fun. The platform offers personalised learning that enables you to progress at your own pace and level, unlocking games and rewards along the way. With a comprehensive curriculum across key subjects, learners can practice, improve, and gain confidence throughout their school journey. ANTON strives for equitable digital learning. Our core teaching and learning content is always free for everyone. https://anton.app/en_gb/



Sporting Success - Netball

It has been an exciting and successful period for netball at our school, with pupils demonstrating great enthusiasm, teamwork and determination across a range of fixtures.



Our Year 5 C Team took part in a friendly host night, where they had a fantastic opportunity to develop their skills, build confidence and gain valuable match experience. The team showed great effort and sportsmanship throughout. Meanwhile, our Year 5/6 B Teams (1 and 2) competed in a brilliant tournament.



The Green Team achieved an outstanding 1st place, bringing home another shield for the school this year - an incredible accomplishment. The Blue Team also performed superbly, showing resilience and teamwork in every match. These events mark the conclusion of our netball fixtures for the year. In total, we have taken part in 8 fixtures - an excellent achievement. Well done to all pupils involved for their hard work and commitment. We now look forward to an exciting summer term ahead!



Spring Term Musical Showcase

This term we were treated to another showcase Wednesday. Performers from across the school impressed an attentive audience with solos and duets. Children from Reception through to Year 6 enjoyed listening to pieces of music played on guitars, the piano, a flute, recorder, voices and even a harmonica! It was lovely to see friends performing together and sharing the musical experience. A particular well done to those children who performed their own compositions. Thank you to the performers for sharing your musical talents.



Year 3 Intergenerational Project



Our Year 3 class continued to take part in the Intergenerational Project with the local community during February and March. One group took part in a musical movement session, and one group experienced small farmyard animals visiting during their session.



SEND Spotlight - Executive Functioning Skills (EFS)

This month's SEND Spotlight focusses on Executive Functioning Skills (EFS). These are the important set of mental skills that children use every day both in school and at home. These skills help them to plan, stay organised, follow routines, manage emotions, and solve problems. Some children, including many with additional needs such as ADHD, autism, dyslexia or dyspraxia, find these skills particularly challenging. But the good news is executive functioning skills can be taught, strengthened and practised over time.

What Are Executive Functioning Skills?

Think of EFS as your child's "brain manager" - helping them organise their thoughts, actions and emotions.

Here are the key areas:

Skill	What it Means	Everyday Examples
Working Memory	Holding information in mind	Remembering instructions or what they need for school
Inhibitory Control	Thinking before acting	Waiting their turn or resisting distractions
Cognitive Flexibility	Coping with changes	Switching tasks or dealing with changes to routine
Planning & Organisation	Managing time, tasks and belongings	Packing a school bag, starting homework
Emotional Regulation	Managing big feelings	Handling frustration, staying calm

Fun fact: The brain area responsible for these skills continues developing until around age 25, so it is completely normal for children to need lots of support.

How Might a Child Show They're Struggling?

You may notice your child:

- Forgetting instructions
- Losing items or getting disorganised
- Getting overwhelmed by changes
- Finding it hard to switch tasks ("But I'm not finished!")
- Acting impulsively or interrupting
- Struggling to start tasks independently
- Getting easily frustrated

These are not "naughty" behaviours, they are skills still developing.

How You Can Help at Home

Here are simple, realistic strategies that make a big difference:

Working Memory

- Give **one or two steps at a time**
- Use visual reminders (lists, pictures, timers)
- Ask them to repeat back instructions

Inhibitory Control

- Play turn-taking games
- Use gentle prompts like "Pause and think"
- Build in movement breaks

Cognitive Flexibility

- Prepare them for changes ("In 5 minutes, we're...")
- Offer small choices to build adaptability
- Model calm responses to change

Organisation

- Have a consistent place for bags/shoes
- Use colour-coding for items
- Make a simple morning or bedtime checklist

Emotional Regulation

- Teach calming strategies ("Breathe in... breathe out...")
- Name feelings ("It looks like you're frustrated")
- Use a calm corner or cosy space

Here is a great video that explains Executive Function. [What is Executive Function and Why Do We Need it?](#)

Year 6 – Design & Technology

Year 6 have been enjoying their latest Design and Technology project, exploring how playground apparatus is designed and constructed. Using a range of woodworking skills, the children planned and built miniature playground structures from wooden rods, dowels and lolly sticks.



