



# Rachel Madocks Newsletter

Spring 1 2026

February 2026

## Headteacher's Message

Dear Parents & Carers,

What a fantastic half term where we have been buzzing with energy, learning and community spirit as children, families, and staff came together for a wide range of amazing experiences.

We began with our Wellbeing Day, where pupils explored activities focused on mindfulness, exploring and resilience - it was wonderful to see everyone engaging so enthusiastically in discussions about friendship and sharing and of course, no day would be complete without our messy tuff trays!

Our Parent Forum provided a valuable opportunity to share ideas, feedback and reflections and we welcomed The Rainbow Trust who were able to provide support and signpost information.

A standout moment for our younger learners was our Primary History Day, where the children immersed themselves in the story of the Great Fire of London. With hands on activities and creative storytelling, they brought this important historical event to life in thoughtful and imaginative ways, no real fires were used although there were plenty of opportunities for water!

The whole school came together to celebrate Chinese New Year, enjoying various activities that helped us learn about the traditions, culture and the significance of this special festival, complete with trying different Chinese foods.

We wrapped up with a warm and welcoming Stay and Play Coffee Morning, where it was lovely to see parents and carers come together.

Niki Wilson, Headteacher



### Inside...

[Message from the Governors](#)

[Geography Day](#)

[Christmas 2025](#)

[Table Top Cricket](#)

[Dance Live! 2026](#)

[Dance Live! 2026 photos](#)

[Discovery: Focus on Puffins](#)

[Discovery: Focus on Robins](#)

[Explorers: Focus on Toucans](#)

[Explorers: Focus on Roadrunners](#)

[Explorers: Focus on Shelducks](#)

[Explorers: Focus on Peacocks](#)

[Explorers: Focus on Skylarks](#)

[Adventurers: Hawks & Kestrels](#)

[Useful Information:](#)

## Useful Dates

INSET Day	13 <sup>th</sup> February
Half Term	16 <sup>th</sup> — 21 <sup>st</sup> February
Stay & Play Penguins, Parrots & Wrens	25 <sup>th</sup> February
Parents Evening	18 <sup>th</sup> March



# Welcoming Our New Governor-Cathy Hems

Dear Parents /Carers,

*"I was born in Coventry and on leaving school worked for 20 years in the motor trade and a further 20 years in farming. I trained as a mature student to teach primary and taught mainly in early years for over 10 years. 5 years ago we retired to Hampshire and now enjoy walking, I am a walk leader for Ramblers wellbeing walks, water sports and we're active in some of the local village groups. If I can't be outside I enjoy reading and sewing and learning to play the piano.*



Cathy Hems—Co-opted Governor

*I have some experience of working with children with additional needs in mainstream and through the RDA and I'm looking forward to being able to contribute to the work of Rachel Madocks."*

Cathy was appointed as Co-opted Governor with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026 - welcome Cathy!

## Geography Day 2026



Our recent Geography Day brought history to life as we explored the Great Fire of London!

All primary pupils took part in a sensory story, helping to fully immerse them in the sights, sounds and experiences.

Pupils also made their own bread, linking to how people lived and worked during that time.

One of the highlights of the day was having the chance to use a hose, just like a real firefighter - safe to say there were lots of smiles and we got very wet!

It was a fantastic hands-on learning experience that was engaging and great fun for everyone involved.



# Christmas 2025



Primary were delighted to welcome Father Christmas to school at the end of last term, bringing lots of festive cheer and excitement with him!

Our sensory room was magically transformed into a beautiful Christmas grotto, complete with twinkling lights and a fantastic disco ball snowman that the pupils absolutely loved. Each child had the opportunity to meet Father Christmas and received a special book to take home.

We all enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner together in the hall, made by our amazing cooks Sue and Vicky. We enjoyed Christmas music and crackers. There was lots of smiles and plenty of festive spirit!

Thank you to our parent governor David Galway for being a fantastic Santa and providing us with delicious festive treats!



# Table top Cricket Competition



On January 21<sup>st</sup> Skylarks class went to Treloars school in Alton to represent Rachel Madocks school in the area Table Top Cricket competition.

