

Giving every child the chance to shine

Generosity

Determination

Confidence

Trust

Positivity

Compassion

Respect

PUPILS

PARENTS AND CARERS

STAFF

GOVERNORS

COMMUNITY



School Newsletter 30.01.2026

Headteacher's Message

What a super week it's been here at Steeple Claydon! I can't quite believe we've already completed January. It can be a tricky month to navigate after all the excitement of December, but the children have been fantastic. In assemblies this week, we've been thinking about positivity. I shared with the children how our bodies release 'happy chemicals' when we approach the day, a lesson, or something new with a positive mindset. We talked about how, even when things feel hard, giving it a go before saying "I can't do this" often leads to good outcomes. You'll either learn from your mistakes, or you'll achieve what you set out to do - both are wins! As we head into February and beyond, let's keep that positivity going.

As the new headteacher, I've also been very clear with the children that I will make mistakes too - and that's okay. I do, however, need to take my own advice! I've made my first one, and if there's a group of people I definitely don't want to upset, it's the legendary FOSCS. I previously shared on social media that we would be hosting a MUFTI day for Mental Health Awareness Week on Friday 13th. Unfortunately, we can't do that as it is already Break the Rules Day, which needs to take priority because:

a) it has been scheduled for longer, and b) FOSCS need and deserve your support!

So, the Mental Health MUFTI Day will now take place on Thursday 12th instead. What a way to end the half term - MUFTI on Thursday and Break the Rules on Friday! I am conscious that this is two events back-to-back where donations are requested, so **please prioritise Break the Rules Day.** If you are able to donate to Bucks Mind for Thursday's MUFTI day, that would be wonderful. The link is here: https://www.justgiving.com/page/steeple-claydon-willen-hospice-4?utm_medium=FA&utm_source=CL But please do break as many rules as you can on Friday and help raise as much money for FOSCS as possible!

I also had the pleasure of attending my first DISCO at Steeple Claydon this week. It was brilliant to see the children fully committing to the dancefloor! A huge thank you to FOSCS, the volunteers, and staff who made it such a success.

Finally, You may have noticed that we are now on Instagram. Please do give us a follow! I post daily, sharing photos of the children's learning, upcoming events, and ways you can support your children at home. Hopefully, it gives you even more insight into life at school and what it means to be part of #TeamSteeple.

Have a brilliant weekend, and I'll see you next week.

Mr Sperring

Year Group Updates

Preschool

This week in preschool, we've been roar-some palaeontologists! The children have been digging deep in the sand and carefully using brushes to excavate dinosaur bones, just like real fossil hunters. They also explored real-life fossils and had an un-fossil-gettable experience touching a megalodon tooth, ammonites, prehistoric fossilised wood, and coral. Using magnifying glasses, the children took a closer look and examined their discoveries with great curiosity, no detail was too small-asaurus!

The children also enjoyed being outdoors, getting delightfully muddy and zooming around on scooters and bikes for some dino-speed races. On Wednesday, we focused on developing our cutting skills and chose a range of materials to cut, paper, card, boxes! We have also engaged in a wide range of sensory play experiences this week. Children explored green oobleck, providing opportunities for dinosaurs to jump, splash, and move through the mixture. It was wonderful to observe the children's enthusiasm and enjoyment during this activity. At the playdough station, children were inspired by the fossils they had explored and created dinosaur eggs containing dinosaurs, demonstrating creativity and imaginative thinking.

During NELI sessions, one of our focus words was "pour." Children used cups and water to practise pouring between one or more containers, supporting the development of both language and fine motor skills.

Reception

This week in Reception we have become star experts. We learnt that the stars we see in the sky are very far away and started to understand that things that are far away can appear small, but if we were near to them they would be much bigger. We learnt what stars are and how they are formed. We were amazed to learn that the sun is a star, and that nobody knows how many stars there actually are, but that our galaxy alone, there possibly has 400 billion stars!

