Rachel Madocks Newsletter

Autumn 1 2026 **October 2026**

Headteacher's Message



Dear Parents & Carers,

A warm welcome to all families and carers returning after the summer break, and a special welcome to those joining our school community for the first time in Nursery, Reception, and Key Stage 3.

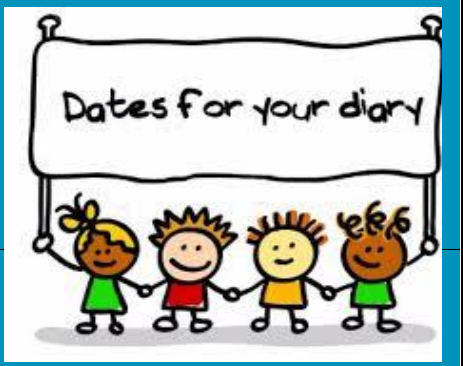
It has been wonderful to see the children settling into their new classes, establishing new routines, and embracing a wide range of exciting experiences. For some, this has included enjoying our Stay and Play sessions, taking walks to church, or celebrating success during our achievement assemblies. It has been lovely to see the confidence and enthusiasm with which the children have approached these new opportunities.

Although autumn seems to have arrived rather suddenly and the weather has certainly taken a turn, we hope there will still be plenty of bright moments for everyone to enjoy during the half-term break.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. I would also like to extend a huge thank you to all of our staff for their hard work, dedication, and commitment throughout what has been a busy and successful start to the academic year.

We wish all our families a happy, restful, and enjoyable half term.

Niki Wilson,
Headteacher



Useful Dates

Inset Day	Friday 23rd October 2026
Half Term	26th October-30th October 2026
Xmas Plays	14th & 15th December 2026
Church Visit for seniors	16th December 2026
Xmas Dinner	17th December 2026
Santa Visit	17th December 2026
Post 16 Closure	18th December 2026

Inside...

Useful Dates
News from the Governors
Prom 2026
Family Fun Day
Post 16 Southsea Trip
Calvert Lakes Residential
Discovery: Focus on Serins
Discovery: Focus on Robins
Discovery: Focus on Parrots
Explorers: Focus on Penguins
Explorers: Focus on Roadrunners
Explorers: Focus on Pelicans
Adventurers' Focus on Post 16
Free School Meals
Halloween Fun !!

News from the Governors



Dear Parents and Carers,

This term seems to have flown by, with October half-term fast approaching and even signs of Christmas already appearing in the shops!

As Governors, we have been busy updating our training and continuing to develop our knowledge and skills. All governors have attended Safeguarding training, either within school or through Hampshire Governor Services, ensuring that Safeguarding remains at the heart of everything we do.

Three Governors joined school staff to learn about Benedict's Law and how it will be implemented within the school. In addition, some Governors have attended training on Ofsted and Safer Recruitment to further strengthen our understanding and governance responsibilities.

Each year, governors complete a skills audit to help identify areas of expertise and future development. The outcomes of this years audit will be used to determine the focus of our whole governing body training in February.

We are also delighted to have received an application from a prospective new Governor. We look forward to sharing further news about this later in the term.

Finally, we would like to extend a huge thank you to Kevin, our Caretaker, for all the work he completed over the summer holidays. His hard work has helped ensure that the school remains a safe, welcoming environment and that all available spaces are utilised effectively for our pupils and staff.

Thank you for your continued support.

Alison Brooker

Chair of Governors

Prom 2026

What a fantastic evening! This July, our incredible Post 16 team hosted another wonderful prom, celebrating the achievements, growth, and resilience of our young people throughout the year. It was a special opportunity to reflect on how far they have come and to look forward to the exciting opportunities ahead.

A special thank you goes to the fantastic staff team who worked tirelessly behind the scenes decorating, organising, and tidying to bring our Dreamland vision to life. We would also like to thank Chelsea, one of our wonderful parents, whose generosity and hard work in creating the stunning Dreamland cakes added the perfect finishing touch to a truly memorable evening.

