Giving every child the chance to shine
Generosity
Determination
Confidence
Trust
Positivity
Compassion
Respect
PUPILS
PARENTS AND CARERS
STAFF
GOVERNORS
COMMUNITY

School Newsletter 05.06.2026

Headteacher's Message

The first week of the second half of the Summer Term is already behind us, and what a wet and wild week it has been! I hope you all had a wonderful half term and were able to enjoy the glorious sunshine. It certainly felt like paddling pools, garden games and ice lollies were the order of the day for many families!

This week marked the launch of Phase One of our OPAL journey. Children have been enjoying all-year-round access to the grass and exploring some newly opened areas that were previously 'out of bounds' but have now been made safe for play. One particular favourite has been the small clearing in the bushes near the tyres, which has quickly become a hub of adventure. We are already looking at creating more spaces like this to allow children to build dens, collaborate with friends and enjoy sheltered outdoor play.

One of the best things I've seen this week has been seeing our older pupils playing alongside and looking after our younger children. It has been magic to watch siblings spending time together and children from different year groups forming new friendships. This is exactly what OPAL is all about, and I hope these positive relationships continue to flourish.

Earlier this week, we sent a reminder regarding coats. Unless we are experiencing torrential rain or thunderstorms, children will continue to play outside at break and lunchtime. Whilst hoodies and jumpers are perfect for the temperature, they are not ideal for wet weather. Please ensure your child brings a coat to school each day. It has also been fantastic to see children embracing puddle play! To make this possible, please send your child in with a pair of wellies that can be easily changed into and out of. These can remain in school throughout the year.

We have also discussed and celebrated Pride Month in school this week. In an age-appropriate way, children have explored themes of equality, inclusivity and celebrating individuality. During assembly, I shared the story of a friend who reflected on how different his school experience might have been had these conversations taken place when he was younger. His message was simple but powerful: every child should know that it is okay to be themselves. At Steeple Claydon, we want every child to feel valued, accepted and proud of who they are.

Our Year 4 pupils have had a particularly busy week as they completed the statutory Multiplication Tables Check. This assessment requires children to answer 25 questions on times tables up to 12 × 12, with just six seconds to answer each question. They have worked incredibly hard in preparation, and we are extremely proud of the determination they have shown.

Parents often ask what they can do at home to support their child's learning. If there is one area I would recommend, it is times tables. Whilst practising them may not always be the most exciting activity, fluency in multiplication facts provides the foundation for so much of the mathematics curriculum. Regular practice really does make a huge difference.

I am also delighted to share some exciting news regarding our Preschool provision. Mrs Bowerman and I met with the Buckinghamshire Early Years Team on Wednesday to finalise plans for our Preschool Wraparound Care, launching in September 2026. We are pleased to announce that bookings are now open via 'Parents Booking' (see separate email from Mrs Bowerman to come on this). We know that many families require flexible childcare, and this provision will offer care from 7.30am until 6.00pm. Children will be cared for in a nurturing environment where they will be fed, entertained, challenged and supported throughout the day. We are incredibly excited to be able to offer this service to our community.

Looking ahead to next week, we are delighted to be welcoming six work experience students from The Freemantle School. It will be lovely to see some familiar faces around the school. Year 5 are off to the Black Country Living Museum on Tuesday, which promises to be a fantastic experience, and on Friday we are hosting an Open Morning for prospective families, so please do spread the word to anyone who may be interested in joining our school community. To round off the week, Friends of Steeple Claydon School will be selling Krispy Kreme doughnuts after school on Friday.

As always, thank you for your continued support. Have a great weekend and I'll see you next week!

Mr Sperring

Link to the school calendar

https://www.steepleclaydonschool.com/calendar/?calid=1&pid=6&viewid=2

Year Group Updates

Preschool

This week in Preschool, the children have enthusiastically launched into our new topic, Heroes and Adventurers!

We have been learning about Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman to travel into space, who orbited Earth an incredible 48 times. Inspired by her adventures, the children have fully embraced all things space-related. They have enjoyed exploring moon sand, practising their mark-making skills, and searching for hidden astronauts buried within it.

Our creative activities have included making stars from playdough and designing our own planets using chalk on black paper. The children have also been busy in our Mission Control area, sending messages to one another, writing notes, and exploring and ordering glittery letters. Lots of enthusiastic countdowns have been heard around Preschool as the children practised their mathematical counting skills before "lift-off", alongside plenty of shape-sorting activities to help build rockets!

Meanwhile, excitement is growing as we eagerly await the arrival of our butterflies. The children have been fascinated by watching the chrysalises and are checking daily in anticipation of the butterflies emerging very soon.

Next week, we are looking forward to continuing our space adventures as we learn all about British astronaut Tim Peake his incredible journeys beyond Earth.