Everyone played really well batting and bowling to the best of their abilities and we also enjoyed meeting lots of different students from 6 other special schools in Hampshire. We didn't win but we all had an amazing time!



# Dance Live 2026



Our students recently took part in **Dance Live!** and it was an experience to remember from start to finish. The event was incredibly rewarding, showcasing just how much dedication, resilience and talent our students bring to everything they do.

In collaboration with The Cowplain School, our students worked hard in the lead-up to the event and truly achieved so much on the day. They performed with confidence, demonstrating their ability to dance independently and rise to a challenge in a professional and inspiring way. The commitment and effort shown throughout rehearsals and the performance was outstanding.

One of the highlights of the day was seeing our students mixing with mainstream peers. They had a really good day building friendships, working alongside others and representing our school so positively. Their behaviour, teamwork and enthusiasm made us incredibly proud.

We thoroughly enjoyed the whole day, from the excitement of performing to celebrating everyone's success together. Although we were all feeling a little tired the next day, it was absolutely worth it for such a memorable experience.

To top it all off, we were delighted to win the **Fellowship Award** and **Best Soundtrack**, which is a fantastic achievement and a true reflection of the students' hard work, creativity and collaboration.

We are immensely proud of everything our students accomplished at Dance Live. It was a brilliant day that highlighted their confidence, independence and determination, and one that will be remembered for a long time.

## Show Photographs:

Professional photographs from the show are available to buy at:

<https://dancelive.gotphoto.co.uk/login>

Access Code: DL26TR97



# Dance Live! 2026- Photos



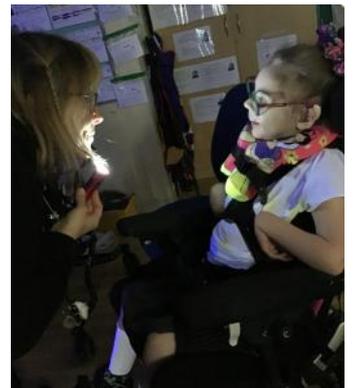
# Discovery - Focus On Puffins



Puffins Class have had a super start to the New Year! We have been exploring our Topic of 'Seasons' and in particular 'Spring'. We have explored our own Spring environment with the sounds of tweeting birds, a hot water bottle for the warm sun, a water spray bottle for the showers, flowers soil etc. We have also been exploring 'light & dark' within our Art sessions with the use of glow in the dark paints.

In Food Tech we have been getting messy and having lots of fun whilst exploring different herbs; for instance, dill, coriander & mint. These herbs have then been used to make different cakes for our very own 'bake-off' style competition.

Puffins class are definitely looking forward now to a restful half term week!



# Discovery - Focus On Robins

Spring has been blooming in Robins Class! Robins have started exploring our new Spring topic, and our classroom has been transformed into a sensory spring wonderland. We have been exploring the sights, scents and sounds of the changing weather in spring and we have been having plenty of fun along the way!

The highlight of the term so far was definitely our "April Showers" experience. The children were mesmerised by the sound of rice pattering on umbrellas to mimic the pitter-patter of spring rain. In the sensory room, our Resonance Board music sessions have been a huge success; the pupils have shown amazing communication and engagement in these lessons.



From baking herb-flavoured cakes in Fun with Food to creating "UV rain" with cornflour for our weather collage in art, Robins have shown such wonderful determination in their learning. We are so proud of how they've embraced the term so far, and we can't wait to get outside and start planting our seeds once the sun begins to shine!



# Explorers - Focus On Toucans



Autumn term was full of fun and excitement for Toucans class. We enjoyed learning about the weather and independence but most of all we loved our wonderful cricket PE sessions with Hampshire cricket. There was something for everyone and all of the children thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and got well and truly stuck in to the games!



# Explorers - Focus On Roadrunners



This term Roadrunners class has been learning about celebrations.

For food tech sessions, we have been talking about the different food you may find in a special celebration like a birthday party. Students communicated during group their food preferences and most of them agreed with having a cake or a sandwich.

We have also been working on our independent skills while making sandwiches. Students used an Aided Language Board (ALB) to choose the ingredients and collected their equipment from the correct place. Roadrunner students are doing amazingly well at spreading butter and adding their favourite fillings.



