

Giving every child the chance to shine

Generosity

Determination

Confidence

Trust

Positivity

Compassion

Respect

PUPILS

PARENTS AND CARERS

STAFF

GOVERNORS

COMMUNITY



# School Newsletter 09.01.2026

## Headteacher's Message

It's been a great week at Steeple Claydon. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the children, staff and parents, and experiencing that strong community feel first-hand. Thank you all for such a warm and welcoming start.

As you can imagine, it's been a busy first week back. Year 2 have started Forest School, KS2 Young Voices Choir are continuing to practise hard for their Young Voices concert next week, and some of our Year 6 pupils have found out that they will be flag bearers for MK Dons tonight – a very exciting opportunity and we are very jealous!

It was lovely to see so many of you on Wednesday evening, where I shared a little about myself and how I see the school moving forwards. The key takeaway from the evening was the importance of high expectations from both home and school. We are one team, working together to give the children of Steeple Claydon the very best education, experiences and relationships. The full PowerPoint from the evening is attached below for those who were unable to attend or would like to revisit it.

I also had the pleasure of observing my first Celebration Assembly today. It was so good and really summed up the strong sense of community that I have witnessed every day since joining Steeple Claydon. Seeing the children celebrate one another's achievements with such pride and respect was a real highlight of the week.

Looking ahead, a few things to note for next week:

- St Michael's Church will be in school on Monday to deliver an assembly
- A group of children from across KS2 will be travelling to Birmingham on Tuesday for Young Voices
- FOSCS have made the decision to move Break the Rules Day to the last day of this half term; it will not be taking place this Friday (More on that further down the newsletter).

Have a brilliant weekend, and we look forward to seeing everyone next week.

Mr Sperring

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## Year Group Updates

### **Preschool**

Preschool children old and new have settled back in brilliantly! We have been excitedly talking about the weather and the changes we have seen throughout the week and are all hoping for more snow to make bigger snowballs!

The children have been on the lookout this week for birds to join the RSPB Big Schools Birdwatch, we have seen many different birds including red kites, pigeons, magpies, blackbirds and have even spotted a squirrel hiding in the trees! We have also enjoyed "Don't wake tiger" in our NELI sessions this week, a story about a sleepy tiger and her animal friends who need to travel around her with colourful balloons, but gets woken up by a balloon popping, but have no fear, tiger's animal friends were planning her a surprise birthday party all along! We had lots of fun playing with balloons and turn taking games too. Take a look at some of the pictures below.

Next week, we begin our half term topic, Dinosaurs! We will be learning about life on earth a long, long time ago and all about the different dinosaurs!

### **Reception**

We have had a wonderful first week back in Reception. The children are very enthusiastic and excited to be learning about Space.. We have had lots of fun blasting off into space in our very own rocket. In Literacy we have introduced our new text - 'Juniper Jupiter', a story about a superhero and her search for a sidekick. The children loved making their own superhero puppets and have impressed Mr Sperrin with their wonderful character descriptions of Joop and Nut the dog. In Maths we have revisited subitising, focusing on representing quantities in different ways, using dots and dice. Next week Mrs Evans will start teaching a weekly balance bike session, please look out for more information on Seesaw.

### **Year 1**

Year One have had a very busy first week back and have been working super hard already! We have started our new unit on 'weather' in science and have been learning all about the seasons. The children created some fabulous drawings depicting scenes from spring, summer, autumn and winter. In Geography we have started to look at the United Kingdom and the countries that make it up. In English our new text is 'Hermelin' a story all about a detective mouse who helps to solve a series of mysteries in Offley Street!

### **Year 2**

Hi everyone,

Year Two have been eager to be back at school and have loved sharing their experiences with one another. We have made a great start to our new PKC topics, with lots of enthusiasm and curiosity.

In Geography, we are learning about the British Isles and discovering that England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland together form the United Kingdom.

The children were very excited to find out the name of our new English text, *The Bog Baby*. This story is about two children who go somewhere they shouldn't and discover something very special.

In Maths, we have been exploring coins by identifying their shape, colour and value, developing their confidence with money.

We have also started a new spelling scheme called 'Ready, Steady, Spell'. It is taught daily and the children will receive a list of words on Friday to learn for a spelling check the next Friday. I will be sticking this weeks spellings in their reading record tomorrow to learn for Friday next week. Your support with this is greatly appreciated,

### **Year 3**

Year 3 have settled back into their routines well this week. They have really enjoyed our new P.E. units of dance and handball. They were especially engaged with our computing lesson this week when they were introduced to Scratch and set with the task of making their character move.