We looked at pictures of constellations – groups of stars which make pictures, and learnt the names of some of the more common constellations - I was very impressed at how many children knew the name of 'The Plough' and how to find the North Star. We enjoyed making our own star constellations and I am sure the children will be eager to go stargazing and see if they can spot the North Star or any of the planets.

This week, in maths the children have continued to develop their understanding of composition, or the numbers within numbers. We have focused on exploring ways to represent numbers using the Hungarian number pattern (die pattern). The children secured their understanding of the pairs of numbers that make 5. Then moved onto exploring 6 and 7 as numbers that are composed of '5 and a bit'. We used double dice frames to help us and

sang the song; '5/6/7 Little Aliens in a Flying Saucer'. The children found neither 6 nor 7 aliens could fit on one dice frame (or flying saucer) so we found different ways to split them across a double dice frame/two flying saucers. In English we had a huge surprise on Monday morning with the delivery of an envelope marked 'urgent'!!! It contained a letter from Joop, the superhero who featured in the book we have been reading - Juniper Jupiter.

Unfortunately, her trusty side-kick, Nut the dog is unwell and she needs a new side-kick. The children spent the rest of the week planning their letters to write back to Joop, explaining why they would make a good superhero and a replacement for Nut until he is feeling better.

With the end to January and hopefully a forecast of slightly better weather we are aiming to start using the new Early Years Natural Area on a more regular basis. We plan to use this every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, so please ensure your child has named welly books in school, and where possible named water proofs, although we do have some in school. Please be warned the area is currently quite muddy so the children are likely to come home a little muddy on these days. Please ensure your child has a change of clothes in school (PE kit is fine) every day in case of muddy, water and toilet accidents.

A huge well done to Reception class who received a Behaviour Award this week, for showing such an improvement in their play skills, sharing and team work when playing outside, it was very well deserved!

Year 1

Year One had lots of fun in Science this week taking on the role of meteorologists and presenting the weather to their friends. The children were brilliant at using the symbols, talking about what sort of weather we would have and giving some top tips on how to prepare for it. In Geography the children have been looking at the landscape of Wales and finding out why there are fewer houses on the mountains than in the valleys. In English the children have been writing some super descriptive sentences about the lost handbag and have been learning all about the features of a letter. In maths the children have begun their new unit on addition and subtraction and have been finding out what the bonds of 20 are.

Year 2

We've had a busy and exciting week in Year 2! Here's a snapshot of what the children have been learning across the curriculum. In Maths the children have begun learning about multiplication. We introduced the \times symbol and explored how multiplication links to repeated addition. The children enjoyed making groups and counting equal amounts to help deepen their understanding.

In English, we started researching facts in preparation for our upcoming writing task. The children are learning about terrariums and are gathering information to design a suitable habitat for their "Big Baby" to live in. We've been focusing on finding key facts and discussing how to organise information. In Computing, the children have been designing

their own mats for the Floor Bot. They thought carefully about routes, obstacles and directions, linking their designs to the programming skills they have been practising.

Our Geography lessons focused on Northern Ireland. We explored its main features and discussed why it is such a green place, linking this to weather, rainfall and landscape.

Here are the results from our Bird Watch last week, we had super fun spotting

1 Songthrush

2 Magpies

2 Gulls

4 Crows

2 Bluetits

2 Doves

1 Blackbird

Home learning

- Maths: Practise 2, 5 and 10 times tables, linking to repeated addition where possible (e.g. $5 + 5 + 5$).
- Reading: Please continue to read at least 3 times a week and record this in your child's reading record.
- English: Talk together about habitats or research an interesting fact about animals that might live in a terrarium.

Thank you for your continued support. We're very proud of how engaged and enthusiastic the children have been this week!

Year 3

This week, Year 3 have enjoyed exploring our new vehicle text "The Worry Tiger." On Monday, the children found a den and some pictures in our classroom and they made some super predictions about these. In maths, the children have been working hard on developing their multiplication and division skills. They particularly enjoyed our D.T. lesson this week where they started to sew their very own key rings! In Science, the children loved learning about how fossils are formed and they even got to handle some real ammonites!