Their designs had to include a variety of functions such as swinging, climbing and sliding and there needed to be an awareness of safety, such as cladding, barriers and fences. The children measured, sawed and cut wood accurately, glued the pieces together and painted the playground structures to make them look attractive. The children showed great teamwork, problem-solving and perseverance throughout the process and we were really pleased with the results!



Science Week

Across the school, we thoroughly enjoyed celebrating Science Week in line with this year's national theme. The children took part in a wide range of exciting, hands-on activities that sparked curiosity and encouraged them to think like scientists. From investigations and experiments to problem-solving challenges, it was fantastic to see such enthusiasm, teamwork and a love of learning on display in every class.



Reception – Springs Visit

Reception have had a wonderful end to the term, celebrating their learning about Spring with a beautiful sunny walk to Ashwell Springs. The children thoroughly enjoyed paddling and splashing in the water, making the most of the warmer weather.

Along the way, they carefully observed the many signs of spring in their local community, from budding plants to wildlife. It was a gorgeous morning, and a lovely time was had by all!



Charity Fundraising Efforts



A huge congratulations to Amelie in Year 2 who has recently cut off all her long hair in aid of the Little Princess Trust who provides free wigs to children affected by cancer or other illnesses and lose their hair. Amelie set out to raise £500 and has exceeded this target! A huge well done for raising money for such a great cause – we are all very proud of you. If you would like to help add to her fundraiser, you can do so here: [Amelie's fundraiser for Little Princess Trust](#)

Year 5 – Sartorius Visit

This term our Year 5 class have been taking part in the Children Challenging Industry Science program that is organised by York University. We have had three fun lessons with CCI, including filtration, testing viscosity and food for microbes. These experiments tested our scientific skills. We finished this wonderful experience off with a trip to Sartorius, which is a science industry that makes medicines, robots and scientific equipment. We met a lot of welcoming scientists, that taught us lots of new things, feeding knowledge to us.



Year 3/4 Production

During the final week of the spring term, Year 3/4 took part in their production of Pirates vs Mermaids.

“Me Hearty High School is the most distinguished pirate school on the seven seas and the trainee pirates can’t wait to graduate and become proper pirates. There is only one problem... none of them can swim! If they can’t swim they will fail their ‘Arrr’ levels and then what will they do? The answer to their problem lies with the mermaids, but the pirates do not like the mermaids, and the mermaids do not like the pirates – will they ever find a way to get along?”

The 3 performances went down extremely well and were well attended. A huge congratulations for the cast, it was so lovely to see them enjoying the opportunity to perform on stage!



Year 5/6 Cyber Security and Fraud Workshop

Earlier in the term, Year 5 and 6 were given the opportunity to hear from specialist in Herts Police around the subject of Cyber Security and Fraud Prevention. During the afternoon workshop they covered the following key areas:

- Explaining the difference between legal and illegal cyber activity
- Encouraging individuals to make informed choices in their use of technology
- Increasing awareness of the Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Promoting positive and legal cyber opportunities

In addition, the children received basic cyber security advice, including guidance on general e-safety and good password hygiene.

Hertfordshire Police are clear that the aim of this work is not to criminalise young people who may be unaware that some cyber activities can have serious, and potentially criminal, implications. Instead, the focus is on engaging, educating and inspiring pupils through the #CyberChoices initiative, helping them to stay safe and make responsible decisions online.



Summer Term Clubs Menu!