### **Year 4**

Happy New Year - Year 4 have returned to school with great enthusiasm. They have been 'buzzing' to delve into all of our new topics.. We have enjoyed learning about Arthur's adventures in our new vehicle text in English- *Arthur and the Golden Rope*, we have been learning about habitats in science, sewing using running stitch and back stitch in DT and our highlight of the week, learning to play the recorders in music. It has been a great week - lots of new and exciting challenges accepted and achieved. Well done, Year 4. See below for pictures!

### **Year 5**

Year 5 has had a really good return to school this week, and it's certainly a half-term with some exciting subjects! In English, we're studying *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, which, um, they've really got their teeth into. We're reading the whole story in graphic novel form, but some particular scenes using the original text, and the class have already produced some impressively atmospheric writing. In science, we're studying living things and their habitats, which, on Wednesday, allowed us to do a little bit of bird watching. This is complemented by our study in computing of Microbits (pocket-sized mini-computers used to teach programming), as later in the half-term, we'll be taking part in the RSPB's Big Schools

Birdwatch, and will be using Microbits to help keep track of the birds we've identified. In maths, we're starting to learn about fractions, which is a big topic, but I've already been impressed by the class' understanding and achievements in this. Well done, Year 5!

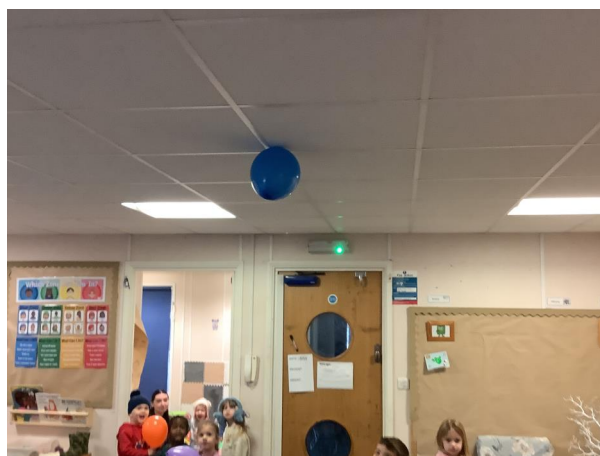
## Year 6

Year 6 has had a busy start to the new term. This week, we have begun to deepen our knowledge of decimals in Maths, learning about their value as well as calculating and problem solving with them too.

In Science, we have enjoyed exploring how light travels and learning about different light sources as well as materials that are reflectors. (See photo underneath)

We also have begun to look at the issue of air pollution in our topic of British Geographical Issues and what can be done to improve this. (See photo underneath)

## Preschool Pictures

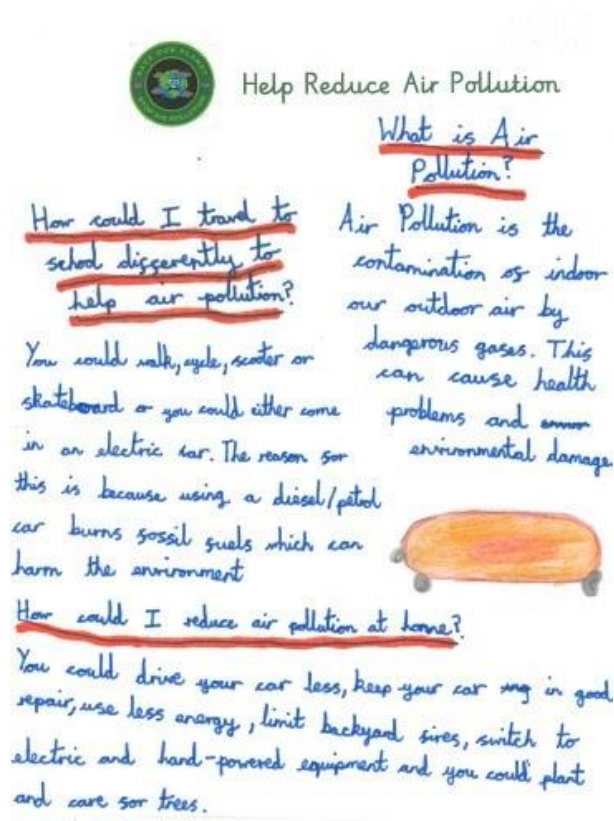




Year 4 photos



## Year 6 Photos



Thank yous

Thank you to Tesco Buckingham who treated us to some crates of exceedingly delicious apples this week. The children devoured them - maybe the novelty of all the festive chocolate has already worn off!



## Celebration Assembly Winners

### Star Awards

Reception - Connor - Trying really hard and persevering in phonics.

Year 1 - Noah - Super independent writing in phonics lessons.

Year 2 - Frances - Using great vocabulary within her writing this week.

Year 3 - Alfie - Demonstrating a mature and sensible attitude in PSHE lessons.

Year 4 - Evie - Sharing her ideas in a confident way.