Very best wishes and good luck to all of our leavers











Family Fun Day!!

A HUGE thank you to our amazing school community!

Thank you to everyone who came along and supported our Family Fun Day July. We are absolutely delighted to share that together we raised an incredible £1,341 for our Eagle Appeal charity!

A special thank you goes to all of our wonderful volunteers. Whether you were running a stall, helping behind the scenes, setting up, tidying away, or keeping everyone entertained throughout the day, your support was invaluable.

Your generosity, time, and commitment made the event such a fantastic success. Thank you for helping us make a real difference and for continuing to support our school community so wholeheartedly.



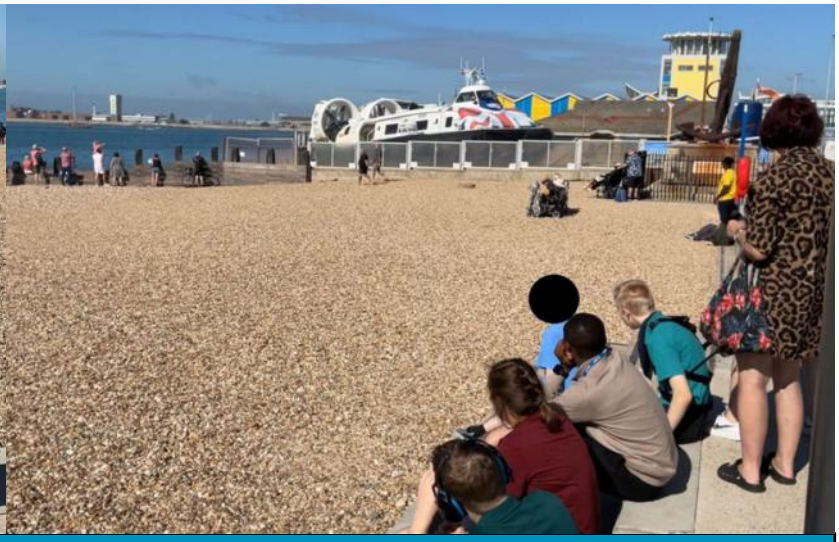






Post 16Trip To Southsea





As part of our Isle of Wight topic, Hawks Class enjoyed a visit to Southsea to see if we could spot the island from the seafront. After enjoying our snacks on the beach, we watched the hovercraft make its journey across to the Isle of Wight.

Many of the students were excited to recognise both the Wightlink ferry and the hovercraft, linking their classroom learning to what they could see around them.

It was a lovely morning of learning outside the classroom, filled with observation, discussion, and discovery.



Calvert Lakes Residential Trip

We have had a wonderful time at Calvert Lakes, enjoying a packed programme of exciting activities and new experiences.

On our first day, we bravely tackled the rock and rope challenges, including swings, high ropes and abseiling. After lunch, we enjoyed a walk around Derwent Water to Friars Crag, navigating muddy puddles and passing grazing sheep along the way. To top off the day, Carol treated everyone to some delicious chocolate brownies! In the evening, we relaxed and explored the sensory room before bedtime.

Wednesday was another fantastic day. We challenged ourselves on a wobbly, rocking and bumpy wooden obstacle course before everyone had the opportunity to have a go on the zip wire. After lunch, we learnt how to make fire safely, built our own fire pit and toasted marshmallows. The evening was spent having fun and relaxing in the sensory room, and we were lucky enough to enjoy mostly sunny weather throughout the day.

Thursday was just as busy. Although the morning was very wet, we made the most of our time by heading back to the high ropes. Our students don't often get the chance to soar high in the sky, so it was an opportunity we didn't want to miss. We then tried our hand at archery and enjoyed a walk through Dodd Wood. During our trip, Nic treated everyone to chocolate brownies from a local café.