A small request: Our Preschool supplies of spare clothing are currently running low, particularly **socks and trousers in sizes 3–4 years and 4–5 years**. If you have any spare items that your child has outgrown and would be willing to donate, we would be very grateful.

Thank you for your continued support!

Reception

The children have returned from their half term break full of excitement and enthusiasm for our new topic - 'Kings and Queens'. We have started this topic learning about King Charles III and his family, including looking at the Royal family's family tree. The children were particularly interested to learn more about the life of Queen Elizabeth II and to find out about life in Buckingham Palace, using an online virtual tour. We have created our very own Buckingham Palace role play and the children have had immense fun dressing up and playing the different members of the Royal family. We have of course had an abundance of beautiful Princesses, brave knights, Kings and Queens and even a dragon.

In maths we have been learning to name and identify 3D shapes. We went on a shape hunt to find real life 3D shapes around the Reception learning environment, and the only shape we could not find was a pyramid. We had great fun getting creative and taking part in 3D shape printing, finding out what 2D shaped footprints each of the 3D shapes make. We identified which shapes have flat faces and which have curved faces, and which have both, and explored which shapes roll down a ramp and which do not.

In Literacy we have finished planning and writing the second part of 'The Picture Gardener', which concludes this story. The children have fully embraced this heart warming story of a boy called Joe who has a dream to turn his dull and grey world into one full of beauty, colour, scent and song. Next week we move onto our final story for the year; 'The Storm Whale'.

Year 1

We have had an incredibly busy and exciting first week back, jumping straight into our new learning with fantastic energy. In English, the children have been stepping into Erin's shoes from *The Secret of Black Rock*, writing brilliant diary entries that capture her frustration that everyone thinks the rock is a monster. Our new Science unit on materials saw us working as mini-scientists to classify everyday objects, while in History, we travelled back in time to learn about King James I and his refusal to listen to Parliament, which the children illustrated through some truly fabulous comic strips. In art we had a brilliant time using clay to sculpt penguins! Finally, we made the most of the fresh air in PE with a brilliant, high-energy Sports Day practice session—showing wonderful teamwork and sportsmanship all around!

Year 2

What a super sunny holiday half term turned out to be. The children have come back excited and full of news about their adventures.

In English, we've started a new narrative text: Rosie Revere, Engineer by Andrea Beaty. It tells the story of a young girl who loves inventing with junk and, despite setbacks, keeps trying with the help of her great-great-aunt. The key theme is perseverance and learning from mistakes. A key message for children and adults alike. Spellings will be sent home on Friday as usual, based on this week's learning strategies — one key focus is contractions (was → wasn't), which is a key Year 2 writing goal. We are continuing to practise cursive handwriting. Read Write Inc have just released helpful videos for home, and I'll be posting these on Seesaw. As I can only attach one video per message, you'll receive several posts over the week.

In maths, we've been recapping how to record data using tally marks, tables, block graphs and line graphs. This links to last half-term's computing unit, where the children created pictograms on the computer. In science, our topic is the planets and the Solar System — always a favourite! In history, we are learning about people who have made a significant impact on our lives; this week we learned about Mahatma Gandhi, who campaigned for India's independence. "In a gentle way, you can shake the world" is one of his famous sayings.

Please send a coat every day and wellies for playtimes (wellies can stay in school). OPAL play is in full swing and the children are really enjoying having space and time to play — including with other year groups and siblings, if they wish. Spellings go home on Fridays, and Seesaw will have multiple Read Write Inc video posts across the week. Have a lovely weekend.

Year 3

This week, in English, the children have really enjoyed being immersed in our new vehicle text "Dear Earth" and writing their own descriptive poem. In maths, the children have continued to be fraction superstars. In art, the children loved designing their own "in-relief" clay tile design. The highlight of the children's week was when they debugged some codes on Scratch in our computing lesson.

Year 4

It has been wonderful to welcome the children back for the first week after half term. They have settled quickly into their learning and have worked hard across all subjects. In maths we have begun our new unit on time. The children have been learning about days, months and years, as well as understanding and comparing seconds, minutes and hours. They have enjoyed discussing different units of time and thinking about how we measure the passing of time in everyday life. In English, we have started immersing ourselves in our exciting new vehicle text, Manfish. The children have explored the text, shared their first impressions and

begun to learn about the fascinating life and achievements featured within the story. We are looking forward to using the text as inspiration for our writing over the coming weeks.

In science, we have started our new topic of electricity. This week, our focus has been on electrical safety, where the children learned how to use electricity safely at home and in school, and discussed potential hazards and how to avoid them. We made posters to help advise others.

In music, we listened to and appraised our focus song, "Blackbird" by The Beatles. The children shared their thoughts on the song, identified musical features and discussed what they enjoyed about the performance. We have very mixed views!

