



School Newsletter 22.05.2026

Headteacher's Message

Half term is already upon us and what a fantastic, action-packed week it has been here at Steeple Claydon School. There has been such a wonderful buzz around the school, with so much learning packed in.

Firstly, some staffing news. The wonderful Mrs Whittle will be leaving us at the end of the academic year. She has been a brilliant addition to the team over the last four years. Having only known her for a short time, I can already see the incredible impact she has had in both the Reception and Year 4 classrooms. We wish her all the very best for the future. Mrs Whittle's last day with us will be Monday 20th July.

On Monday, during our Church assembly, we reflected on the parable of the lost sheep. Together, we thought carefully about the importance of care, kindness and belonging within our school community. We spoke about how, if any child ever feels 'lost' during a lesson or at any point in the school day, there will always be adults at Steeple Claydon who will dedicate their time and attention to helping them feel 'found' again. It was a lovely opportunity to reflect on the nurturing environment we aim to provide for every child.

Also on Monday, our Year 5 pupils attended a Science Fair, taking part in a range of Biology, Chemistry and Physics experiments. The children were incredibly engaged and enthusiastic throughout the experience and loved seeing the specialist resources, chemicals and equipment they may go on to use in secondary school.

On Wednesday, I spent time in classrooms observing how our Steeple curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of all learners. I was genuinely blown away by the personalised support, carefully adapted learning and inclusive practice taking place across the school. The dedication of staff to ensuring every child can succeed is something we should all be incredibly proud of.

I also led our Secondary Transfer Test and Moving to Secondary School information evening this week. It was great to be able to share with families what the transfer test day will look like for our current Year 5 pupils when they sit the test next September. The presentation has now been shared with parents and carers and will also be uploaded to the school website under *Parents / Parent Presentations*. At the end of the evening, I was also delighted to announce that we have secured Youlbury, near Oxford, for next year's Year 6 residential. Communication regarding the first deposit has now been sent out and we would absolutely love for every child to attend what will be a brilliant experience.

Thursday brought two very special visitors to school. Firstly, Ruby, our therapy dog, spent time being thoroughly pampered by the children this week - much to her delight! It was lovely to see the joy she brings to so many children across the school.

We were also thrilled to welcome Mrs Abu-Rish for a visit. It was fantastic to see her recovering well and her visit provided a real morale boost for both staff and children alike. We are very much looking forward to seeing her back into school more regularly soon.

As we reach the end of another busy half term, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of our parents and carers for the support you show the school every single day. Whether it is ensuring your child arrives at school on time, supporting learning at home, attending events or helping at FOSCS discos and activities, your support truly does make a difference and never goes unnoticed. Thank you.

Looking ahead to the first week back after half term, please remember that Monday is an INSET day for staff, so school will reopen to pupils on Tuesday 2nd June.

On Tuesday, we welcome visitors from The Buckingham School to support our Year 6 transition work ahead of September. We also have Year 1 and Year 2 athletics taking place at Buckingham Primary School after school.

On Wednesday, unfortunately due to lack of numbers the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils' cricket festival at the Royal Latin School is no longer going ahead. However our strongest swimmers in year 6 will compete in a swimming gala on Friday the 5th of June. We wish all our athletes and swimmers the very best of luck!

Finally, please do take some time to read through the parent survey feedback included later in this newsletter and on the website. Your views are incredibly important to us and we are grateful to everyone who took the time to share feedback.

I hope you all have a wonderful half term break. Enjoy the sunshine, spend time together as families and I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Tuesday 2nd June.

[Link to the school calendar](#)

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

Year Group Updates

Preschool

What a wonderfully busy and exciting week we have had in Preschool! This week, the children have been exploring the fascinating world of Arctic and Antarctic animals. They enjoyed sorting animals into the correct icy habitats, breaking down ice, and even painting with ice cubes, which was a big hit! We have learned lots about polar bears, where they live,

and why the Arctic ice is melting too quickly. The children shared some fantastic ideas and many told us they would like to become scientists when they grow up to help save the ice, how amazing is that? In NELI this week, we have been reading the story "Look and Say What You See" The children loved learning about different animal homes, including deer living in woodlands and foxes and their cubs living underground. We had some brilliant discussions and vocabulary work linked to animal habitats. We have also had lots of fun playing our "Feed the Penguin" game! The children used fish with different numbers of dots on them and had to feed the penguin the correct amount. We saw some fantastic mathematical skills, careful counting, and wonderful turn-taking throughout the activity. Another very exciting addition to Preschool this week is our very own caterpillars! The children were fascinated watching them wriggle around in their little pot and are so excited to watch them grow into beautiful butterflies. Miss Harding will be sharing regular caterpillar updates on Seesaw, so keep an eye out!