Back at the centre, we spent time in the fantastic hydrotherapy pool, enjoying the bubbles, water spout and jacuzzi area. After tea, we finished the day in style with a disco alongside the other guests.

We have had a truly wonderful holiday at Calvert Lakes. The students have shown incredible courage, enthusiasm and resilience throughout the week, embracing every challenge and making memories that will last a lifetime. Well done to everyone for making the trip such a success!

Calvert Lakes



Making Memories

Calvert Lakes Residential Trip Photos!!











Calvert Lakes Residential Trip Photos!!









Calvert Lakes Residential Trip Photos!!









Discovery - Focus On Serins

Serins pupils have settled brilliantly into the new academic year, adapting well to new classmates, new routines and new members of staff. We are so proud of how positively everyone has embraced the start of term.

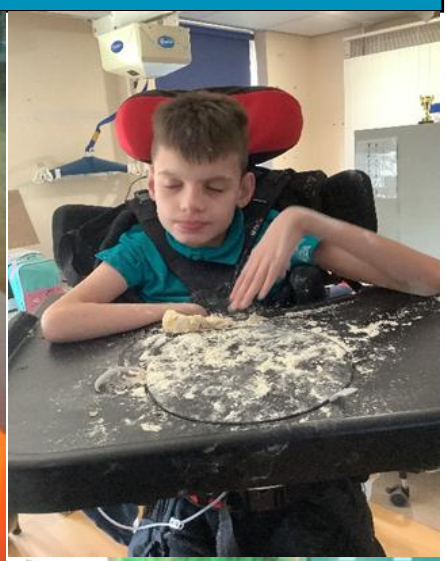
Our topic this term is Space, and we have been busy exploring a variety of space-themed objects and activities. As part of our learning, we have made different types of biscuits to represent the planets. While making the biscuits, pupils enjoyed squeezing, pulling, rolling and squashing the dough, developing their sensory experiences and fine motor skills.

Our story this half term is The Smeds and the Smoos by Julia Donaldson. We have loved interacting with props linked to the story, helping to bring the characters and events to life. Pupils have also enjoyed taking part in Sherborne Movement activities inspired by the story, encouraging communication, interaction and movement.

One of our favourite experiences has been using the magic carpet, which has helped enrich our learning and exploration of the many vibrant colours featured throughout the story. The pupils have thoroughly enjoyed these immersive experiences, which have supported both their engagement and understanding.

It has been a fantastic start to the term, and we are looking forward to continuing our journey through space and discovering what adventures await us next!








Discovery - Focus On Robins

We are so pleased with how well our Robins have settled back into the new academic year, and we are particularly proud of our new Nursery and Reception pupils. They have embraced the start of their Rachel Madocks journey brilliantly, and it has been wonderful getting to know them and watching their confidence grow.

This term, we have been exploring Space, with a special focus on the story The Smeds and the Smoos. The pupils have loved travelling to different planets and immersing themselves in a range of multi-sensory space adventures. Through imaginative play, stories and sensory experiences, they have enjoyed exploring the sights, sounds and textures of outer space.

In Food Technology, we have continued our space theme by exploring the planets through biscuit making. As part of our activities, we have been brave taste testers and sampled some interesting flavours, including blue cheese! The pupils have thoroughly enjoyed the hands-on experiences and have shown great curiosity throughout.

Our Early Years playground has also had a wonderful revamp, providing even more opportunities for outdoor learning and play. It has been fantastic to see our younger pupils spending more time outside, developing their play skills, confidence and independence.

We can't wait to continue our space adventure next term. The pupils have responded so positively to all the exciting experiences and opportunities on offer, and we are looking forward to discovering even more together.
Well done, Robins Class - you are all superstars!





Discovery - Focus On Parrots

Parrots Class have been working incredibly hard this half term as we explored our topic of Space.

We have thoroughly enjoyed our sensory story, Aliens Love Underpants, where we have explored balloon aliens, colourful pants and flashing lights from a flying saucer. Our favourite part of the story has been trying to squeeze the alien balloon into the pants, which always brings lots of laughter and excitement!