Year 5 - Charley - Valuable contributions to lessons throughout the week

Year 6 - Danny - Great start to the term! Excellent attitude and efforts in class this week.

### Value Awards

Reception - Rupert - Confidence - Returned back to school full of enthusiasm and confidence!

Year 1 - Nora - Confidence - Super confidence shown in RE this week talking about her pets, in particular her whippet!

Year 2 - Athena - Compassion - Being a good friends and looking after others in class.

Year 3 - Toby - Confidence - Sharing geographical ideas in the classroom.

Year 4 - Lauren - Compassion - She has been helping her friends in and around the school this week.

Year 5 - Theo - Respect - Friendly and Respectful way he treats others in class.

Year 6 - Jemima - Positivity - She demonstrates a lovely positive attitude both in her learning and the way she treats others. Thank you!

### **Lunchtime Awards**

Ronnie (Reception) - Really tried hard this week to finish his lunch. Well done!

Elsie (Year 4) - Always smiling and using her manners. Thank you!

### **House Point Awards**

#### **Bronze (Reaching 30 house points)**

#### **Year 2**

Rupert H

Coby

Timmy

Louie

Leo

Skylah

Tilly

Harry

Cleo

Caleb

Maya-Bonnie

Omika

***Year 4***

Lykan

Lorcan

Oscar

Ivy

Aubrey

**Silver (Reaching 60 house points)**

***Year 5***

Jasper E

Chloe

Nicole

Harvey

***Year 6***

Jemima

William Chu

Rose

William Che

**Gold (Reaching 90 house points)**

***Year 6***

Tallulah

## Office Updates

Just a reminder that the deadline for applying for a place in reception class for September 2026 is fast approaching. Do contact the school office if you would like to book an appointment to visit the school. Tell your friends!

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-admissions/apply-for-a-primary-school-place/>



**Starting school for the first time**  
Was your child born between  
1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022?  
If yes, Buckinghamshire parents can apply online for a school place from 5 November 2025 visit



**You must apply even if your child is at the nursery attached to the school you would like them to go to.**

**The application deadline is 15 January 2026, please do not miss it**

Please contact the school nursing service using the link below to find out what health checks and vaccinations are available for your child.  
[buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/cyp/school-years-development/school-nursing](https://buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/cyp/school-years-development/school-nursing)



Application deadline is midnight on 15 January 2026

## Attendance

Regular school attendance is vitally important for children's learning, wellbeing and long-term success. Research consistently shows that pupils who attend school regularly make stronger academic progress, develop better social skills and are more confident learners. Even small amounts of missed learning can quickly add up and have a significant impact over time.

In the Autumn term, our whole-school attendance was 93.8%, compared with a national average of 95.1% and a Buckinghamshire average of 95.3%. This tells us clearly that we need to do better, together. Our Spring term attendance has also started lower than we would like, currently sitting at 91%.

To clarify attendance thresholds:

89.9% or below = Persistently absent

90–94.9% = At risk

95% and above = Good attendance

In the Autumn term, we had 32 children whose attendance fell below 90%, meaning they are considered persistently absent.

Moving forward, at each half-term point I will be writing to families, making phone calls and offering meetings where attendance is a concern. This is not about blame, but about working together to support improvement — as I said in my presentation, we are one team.

I fully understand that some absence is unavoidable. Some children have long-standing medical conditions, and illness such as chickenpox does happen. However, there is also absence that can be avoided. Please ensure children arrive on time, as lateness significantly affects attendance data, and avoid booking holidays during term time, as these cannot be authorised.

In short, every day counts. Thank you for your continued support in helping your child attend school every day and get the very best from their education.

## Safeguarding

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](mailto: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.

## Safety on Site

Smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited on the school site. We also kindly ask that parents and visitors do not smoke or vape by the school gates. We are about to start the process of updating our signage around the school to clearly reflect that both smoking and vaping are prohibited. Anyone found smoking or vaping on the school site will be asked to leave. We appreciate your understanding and support in helping us maintain a safe and healthy environment for our children and community.

## FOSCS

Please note that the Break the Rules Day, originally scheduled for Thursday 16th January, has been postponed to Friday 13th February. The school disco will still go ahead as planned on Thursday, 29th January.

We would also like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to everyone who attends FOSCS events and supports our fundraising. Your support is truly invaluable to the school and helps provide enriching opportunities for all of our children.

That said, what FOSCS really needs is volunteers. Whether you are able to join the team or can spare just an hour now and again to help at events, every bit of support makes a real difference.

If you are interested in helping out, please let the school know - we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for your continued support.

## Good news!

We love celebrating the wonderful achievements of our children - both in and out of school. In this section of the newsletter, we would like to share photos and mentions of pupils' successes outside 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!