We hope you all have a fabulous half term and we cannot wait to welcome everyone back on Tuesday 2nd June!

Reception

I can't believe we have come to the end of another half term. As always, it has been an action packed week in Reception. The children have amazed me with their sentence writing in Literacy, planning and writing the Octopus Opening and Build Up Bear for our story 'The Picture Gardener'. We look forward to finishing these stories after half term.

In maths we have been ordering numbers to 10, making our own number tracks and describing where a number is placed, and which number it comes before and after. The children had great fun playing simple number track games, rolling a dice and moving the teddies and then ourselves on the number track outside, along the number track to see who would reach number 10 first.

We have ended our Growing and Changing topic learning about how we grow and change. We started the week thinking about what we could do as babies and what we can do now, we then went on to order the different stages in the lifecycle of a human. The highlight of the week was certainly listening to the children describe what they want to be when they become an adult; from Police Officers, to Bullet train drivers to Pop stars, and even a unicorn, so many high aspirations, reach for the stars Reception!

A huge thank you to Jess Foster who has been completing work experience with us this week, she has been a welcome addition to the team, bringing lots of youthful energy, fun and enthusiasm, which the children have loved.

I hope you all find time to enjoy the predicted sunny weather over the next week and I look forward to welcoming the children back on Tuesday 2nd June for our final half term in Reception.

Year 1

It has been another busy and productive week in Year 1! In Science, our young botanists have been exploring the different parts of a plant that we can eat, discovering everything from edible roots to stems and leaves. In Maths, we kicked off our new unit on position and direction; the children have been practicing different types of turns and brilliantly applying their previous knowledge of halves and quarters to describe movement. Finally, we have officially finished our *Black Rock* stories. I have been incredibly impressed by the children's amazing writing and the wonderful independence they showed throughout the entire process. Well done, Year 1!

Year 2

Dear Parents and Carers, This half term has flown by! It has been packed with great learning from the children. In English this week, we completed writing our five-part narrative. The story is about a Queen who banned silence and the consequences that had on the citizens of her Kingdom. The children have been using super vocabulary, including revolt, townsfolk, influential and peculiar. In Maths we have been consolidating our learning around telling the time on an analogue clock. Please keep up the time-telling practice at home. This regular reinforcement has really helped the children this week. In DT we have been making Moving Pictures based on the designs the children drew last week. They had great fun making and decorating them. The results were amazing!

We completed our final lesson learning about the explorer Roald Amundsen in Geography. He was the captain of the first ship to sail through the icy Northwest Passage. The children learnt how Amundsen gained valuable skills from the Inuit people he met on his explorations. It is half term next week! Have a great holiday whatever you are up to! We look forward to seeing everyone back in school in June.

Year 3

This week, in English, the children have loved writing the instructions for their very own potions! In maths, the children have all continued to be fraction superstars and have been working super hard. At the end of last week, the children loved sharing their pop-up books with some of the younger children in the school - all of the children were very proud to show their amazing books! In PE, the children have been continuing to enjoy cricket.

Year 4

What a fantastic and busy half term we have had in Year 4! The children have worked incredibly hard and should be very proud of all they have achieved over the past few weeks.

In English, we have thoroughly enjoyed writing our *Secret Sea Creature Guides*. The children used imaginative vocabulary, detailed descriptions and persuasive language to create engaging and informative guides about their mysterious underwater creatures and their hidden talents. It has been wonderful to see their creativity shine through in their writing.

In maths, we have completed our unit on money. The children have developed their skills in adding, subtracting and solving problems involving pounds and pence. Over the holidays, it would be hugely beneficial for the children to continue practising practical, real-life money situations such as calculating change, working out totals while shopping, or handling coins and notes to help embed their learning further.

In science, the children completed their end-of-unit assessment by writing detailed explanations of the water cycle. They demonstrated an excellent understanding of evaporation, condensation, precipitation and collection, using scientific vocabulary confidently within their explanations.

In DT, we finished making our miniature playgrounds before carefully evaluating our final products. The children showed great teamwork, creativity and problem-solving skills throughout the design and construction process and enjoyed checking they were fit for purpose – using Lego men to test their pieces of play equipment.

Music has also been a highlight this week, with some of the children performing their composed tunes using the glockenspiels. It was wonderful to hear how confidently they played and how well they kept in time with the pulse of the music.

