



School Newsletter 15.05.2026

Headteacher's Message

I hope you all enjoyed the bank holiday weekend! It may have been a shorter week, but it has certainly still been packed full of achievements and exciting moments across the school.

This week, we received feedback following a Bucks Learning Walk and I was incredibly proud of the comments shared. Highlights included just how inclusive our school is, the “above and beyond” provision taking place for our children, the high levels of engagement in lessons and, most importantly, the wonderful relationships between adults and children. I have the pleasure of seeing this every single day and it really does make me proud to be part of such a fantastic team and community.

A huge thank you to everyone who attended Wednesday’s Parent Coffee Morning. It was lovely to see you there and spend time chatting together. We’re hopeful for even more attendees at the next one!

We also had our Early Years advisor in this week. The space our Preschool and Reception children have is outstanding, but as we all know, a wonderful environment is only effective because of the carefully planned activities and experiences that happen within it. It was brilliant to see the children’s confidence shining through. They were eager to share their learning, involve adults in their play and proudly show off their achievements. Well done to the Early Years team for such a fantastic morning.

Across the school this week, we have been discussing the idea of 'Bucket Filling' based on the book by Carol McCloud. It may be an oldie, but it's a goodie! The children explored the idea that we all carry invisible buckets - when our buckets are full, our self-esteem is high and we feel happy; when they are empty, we can feel upset or low. We talked about ways we can fill our own buckets and, more importantly, how we can help fill the buckets of others through kindness, encouragement and compassion. The children’s responses were very thoughtful, and they demonstrated exactly what a kind and caring school community looks like.

A reminder as well about our Parent Survey, which was sent out last week. So far, we have received a handful of responses and we would really value hearing from even more families. It should only take around five minutes to complete and your feedback genuinely matters to us.

Thank you also for bearing with us during the website update process. We are delighted to say that the new website is now live!

Over the coming weeks, please bear with us as we continue to make the site as up-to-date and as informative as possible. Areas such as the school calendar, admissions information and class pages will all be updated in the coming weeks. Happy days!

Looking ahead to next week, it is SATs Week for our Year 6 children. They have worked incredibly hard and we are so proud of the determination they have shown. We know they will do brilliantly. We hope they enjoy their special breakfasts too!

Next week also marks our first OPAL visit, where we will begin looking at our current playground provision and supervision. Our aim is to continue developing play opportunities across the school, including encouraging Reception, KS1 and KS2 children to play together more and remove the divide between key stages.

Finally, we are very much looking forward to the discos on Thursday - we cannot wait to see so many of you there!

Have a wonderful weekend everyone.

Year Group Updates

Preschool

In Preschool this week, the children have been learning all about woodland animals. They have enjoyed creating habitats for hedgehogs, hiding toy squirrels in the trees, and discovering the names of baby woodland animals.

On Tuesday, the children took part in a woodland walk to the Forest School area to explore and observe the natural environment. Although there was some disappointment that no foxes or badgers were spotted, the children were excited to discover pigeons, a feather, a small broken egg, a lone bumblebee, dandelions, and some beautifully bright buttercups.

The sunny weather has continued to provide wonderful opportunities for outdoor learning and play. The children have been experimenting with different coloured water, creating potions, and using spray bottles to help develop their fine motor skills. Watering the vegetable patch, making cake in the mud kitchen, climbing and using the new hammock to hide and relax!

We look forward to learning about wild and endangered animals next week!

Reception

Reception have fully embraced the outside area this week, where the children have been incredibly busy building reading dens and dressing up and taking to the stage - putting on imaginative shows for their peers. They have enjoyed trips to our very own Garden Centre, as well as enjoying our extended water play area and potion making station.

They have continued to plant an array of seeds as well as taking great care to tend to the seeds they have already planted. There was great excitement to see how quickly the cress seeds they planted last week have grown.

This week we have been focusing our topic learning on animals and their babies. We have been learning the names of different animal babies and matching the young with the adults. We noticed that like humans, most animals look similar to their babies. We read the story 'Monkey Puzzle' by Julia Donaldson and then looked at how both frogs and butterflies undergo a metamorphosis and change significantly throughout their lifecycle from larva to adult.

In English we have now finished planning and writing our Instruction text - 'How to grow a big beautiful tree'. The children have continued to impress me with their sentence writing and how neatly they are now forming their letters.

In maths the children have been consolidating their understanding of the composition of 5, practising to recall the parts of 5 when 1 part is not visible, using their fingers to support this. In addition, the children have also been looking at the composition of 6, 7, 8 and 9 as 5 and a bit. I have been very impressed by their speedy subitising and composition to 5 and beyond. Next week we move onto exploring where our food comes from and how it is grown. As per the letter on Seesaw, on Monday Mrs Whittle will be making fruit kebabs with the children, so any donations of fruits would be greatly appreciated.