During Science lessons, we have been learning about changing states of matter. We talked about when we celebrate something special, we often have treats, balloons and fun things to play with and that the objects that we use to celebrate with, can change.

Roadrunners class really enjoyed decorating their iced cupcake and observing how the ice melted. Some students talked about how it changed from solid to liquid.

# Explorers - Focus On Shelducks



This half term Shelducks class have been exploring the topic 'Celebrations'. We have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the different ways people celebrate special occasions, including birthdays, Burns night and Valentine's Day. We have tasted celebration foods, decorated cakes, made traditional Scottish deserts, woven kilts, and made our own red roses to gift to someone special.

Shelducks class have also loved sharing the book *'The Birthday Invitation'* during our literature lessons. We have had lots of fun role-playing in class and designing our own dream birthday parties. This has included writing recipes for a birthday cake, creating our own party playlists and designing pretend invites for our family and friends.



# Explorers - Focus On Peacocks



Wonderful Peacocks class have been working extremely hard this half term in all subject areas. Our topic this term has been 'Celebrations'. We have had a focus on birthdays as a celebration and have experienced lots of things you might have and do at a birthday party.

Our story has been '*The Birthday Invitation*' and we have enjoyed learning about all the different characters invited to the party.

This term for Science we have been making and melting ice cakes.

Peacocks Class have also enjoyed their PSHE lessons this term where they have been learning about using different medical equipment.



# Explorers - Focus On Skylarks



Skylarks class have been really busy this half term. In our topic activities we have been exploring lots of different Celebrations. We explored lots of different resources connected to New Year and made our own fireworks pictures.

The story we have been exploring is called *'The Birthday Invitation'*, so the students dressed up as the Princess who is the main character in the story.

For our PSHE lessons we have been making hand scrubs to use in class and we really enjoyed feeling and smelling all the ingredients



# Adventurers - Hawks & Kestrels



It has been a busy and rewarding period for our Post-16 students, with lots of hands-on learning, teamwork and personal achievements to celebrate.

In history, students explored the rich naval history of Portsmouth, developing their understanding of the city's heritage and its importance to Britain's past. The sessions encouraged discussion, curiosity and pride in local history, with students engaging thoughtfully in the topic.

Our food technology lessons have been full of creativity and practical skill. Students have been working with pastry, learning key techniques and building confidence in the kitchen. Alongside this, our Mini Enterprise sessions have focused on preparing soup, jacket potatoes and salads, giving students the opportunity to practise food preparation, teamwork and independence while working towards real-life outcomes.

In PE, students took part in skittles and different ball skill activities, developing co-ordination, communication and sportsmanship. These sessions have been a great way to build physical skills whilst also promoting co-operation and enjoyment.



# Adventurers-Hawks & Kestrels Continued



Across all areas, students have continued to work hard on their individual targets, showing determination and resilience. It has been fantastic to see personal progress, increased confidence and a willingness to challenge themselves.

We also enjoyed a brilliant Wellbeing Day, which gave everyone the chance to pause, reflect and focus on mental health and self-care. The day was filled with positive activities and meaningful conversations, and students engaged enthusiastically throughout.

Overall, it has been a hugely positive time for our Post-16 group. We are incredibly proud of their effort, progress and attitude, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the weeks ahead.



# Useful Information: Free School Meals:

## Are you eligible for Free School Meals?

Even if your child does not eat a school meal the school can still receive additional funding if they qualify.

To check if you qualify or to ensure that you do not lose your entitlement please go to:



## [Online FSM Application](#)



# Useful Information: Managing Infectious Diseases



A practical guide for staff

## Managing cases of **infectious diseases** in all education and childcare settings

The online guide offers information and resources for the following:

Introduction to infection control in all education and childcare settings

Prevention and control

Outbreak management

Immunisation

Staff health, pet and animal contact

Cleaning the environment

Managing specific infections

Exclusion table

Diarrhoea and vomiting outbreak action list



© Crown Copyright 2025. Source: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities)

### Advice and guidance

To find out more, visit [www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities) or [bit.ly/2xiJpZ](https://bit.ly/2xiJpZ).