We have also thoroughly enjoyed the first few days of mixing with KS1 during lunchtime play as part of the beginning of our OPAL rollout. It has been lovely to see the children building new friendships, playing cooperatively and making the most of the new and exciting play opportunities available.

Well done, Year 4, on a fantastic start to the half term! We look forward to another busy and successful week ahead. 🌟

Year 5

In this shorter week, Year 5 have begun studying a book that might just take The Hound of the Baskervilles' crown as their favourite book: a beautifully illustrated adaptation of King Kong, created by picture book favourite, Anthony Browne! What can I say? The class likes classic tales of monstrous animals! They've already become invested as our heroes have reached Skull Island, and complain every time I stop reading!

In maths, we've just finished position and direction, and again, I've been so pleased at how confident the class are with coordinates, but they've also aced symmetry and reflection. Next up, we're on to converting measurements. Number of km to a mile, anyone?

Elsewhere, we've started our work on the Industrial Revolution, nicely in time for our trip next week to the Black Country Living Museum. And in Science, we've begun learning about meteorology - the study of weather. It turns out that the atmosphere is made of five layers, which can vary from -180 to 2000^{o}C! Who knew?

Year 6

This week, Year 6 had a very busy week.

We started writing about our new text, The Nowhere Emporium., writing a profile about the main character, Daniel Holmes as well as adding narrative to create suspense in dialogue.

We have also continued our topic of America in Geography learning about the impact of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest. The children found out lots of brilliant facts.

In History, we have begin to explore our new topic of Human Rights and explored how this has changed over the years.

We have also been excited to start learning songs and reading through our scripts for the Year 6 production - Peter Pan! We have lots of work to do over the next few weeks. It would be great if you could help the children to start learning their lines.

Thank you for your support and have a great weekend!

Reception class photos

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Celebration Assembly Winners

Star Awards

Reception - Elijah - for his fantastic knowledge of 3D shapes

Year 1 - Ffion - incredible writing this week using some fabulous story language

Year 2 - Jacob - for having such great ideas and using excellent vocabulary in his writing this week

Year 3 - Zayaan - for a brilliant sketch design of his "in relief" clay tile

Year 4 -Verity - for sharing her ideas in a confident way in Maths, demonstrating s good knowledge of time.

Year 5 - Hugo - for his consistent skill, speed and dedication in Maths

Year 6 - Maisy - for producing interesting writing with good sentences.

Lunchtime Awards

Reception - Ronnie- For following all of our lunchtime rules and being very polite

Year 5 - Duncan - Brilliant improved attitude and lunchtime behaviours

Swimming Gala Superstars

Chloe, Flo, Jemima, Louis, Scarlett, William and William represented the school today for the first time in at least 10 years at the interschools swimming gala held at the Swan Pool.

While they came a very respectable 4th place overall, Louis, Scarlett and William Chu placed first in their individual heats, while the relay teams came a consistent 3rd in each race.

It was a fantastic morning and a great opportunity for a small selection of year 6 pupils to experience competitive swimming, some of them for the first time.

A huge well done to all of them for being such a great team!

FOSCS - Update

Message from Mr Sperring:

Having had a pre-Summer Fete planning meeting this week, we attempted to allocate volunteers to stalls and stands based on the times people had offered. Unfortunately, we simply do not have enough volunteers to cover all of the time slots.

I know that many of you are planning to attend the fete, and I also know that your children would love to help out on a stall with you! Could you spare just 30 minutes of your time? It really would make a huge difference. You'll have a great time, meet other members of our school community and know that you are helping to make the event a success for all of our children.

If you can only commit to half an hour, that's absolutely fine - that's all you'll be asked to do.

If you are able to help, please get in touch with FOSCS or contact the school office. Your support would be hugely appreciated.

Thank you.

Please also see below details for the 'Tombola Mufti' on Friday 26th June.

Parent Survey - May 2026

Please click on the link below to see the results and report from the most recent Parent Survey:

https://www.steepleclaydonschool.com/page/?title=Parent+Surveys&pid=116

MAGEE Morning

We are delighted to invite you to our upcoming MAGEE Morning on Friday 19th June!

MAGEE stands for Mothers, Aunties, Grandmas and Everybody Else, and we hope as many family members as possible will be able to join us for this special event.

The morning will begin in the school hall from 8:15am, where croissants and juice will be available for all our visitors. Children should arrive with their accompanying adult and enjoy this time together before the school day begins.

At 8:45am, children will head to their classrooms for registration, whilst adults remain in the hall for a short presentation from the Headteacher between 8:45am and 9:00am.

Following the presentation, adults will be taken to their child's classroom for an exciting morning of making, creating, crafting and learning together.