Year 1

This week in English, we introduced our new class text, *The Secret of Black Rock*. The children enjoyed analysing the cover art and sharing their initial predictions about the story's mystery.

In Geography, we explored the physical diversity of different continents. We compared various landscapes, specifically looking at the unique characteristics of rainforests, deserts, and grasslands.

Our Maths lessons focused on the introduction of fractions. The children have been practicing how to identify and create halves by dividing shapes into two equal parts.

Year 2

Another super exciting week of new learning in Year 2!

In English this week, we have started the second part of our narrative writing unit. The children have been reading an example text about a Queen who cannot stand silence, so she bans it and installs loudspeakers across her kingdom! Before long, the people become fed up with all the noise and devise a cunning plan to bring back peace and quiet. The story is full of rich and imaginative vocabulary, which the children have been exploring and using in their own work this week.

In Maths, we have begun our new topic on *time*. The children have been learning about the features of a clock face, the numbers 1–12 around the edge, the hour and minute hands and what each represents. We have practised reading o'clock, half past, quarter past, and quarter to times. Time can be a tricky concept, so any extra practice at home will be super helpful. Please encourage your child to read the time throughout the day and talk about morning and afternoon, am and pm.

Our DT topic this term is *Building and Moving Pictures*. The children have been investigating how mechanisms such as levers and sliders work, and exploring how they are used in books to create movement. If you have any pop-up books at home, have a look together and see how many of these clever devices you can spot!

Have a lovely weekend - and don't forget to get those watches, clocks, and pop-up books out for some hands-on learning fun!

Year 3

This week, in English, the children have been introduced to our new vehicle text "A Midsummer's Night Dream." In maths, the children worked hard on continuing to learn all about volume and capacity. In PE, the children loved practising their batting skills in our cricket lesson. In Science, the children have been continuing to enjoy learning about plants. The highlight of the children's week was using atlases to find out more about the South West of England in our geography lesson.

Year 4

This week in Year 4, the children have made a fantastic start exploring our new vehicle text, *Flotsam*, the wordless picture book by David Wiesner. We began by closely examining some of the beautiful and intriguing illustrations, sparking lots of curiosity and thoughtful discussion. The children have made some excellent predictions about the story and used their imagination to consider what might be happening in each scene. Building on this, they have been writing their own engaging sentences, incorporating new and exciting vocabulary inspired by our example text.

In Maths, we have continued our work on decimals. The children have been developing their understanding by partitioning decimals in flexible ways, as well as comparing fractions and ordering decimals. It has been great to see their confidence growing as they tackle these concepts with increasing independence.

In DT, the class has begun constructing their miniature playgrounds. There has already been some creative thinking and careful planning, and we are looking forward to seeing how their designs develop over the coming weeks.

Music lessons have been equally enjoyable, with the children improvising and composing simple pieces inspired by our focus song, *Lean on Me* by Bill Withers. They have shown great enthusiasm and creativity while experimenting with rhythm.

Of course, one of the highlights of the week has been our third swimming lesson. Year 4 have been working incredibly hard over the past few weeks, showing growing confidence in the water and continuing to improve their already impressive stroke techniques. Their determination and positive attitude have been wonderful to see and have impressed the Swan pool swimming teachers. Their behaviour outside of school has also been impeccable.

Well done to all of Year 4 for another week of hard work and enthusiasm!

Year 5

Year 5 have spent the week finishing their survival narratives (or as we know them, adventure stories). Helping the children write stories is one of my very favourite things to do as a teacher, and I've loved seeing the dramatic/horrendous scenarios the children put their protagonists through. We've had animal attacks, falling from waterfalls or cliffs, sandstorms, snowstorms and everything in between! One story included a man stuck underground in a cave filling with water... *along with spiders that climbed up his legs and covered him with bites*. That one was particularly full-on! But I didn't want to just leave it there with their stories, because they had done so well with them, so we published them, and then today, they read and performed their stories in groups to each other. It was really, really lovely to see.

The other big thing from this week has been our DT project. The tote bags are now sewn up the sides, and next we'll be moving on to the hems. I'm excited to see how they turn out!

Year 6

Check Seesaw

Preschool Pictures







Reception Pictures

It will get
bigger

~~Need~~ ^{the} ~~soil~~ ^{seed}
^{this} ~~us~~ will tell you
how.
Look at this. ✓

you will need a soil
and a pot.



put the soil into
the pot. ✓
put the seed in to
the pot soil. ✓
the wet soil the ✓

Year 5 Pictures







Celebration Assembly Winners

Value Awards

Reception - Coral - Confidence - for showing such confidence when performing her fabulous cheerleading show to the class.

Year 1 - Axel - Positivity - He always approaches challenges positively, always has a huge smile on his face and makes others laugh.

Year 2 - Rupert H - Compassion - He has made his class peers and adults very happy with week by 'filling everyone's buckets' with smiles and little notes.