These are just a few of the many exciting activities we have undertaken this week. The children have worked incredibly hard across all areas of the curriculum and have shown enthusiasm, resilience and positivity throughout the half term.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We hope you all have a restful and enjoyable half-term break, and we look forward to welcoming the children back refreshed and ready for another exciting half term – the final one in Year 4.

Year 5

estival! They took part in chemistry, physics and biology experiments, which involved weirdly popping substances, rockets, electrical sparks making making hair stand on end, and testing for acid with red cabbage. What a great morning!

In English, the class are writing their survival guides based on their research. This is possibly the most engaging and interesting non-fiction writing they've written all year, and it's bound to keep me safe next time I go camping surrounded by snakes, bears or crocodiles. In DT, we've been decorating our tote bags, and they're coming together really well. We ended today on a high note, with a nice bit of board game time. Have a great half-term holiday!

Year 6

This week, Year 6 has had an amazing week. They have been working very hard writing a range of pieces based on the video of 'Titanium'. My favourite was the prequels they wrote, narrating how the young boy in the video obtained his powers.

In Maths, we have been working on a variety of challenging investigations both on paper and the computer. They used the skills they have learnt over the year to complete them - A great job!

In Geography we explored the effect of urbanisation across America and in Science we learnt about the Wallace Line and how different species are separated into different areas.

We have also had some post SATs fun this week predicting and investigating improvements to paper airplanes, played a fun game of Danish longball and completed an escape room - Well done to Louis and Athen for getting out first!

Have a brilliant half term

Preschool Photos







Year 1 Photos

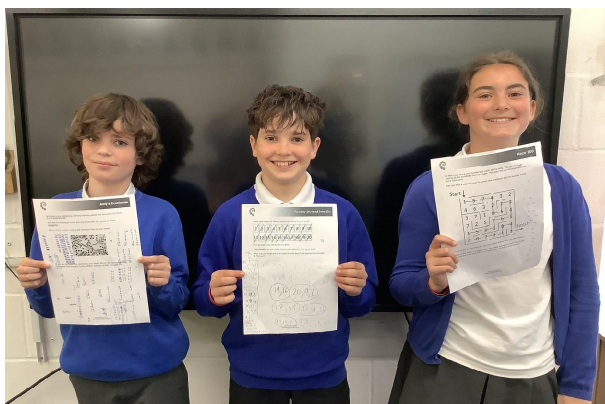




Year 6 Photos







Celebration Assembly Winners

Value Awards

Reception - Ronnie - Determination - for working hard and showing great determination to learn the set 1 sounds and to use these sounds to read words.

Year 1 - Maisy - Generosity - Maisy shared her ear defenders with another child who was having a tricky morning showing real empathy and care.

Year 2 - Frances - Positivity - She has a very positive attitude in her work. She gets started straight away and tries her best with everything.

Year 2 - Rupert H - Confidence - He is going to start his school with a new smile and full of confidence. Go and be amazing!

Year 3 - Henry - Determination - Henry has shown a super determination to improve his handwriting. Keep up the great work.

Year 4 - Lenny - Determination - he has been very determined in English this week. He has been working hard to use his phonics skills and to sound out words accurately when writing independently.

Year 5 - Charley - Generosity - for always being willing to help out in class.

Year 6 - Athen - Positivity - for his infectious smile, happy go lucky attitude and consistent positive attitude all day long.

Star Awards

Reception - Holly - for fantastic independent sentence writing

Year 1 - Oscar - for his brilliant 'Secret of Black Rock' story.

Year 2 - Harmony - Having such amazing idea n her writing narrative text.

Year 3 - Teddy - for working super hard on his potion writing and improving his handwriting.

Year 4 - Oscar - for working really hard on his handwriting and earning his handwriting pen.

Year 5 - Abi - being so helpful in DT (and at lunch) and for the neatness of her tote bag.

Year 6 - Mia - for her super effort and growing confidence she has put into both her work and in building positive relationships with her friends.

Lunchtime Awards

Year 2 - Gianni - being well mannered all week

Year 3 - Alfie - really impressing the lunch staff with his behaviour in the hall this week

House Point Winners

Silver Awards (60 house points)

Year 2 - Leo, Rupert L, Frances

Gold Award (90 house points)

Reception - Zak, Ryan, Arlo, Connor

Platinum Award (120 house points)

FOSCS - Update

We are now quickly approaching our Summer Fete and FOSCS are still in real need of helpers to support with running stalls on the day. Even if you can spare just half an hour (or ideally an hour), your help would make a huge difference. If you are able to support, please speak to a member of the FOSCS team or a member of staff, who will gladly point you in the right direction.