Year 4

In English this week, Year 4 have begun exploring our new example text, *A Monster Hunter's Guide*. The children have enjoyed diving into the language and features of the text and are starting to think like expert monster hunters themselves!

In Maths, we have been learning how to add and subtract lengths. The children have also been practising converting between units of measure, including metres to centimetres and centimetres to millimetres.

In Science, we had great fun creating our own mini ecosystems. They explored how living things depend on each other and their environment, carefully setting up their own small habitats. Planting difference seeds – these have be brought home, please water them...

In DT, we continued developing our sewing skills. The children are becoming more confident with their techniques and are showing great care and concentration in their work. It has been a real treat to welcome some of our grownups into class to help and our cushions are looking great.

Year 5

This week, I've been reflecting a bit on the good progress Year 5 have made even just in this half term. We're working on fractions, which can be full of tricky challenges, but in a recap lesson we've just done, I could see how everyone has grown in understanding and confidence, which is lovely to see. The same is true in music, where we've been practising, repeating and building on the song *Livin' on a Prayer*. Most of the children certainly didn't lack confidence in singing it, but they have really grown in their correct timing with their tuned percussion. The song is beginning to sound great! Finally, the class are beginning to show greater understanding of some of the trickier grammatical requirements of year 5, such as using adverbials as cohesive devices, and commas for ambiguity (such as in the sentence, "Let's eat, Grandma!", where the comma is a lifesaver!). It's been really gratifying to see how far the children have come even in these few short weeks.

Year 6

Another busy week in Year 6 - this week, we have had a great time in Science, investigating how light affects shadows. Using our torches and some interesting objects, we were able to explore how distance from the light source affected size, darkness and clarity of the shadow. In Art, we have looked at the work of Cezanne and how he painted scenes using constructive brushstrokes to create the volume of a shape. We created similar images using chalk pastels - they were amazing! Litter was the issue in Geography this week and we learnt about the impact that it has on our country and ways in which we can help to reduce this - have a look at some of our super posters underneath!

Preschool Pics









Year 2 Buddy Reading





Year 4 Sewing





Year 6 pics





LITTER

Litter is the term given to waste left out in public.

In the UK we are surrounded by a lot of trees and wild places. Some animals get caught in plastic.

Waste is materials that are unwanted or unusable.

Some people leave their waste on the ground.

Why is Litter an ISSUE?

Negative impacts of littering:

- It makes places look unattractive.
- It creates negative impacts on the environment.
- It puts animals at risk.

Definition - It's something wrong that gets left as waste behind. Take care you don't leave your rubbish!

The top ten items found on beaches:

- Food wrappers, cigarette butts, plastic water bottles, paper straws, toothbrush/cotton, dumped nets, plastic waste, aluminium cans and other waste products.

By Littering - Sometimes we don't have large amounts of rubbish that is hard to fly away and it is a shame you will be proud that you've got it away.

More information on Littering:

- Littering is litter means to "drop" and leave objects, coffee machines, toothbrush, aluminium cans, food waste and cardboard boxes.
- More Litter - over two million pieces of litter are dropped in the UK every day.
- This is a huge change to litter which means that it is the best material there, but it is the best.
- Even more people are dropping their litter in the UK every day. It's a huge problem.

WHY IS LITTER A PROBLEM IN THE UK?

1. There is too much of it!

There is too much litter in the UK as it is not properly disposed of. The amount of litter left on the streets each year is a huge problem for the UK.

2. It's been around since the beginning.

The amount of litter around us is big and it's not just the litter that we see on the streets, it's the litter that we see in the parks, in the woods, in the fields, in the streets.

3. It makes our world look unattractive.

It makes our world look unattractive and getting rid of it is not easy. It's not just the litter that we see on the streets, it's the litter that we see in the parks, in the woods, in the fields, in the streets.

DO NOT LITTER!

Why is Litter a Problem in the UK?

Litter is a problem because:

- Over two million pieces of litter are dropped in the UK every day.
- This is people choosing to discard rubbish rather than putting it in the bin.
- Many rural areas suffer from the littering where people dump a large amount of rubbish in a place they can't be seen doing it.
- Why we need to stop.