Our recent FUDGE Morning was a tremendous success, with a fantastic turnout from families. It created a wonderful buzz around the school that lasted throughout the day (and beyond!), and we would love to recreate that special atmosphere on Friday 19th June.

To help us with planning and catering, please add your name to the registration form below if you would like to attend:

https://forms.gle/VanTxXWKw19fQm1q6

We very much hope to see you there for what promises to be another memorable morning.

Attendance

Regular attendance at Steeple Claydon is vital. Research from the DFE (Department for Education) shows pupils with higher attendance are significantly more likely to achieve expected age-related standards at both Key Stage 2 (Year 6) and Key Stage 4(GCSEs), with as little as 10 missed days a year lowering the odds of strong outcomes. Being present in school also supports social development, wellbeing and future opportunities, equipping our pupils with the skills they need for later life and building valuable relationships.

This week's whole school attendance was 92.1%. Well done to Year 1, who had our highest attendance this week of 95.1%. Legends!

If your child is well enough, please send them to school.

In the event of your child being ill and unable to attend school or preschool, please ensure you phone or email the office before 8.45am on each day of illness to report the absence.

Safeguarding

In school, we consistently reinforce a clear message: if a child sees or hears anything online that worries them, makes them feel uncomfortable or unsure, they must tell a trusted adult straight away. Please continue to echo this message at home. Working together, we can help ensure our children enjoy the benefits of technology safely and responsibly.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Harry Sperring (Headteacher). The Deputy Safeguarding Leads are Mrs Theresa Wheeldon (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs Georgina Tapping (EYFS lead). The Safeguarding Governor is Mrs Jenny Shaw. The Designated Person for Looked After Children (LAC) and Pupil Premium is Mrs Theresa Wheeldon. If you are concerned about the safety of a child, you can email the DSLs on safeguarding@steepleclaydon.bucks.sch.uk or you can contact the Bucks Safeguarding Team who will be able to assist. If you feel a child is in immediate danger, please call 999.

Exciting Upcoming Events

XYZ will be hosting their annual concert on Saturday 20th June 2026, featuring some of their students from Steeple Claydon School!

There will be 5 concerts spread throughout the day, along with musical performances between student concerts, and an evening of live music following the completion of concert 5!

Tickets are available to purchase through their website from May 5th 2025 – and are valid all day. XYZ Music Academy Summer Concert

Students that are performing will not need to purchase a ticket for the day.

Mrs Bradford wanted to share details of a fantastic upcoming children's author event taking place on **Saturday 21st June** at the Vinson Centre. This promises to be a brilliant morning for children who love stories, adventure and books - especially fans of the hugely popular Astrosaurs series!

Children will have the opportunity to meet bestselling children's authors Steve Cole and Teresa Heapy for a fun-filled session of storytelling, laughter and interactive activities.

Meet Steve Cole

Steve Cole will take children on an action-packed *Astrosaurs* adventure as his dinosaur heroes zoom across the galaxy tackling everything from giant explosions to terrible smells and chaotic missions!

Steve is also the author of:

- Cows In Action
- The Slime Squad
- Z. Rex

He has also written stories for Doctor Who.

Meet Teresa Heapy

Teresa Heapy will introduce children to her wonderful picture book The Heart of the Storm - a heartwarming story about Ruby the fox and Growl the wolf, who must learn to work together when a huge storm sweeps through the forest.

The morning will include:

- exciting stories
- author talks
- interactive fun
- plenty of laughs

At just **£10 per child**, this is a wonderful opportunity to inspire a love of reading and meet two fantastic authors in person.

Please contact the organisers directly for further information or to book tickets.

https://bucklitfest.littleboxoffice.com/events/158925

Good news!

Congratulations to Hunter in year 3 who was awarded the Manager's Player trophy for facing some challenging situations in football. Hunter showed resilience and has continued to work hard with his team.

We love celebrating the wonderful achievements of our children - both in and out of school, such as winning a trophy or competition, writing a poem they are proud of, creating arts and crafts at home, raising money for charity, passing a musical grade, or achieving success in any other exam or activity.

If your child has something they would like to share, please send pictures and a short description of their achievement to **office@steepleclaydon.bucks.sch.uk**. We look forward to celebrating and sharing lots of good news together! 🌟

Communication from Bucks

See see the proposal and Statutory Notice Press Release to open a Cognition and Learning Unit at The Buckingham School.

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Parenting course for those families with a child starting school in September

Please see attached for a Parenting course that supports parents/carers who have a child starting reception. It's free to attend and is held over 2 mornings (4 & 11 June 10am to midday) at Lace Hill Academy (Buckingham).

The QR code on the poster takes you to the course sign up page Parenting Courses.

If parents have difficulties with the sign-up process, they can email familyhubgroups@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or call 01296 383 293 and request to sign up to the Parenting Puzzle Course and Lace Hill Academy in June.