In Topic lessons, we have been learning about the different planets using sensory props and inflatable planets. We have worked hard to create a different planet each week by mixing paint into foam and printing onto paper plates, producing some fantastic artwork along the way.

During Funky Fingers, we have been developing our fine motor skills through a range of fun activities. These have included smashing foil moon rocks, cutting out rocket smoke and using our pincer grips to pick tiny stars from shredded paper. The pupils have shown great concentration and determination while completing these tasks.

In Food Technology, we have been exploring different ingredients and making choices about what to add to the blender as we created our own moon sand. This was a wonderful sensory experience that encouraged exploration, communication and independence. We are so proud of everything the pupils have achieved this half term. They have embraced every activity with enthusiasm and curiosity, making excellent progress while having lots of fun.

Well done, Parrots Class, for a fantastic half term!













Discovery- Focus On Penguins

This half term has been a wonderful one for Penguins Class.

We have been delighted to welcome four new little Penguins and their families to our school community. We are so pleased with how quickly our new children have settled into their school routines. It has been lovely to see families forming new friendships at drop-off and pick-up times, and we are incredibly grateful to our existing school community for the warm welcome they have given to our new families.

Our new Penguins have amazed us with how well they have adapted to new challenges and routines. We have focused on building strong relationships to help every child feel safe, secure, and happy at school. It has been wonderful to see their confidence grow as they relax into school life and enjoy the wide range of activities on offer.

Our returning Penguins have also been fantastic. They have welcomed new classmates with kindness and enthusiasm and have impressed us with the skills they have maintained and developed over the summer holiday. They have all grown so much, showing increased independence, determination, and confidence in their learning.

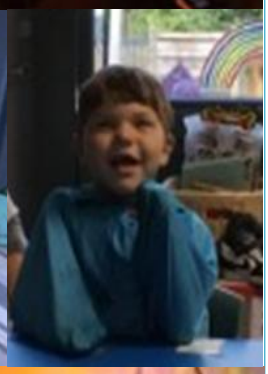
This term, we have made the most of the late summer sunshine by exploring our new playground resources. We have absolutely loved our Bucket activities, enjoyed getting wonderfully messy with shaving foam, and had great fun during our singing sessions. One of the highlights of the term was playing in the snow created by our snow machine. It was a truly special moment as three classes came together to share laughter, excitement, and fun.

It has been a fantastic start to the school year, and all of our children, along with their families, should be incredibly proud of everything they have achieved this half term.











Explorers- Focus On Roadrunners

Roadrunners Class have thoroughly enjoyed learning about people in our community as part of our PSHE topic this term.

We have been very fortunate to welcome several visitors into our classroom to talk about their important job roles and share some of the equipment they use in their work. Firstly, we had a visit from Niki, our Headteacher, followed by Vicky, our School Nurse. Our final visitor was the Police, and the pupils were especially excited to have the opportunity to sit inside a police car and explore some of the equipment used by police officers.

The class did an excellent job listening carefully, asking questions and exploring the different objects and resources that our visitors brought along. These experiences have helped the pupils develop a greater understanding of the people who help and support us in our community.

Roadrunners Class have also really enjoyed their swimming sessions in the school pool this term. In a relatively short space of time, the pupils have grown considerably in confidence in the water and are becoming increasingly independent. Many are now able to travel further around the pool, and some are beginning to swim lengths with support from an adult.

We are incredibly proud of the progress, confidence and enthusiasm shown by all of the pupils this term.

Well done, Roadrunners Class!









Explorers- Focus on Pelicans

This term, Pelicans Class has been learning all about our local community.

During our food technology sessions, we have been exploring local shops and restaurants, including favourites such as Domino's and McDonald's. The students took turns beautifully discussing the foods they enjoy when visiting local restaurants. They communicated their preferences during group discussions, with many agreeing that nuggets and chips are a firm favourite!