Year 3 - Teddy - Respect - This week, Teddy has been super respectful towards everyone and he has been working incredibly hard.

Year 4 - Noah - Determination - for showing great determination this week in English. He has written some lovely pieces of writing including a story prediction and some illustration explanations.

Year 5 - Lexi - Respect - For consistently demonstrating respectful behaviours and attitudes everyday (along with the other 6 too!)

Year 6 - Danny - Compassion - Danny always shows kindness and compassion and makes sure he thinks of everyone in the class.

Star Awards

Reception - Arsalan - for showing great determination and hard work in phonics lessons.

Year 1 - Noah E - for his beautiful presentation in absolutely every lesson.

Year 2 - Omika - for being a star mathematician finding fractions of numbers.

Year 3 - Aiden - for his brilliant joining in and listening in our PE lesson this week.

Year 4 - Lauren - for making a great prediction about our new text in English.

Year 5 - Daniel - for his creative vocabulary and amazingly neat writing in his published story.

Lunchtime Awards

Reception - Skyla - for her continued improved attitude in the lunch hall.

Year 1 - Aubrey - for always following the lunchtime rules.

House Point Winners

Bronze Awards (30 house points)

Silver Awards (60 house points)

Reception - Paige

Year 2 - Cleo, Deacon

Gold Award (90 house points)

Year 3 - Seb

Year 5 - Sophie, Milan

Platinum Award (120 house points)

Year 3 - Cooper

Year 5 - Everly, Harry, Alex, Hugo

FOSCS - Update

Just a reminder that the money we are currently raising is for OPAL (Outdoor play and learning). Over the Summer term and beyond, the school will be adding to their outdoor provision to improve the quality of learning and breaktimes outside.

Please also see below the posters for our upcoming events.





Parent Survey - May 2026

Our May 2026 Parent Survey is now open for the next two weeks! Please click on the link to submit your feedback: <https://forms.gle/M2t5JzrJsDjmexS98>. This is a valuable opportunity for parents and carers to share their views and help shape the future of Steeple Claydon School. Your feedback helps us celebrate what is working well and identify areas where we can continue to improve. The survey should take no more than 5 minutes to complete, as the majority of questions are simple tick boxes. Please take the time to complete it - your views really do make a difference and help us as a school. Thank you for your continued support.

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.



The poster features a pink header with the text 'Child Car Seat Check Event'. Below this, on a dark blue background, is the date and time: 'Tuesday 2 June 2026 10am - 3pm'. To the right of this text is a circular image of a smiling child in a car seat, with a 'Travel SAFE Bucks' logo overlaid. Below the date and time, on a dark blue background, is the location: 'Smyths, Broadfields Retail Park, Bicester Road, Aylesbury HP19 8BU'. Below the location, in light blue text, is the phrase 'Pop along for FREE advice and an independent check!'. At the bottom left is the Buckinghamshire Council logo, and at the bottom right is the 'Child Seat Safety Ltd' logo. A circular inset image shows a close-up of a car seat harness.

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

Child Seat Safety Ltd

Attendance

A huge thank you to all of our families for the real effort being made to ensure children are in school every day and arriving on time.

For the first time this academic year, our attendance for the Summer Term is currently ABOVE both the local and national averages. Whilst this may not seem like a huge deal to everyone, for us at Steeple Claydon, this is a massive achievement and something we are incredibly proud of as a school community.

We know that regular attendance has a huge impact on children's learning, confidence, friendships and overall wellbeing. Equally, arriving on time means children get the FULL Steeple Claydon experience - from morning routines and early learning opportunities to settling positively for the day ahead. Punctuality is also an important life skill and helps children develop positive habits and behaviours for the future.

Our attendance journey this year has looked like this:

- Autumn Term: 93.9% - below local and national averages
- Spring Term: 94.2% - an improvement, but still below averages
- ***Summer Term so far: 95.1% - ABOVE both local and national averages!***

This improvement is down to the teamwork between school and home, so thank you for your support. Legends.

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 93.8%. Well done to Reception, who had our highest attendance this week of 100%. 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.

Office update

A number of our children bring mobile phones to school and hand them to their class teacher on arrival. Please ensure that all phones are put away before entering the school gates and are not taken out again until children have left the school site. We have reminded

the children of this expectation in school, and we would appreciate your support in reinforcing this message at home over the weekend.

We have also noticed that some well-meaning members of our community are opening the office door for other parents or visitors. While we appreciate the kindness behind this, please do not do this. For safeguarding reasons, only a member of the school team should open the doors to visitors. This helps us ensure that all children remain safe at all times.

Thank you for your continued support.

Good news!

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! 🌟

Amazon Wishlist Update

As previously shared, if you're able to, we'd be hugely grateful for any donations to help update and modernise our school library. You can find the list here: [Steeple Claydon School Amazon Wishlist](#) Thank you for your continued support!