On the subject of helping out, we know just how vital FOSCS are to our school community. Their hard work helps create memorable experiences for our children and raises valuable funds to support the school. If you would like to have a positive impact within our school community, please do consider joining the team. Many hands really do make light work and new ideas, new faces and extra support are always hugely appreciated. I know both FOSCS and the school would be incredibly grateful for any support you can offer.



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>

S4A Holiday Club

Please see attached posters for the S4A May Half Term holiday club. It looks like a lot of fun!

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Free Car Seatbelt Check

We're pleased to share an important opportunity for families to help keep children safe in the car. Buckinghamshire Council, in partnership with Travel Safe Bucks and Child Seat Safety Ltd, is hosting a free Child Car Seat Check Event:

 **Tuesday 2 June 2026**

 **10:00am – 3:00pm**

 **Smyths, Broadfields Retail Park, Bicester Road, Aylesbury, HP19 8BU**

Parents and carers are invited to drop in for free, expert advice and an independent safety check of their child's car seat. Ensuring your child's seat is fitted correctly can make a significant difference in keeping them safe on the road.

No booking is required - just pop along on the day.

With the warmer months approaching and more families travelling, it's the perfect time to make sure everyone is safe and ready for the journey ahead.



Child Car Seat Check Event

**Tuesday
2 June 2026
10am - 3pm**

**Smyths,
Broadfields
Retail Park,
Bicester Road,
Aylesbury HP19 8BU**

*Pop along for FREE advice
and an independent check!*

 Buckinghamshire
Council

 Travel
SAFE
Bucks




Child Seat Safety Ltd

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 Book Event

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

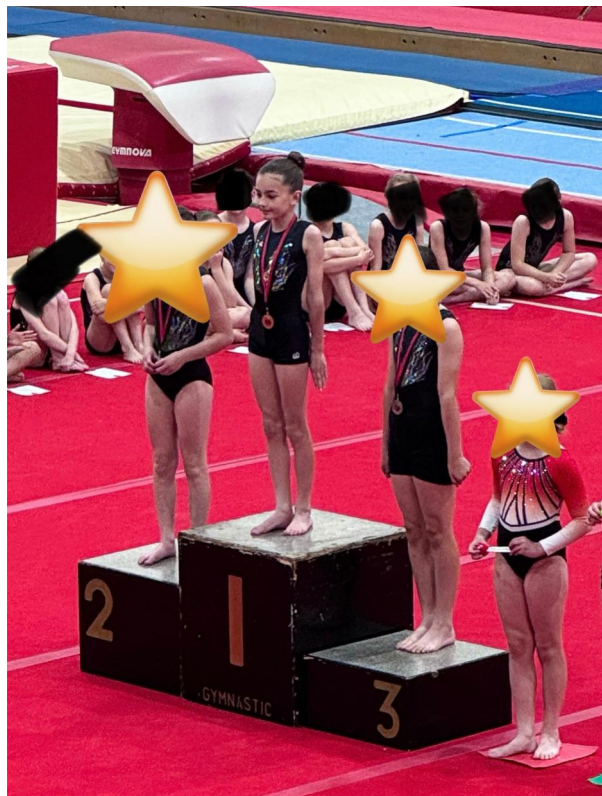
At just **£10 per child**, this is a wonderful opportunity to inspire a love of reading and meet two fantastic authors in person.

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

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

Good news!

On Sunday, Eliza competed in the Buckinghamshire County Gymnastics Tumble & Trampoline Championships representing Lace Hill Gymnastics Club. She performed her tumbles and trampette skills beautifully, claiming her the gold medal.



Dyman won the Manager's Player Award during the end-of-season presentation of Buckingham Football Club.

Although he joined the Athletic team towards the end of the season, the coaches said he quickly made a strong impression, describing him as an extremely solid player and saying that "nothing gets past him." They also highlighted his positive attitude, his ability to listen carefully to instructions, and how well he puts coaching advice into practice.



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.



Parenting Puzzle
Supporting your child starting school

Starting school can bring big feelings!

If your child is starting school this September and you would like to improve your parenting skills to support this transition, come along to our Parenting Puzzle programme. This 2-day programme will help you to:

- Improve your confidence
- Better understand your child's feelings and needs
- Learn practical tools to manage challenging behaviours
- Meet other parents and share experiences

 Lace Hill Academy,
MK18 7RR

 10
Thursday
4 and 11 June

 10am to 12pm

 Spaces are limited so booking is required by scanning the QR code.

 Buckinghamshire
Council

Proud to be part of
Family Hub Network
Buckinghamshire