We have also been developing our independence skills by making delicious pepperoni pizzas. Students used their ALBs to request the ingredients and equipment they needed before collecting them from the correct locations in the food technology room. We have been incredibly proud of how well the students have done, independently spreading tomato sauce and adding mozzarella, pepperoni and oregano to their pizzas.

Pelicans students are doing an amazing job developing their communication, independence and food preparation skills, and we are very proud of their achievements.

For PE, Pelicans students have been learning about cricket. We begin each session by walking to the hall and taking part in a quick warm-up to get our bodies ready for exercise. The students then practise their throwing skills, focusing on accuracy and control.

To finish the lesson, everyone has the opportunity to hit the ball using a cricket bat. The students have shown great enthusiasm and determination as they develop their skills and confidence. It has been wonderful to see them encouraging and cheering one another on while playing, demonstrating excellent teamwork and sportsmanship.

We are very proud of the positive attitudes Pelicans students show during PE and the support they give to their classmates.



Adventurers- Focus on Post 16

Post-16 has had a busy and exciting half term, filled with opportunities to learn new skills, explore the local community and develop independence.

Our topic this half term has been the Isle of Wight. We have explored some of the island's famous landmarks, including The Needles and its many lighthouses. As part of our learning, we took a trip to Southsea Beach to see if we could spot the Isle of Wight from the mainland. Our first attempt was a little disappointing when the weather suddenly became very cloudy, but we didn't give up. On our second visit, we had much more success. Some of our students were able to point out the island, and we enjoyed watching the hovercraft travel between Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

We have also been learning about the people around us, friendships and staying safe. Students explored the difference between familiar people and safer strangers, thinking about who they could approach for help in different situations. One student made a fantastic connection by identifying the lifeguards at our local swimming pool as safer strangers who could help if needed.

Our weekly cake-making enterprise continues to be a great success. Students have been developing their independence by following recipes, identifying ingredients and baking cakes to sell to staff across the school. Some students are now able to make cakes independently, while two students have been confidently taking the trolley around school and working together to sell their products. We are incredibly proud of their growing confidence, teamwork and communication skills.

We ended the half term with a Halloween-themed Bucket lesson. Students enjoyed exploring a variety of spooky sensory experiences, including putting their hands into bowls of gooey, messy substances to discover hidden Halloween treats. There were plenty of opportunities to explore different textures, have fun and enjoy the Halloween surprises, ending the half term with lots of smiles and laughter.

Well done to all of our Post-16 students for another fantastic half term of learning and achievement!








Useful Information: Free School Meals:

Are you eligible for Free School Meals?

Even if a young person does not eat school meals, or is nil by mouth, Rachel Madocks can **still receive additional funding** if they qualify.

Same opportunities Brighter futures

- Does not eat school meals
- Is nil by mouth
- Brings a packed lunch



Check to see if you are eligible

APPLY TODAY

Check your eligibility today and help ensure we receive all the funding we are entitled to!

Online FSM Application

Half Term fun...

HALLOWEEN

Word Search

B	P	C	P	K	H	Y	S	P	Y	L	T	R	C	E	F	Q
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U	E	G	G	T	A	W	I	V	W	M	I	S	S	S	Q	E

BLACK CAT
CANDY
CAULDRON
COBWEB
COSTUME
FRIGHTFUL
GHOST
HAUNTED
MONSTER
PUMPKIN
SKELETON
SPOOKY
TRICK OR TREAT
VAMPIRE
WITCH



Halloween Word Wheel

Halloween is an annual celebration held on the 31st October, the eve of All Saints' Day. Typical festivities include trick or treating, pumpkin carving, dressing up and apple bobbing. Did you know that the first Jack O' Lanterns were carved from turnips and not pumpkins?

This Halloween themed word wheel is made from a 9 letter Halloween themed word. Try and find that word, then make as many words of any length as you can from these letters. You can only use each letter once, and each word must include the letter H.