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Before School	Club: Chess Staff: Dr Hunt Yrs: 1 to 3 Max No: 10 Location: Library		Club: Dodge Ball Staff: Premier Years: Yr 1 to 3 Max No: 20 Location: Hall	Club: Dodge Ball Staff: Premier Years: Yr 4 to 6 Max No: 20 Location: Hall	Club: Chess Staff: Dr Hunt Yrs: 4 to 6 Max No: 10 Location: Library
Lunchtime 11:45 – 12:15		Club: Mindfulness Staff: Mrs Andrews Yrs: 6 Max No: 20 Location: Ash	Club: Chill & Chat Staff: Miss Sohal & Mrs Andrews Yrs: All Max No: N/A Loc: Ash	Club: Summer Sports Staff: Premier Years: Yr 3 & 4 Max No: 20 Location: MUGA	Club: Summer Sports Staff: Premier Years: Yr 3 & 4 Max No: 20 Location: MUGA
		Club: Gardening Staff: Ms Coates Yrs: 3 Max No: 10 Location: Yr 2			
Lunchtime 12:15 – 12:45	Club: Dance Staff: Miss Meehan Yrs: 4 & 5 Max No: 30 Location: Hall	Club: Dance Staff: Miss Meehan Yrs: 1 to 3 Max No: 30 Location: Hall	Club: Boys Choir Staff: Mrs Lee Yrs: 3 to 6 Max No: 20 Loc: Hall	Club: Choir Staff: Mrs Lee Yrs: 2 to 6 Max No: 20 Location: Hall	Club: Speed Stacking Staff: Y6 Sports Leaders Yrs: 3 to 4 Max No: 20 Location: Ash
After school 3:15 – 4:15	Club: Musical Theatre Staff: TheatreTrain Yrs: 4 to 6 Max No: 20 Location: Hall	Club: Gymnastics Staff: Premier Yrs: R to 3 Max No: 20 Location: Hall	Club: Tennis Staff: Premier Yrs: 4 to 6 Max No: 20 Location: Outside	Club: Musical Theatre Staff: TheatreTrain Yrs: R to 3 Max No: 20 Location: Hall	Club: Summer Sports Staff: Premier Yrs: 4 to 6 Max No: 20 Location: Outside

Dates: 14th April – 24th July (Half term 25th – 29th May)

Mental Health Support for Hertfordshire's Children and Young People




JUST TALK

If you're young and feeling a bit low, or worried, find the help you need in Herts.



www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/mentalhealthsupportforhertsyoungpeople




TALK

Find advice and help If your child is feeling low, anxious or generally struggling



www.justtalkherts.org

If your child or teenager is feeling low, anxious, or generally struggling, there are lots of services available to help them all year round. Please always encourage them to talk and ask for help if they need it.

The services listed on Just Talk's webpage are all free and don't need a professional referral, so they can be contacted directly by young people and/or their parents/carers. Services listed include Hertfordshire's new With Youth Digital Wellbeing Service for ages 5-18, parents and carers and many more, so please take a look:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/mentalhealthsupportforhertsyoungpeople



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(School Years 3-7)



An effective & fun therapeutic mobile intervention improving pupil anxiety

- ★ Instant access through a mobile app
- ★ **Based on highly effective Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**
- ★ Helps breakdown fears and worries into manageable steps
- ★ Development funded by the NHS



Medicines &
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Helps pupils learn life-long skills to self-manage worries and build resilience



Get Access

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(Children & Young People's Digital Wellbeing Service)

To find out more visit: www.withyouth.org/lumi-nova

or Scan QR code to sign up for instant access to Lumi Nova now.



How Does School Attendance Affect a Child's Learning?

365 Days in a Year
190 School Days
175 Non School Days

0 Days
Absence

190
Days
in
School



100%
Attendance

Best chance of success

10 Days
Absence

180
Days
in
School

95%
Attendance

19 Days
Absence

171
Days
in
School



90%
Attendance

Less chance of success

29 Days
Absence

161
Days
in
School

85%
Attendance

38 Days
Absence

152
Days
in
School

80%
Attendance

Serious impact on
education and
reduced life chances

47 Days
Absence

143
Days
in
School

75%
Attendance

Over half
a term
missed!

Having 90% Over 5 school
years, is half a school
year's work missed.

A 2 week holiday in term
time, means that the
highest attendance a child
can achieve is 94.7%



Please park **SAFELY**

We need everyone to play their part in keeping the roads near schools safe.

DRIVERS SHOULD NOT:

- park on yellow zig zag markings.
- park on double yellow lines at any time, or on single yellows during restricted hours.
- park or drive on footpaths.
- park within 10 metres of a junction, as this decreases visibility.
- block driveways or dropped kerbs.

You may be issued with a fixed penalty notice.
Thank you for your cooperation.