Sometimes it's not in plastic, rubbish is really light weight and it can be blown out of bins and landfill sites, it then ends up in the sea and rivers. It also makes it's way through the ocean.

Over two million pieces of litter are dropped in the UK every day. This is people choosing to discard rubbish rather than putting it in the bin. Even more people are dropping their litter in the UK every day. It's a huge problem.

Litter isn't just on our streets it is also on our beaches in the UK. Unfortunately, our wind plastic is getting into our oceans. Over 100,000 tonnes of plastic are dumped into the sea every year. The rubbish that you litter could still reach the ocean.

Celebration Assembly Winners

Star Awards

Reception - Paige for being phenomenal in phonics!

Year 1 - Hendrik for an amazing snake sock puppet design in DT

Year 2 - Jacob for completing so many Maths star challenges this week.

Year 3 - Sebby G for impressive scientific and mathematical thinking

Year 4 - Sulaimon for trying extra hard in class, particularly with his sewing

Year 5 - Sophie for enthusiasm and increased understanding of Hound of the Baskervilles!

Year 6 - Thea for her brilliant Maths work. She's put 100% in her lessons, shown great progress in decimals and percentages and confidently shared your learning with class.

Value Awards

Reception

Ezra - Confidence - He has shown a real increase in his confidence in sharing ideas and speaking in front of the class.

Year 1

Frankie - Generosity - He has been a very kind and generous friend in phonics this week, helping his friends write words with two sounds.

Year 2

Tilly - Generosity - She is always generous to her friends, sharing her time at playtimes and ideas during lessons.

Year 3

Dylan - Respect - Dylan is always respectful to everyone and always shows amazing listening in every lesson

Year 4

Oscar - Determination - He has worked really hard in DT designing and making his cushion. He found sewing tricky at first but with a little determination was one of the first to finish.

Year 5

Duncan - Positivity - He has a real improved attitude and confidence in 'giving it a go' with fractions.

Year 6

Emily - Determination - She has shown super determination, making a real effort to do her best in English and Maths this week.

Lunchtime Awards

Year 1 - Alice - she has been an excellent role model during lunchtimes

House Point Awards

Silver (Reaching 60 house points)

Year 3

Hunter, Archie, Henry, Jack F, Jasper

Year 4

Lenny

Year 5

Oliver W, Karla

Year 6

Thea, Danny, Scarlett

Gold (Reaching 90 house points)

Year 4

Poya, Dyman

Year 5

Chloe B

Year 6

Louis

FOSCS - Update

We had such a brilliant disco last night! The children were on top form, cutting some serious shapes on the dancefloor. It was hard to tell what was louder - the music or the excitable screams! A huge thank you to the parents and staff who gave up their evening to make sure the children had the very best time.

Next up, please see the poster below for Break the Rules Day on Friday 13th February. On the final day of this half term, children are invited to come into school and break some rules! It's 50p per rule, with class teachers collecting cash on the day. Break as many rules as you like and help raise funds to support the school.

Do you have an idea for an event? Would you like to support or even join the FOSCS team (you won't regret it!)? They really do need your help. Volunteering with FOSCS is a wonderful way to get involved in school life. You can give as much or as little time as you're able – every little helps, and many hands make light work.

How can you get involved?

- Speak to your class rep
- Email: office@steepleclaydon.bucks.sch.uk
- Email: foscsfundraising@gmail.com
- Have a quick chat with a member of staff on the school gates

If you've ever thought, "I'd love to help, but I'm not sure how" – this is your chance. Please support FOSCS so they can continue to support our children. Let's rally together and show some #TeamSteeple spirit! 💙





Amazon Wishlist Update

This week, we began sorting all the donated books we've received from our incredibly generous parents. It honestly felt like Christmas all over again here at Steeple Claydon! We're planning to add a little note inside the cover of each donated book, so if you've managed to donate one, you'll always be a part of #TeamSteeple. I've also added a few more titles from the BookTrust's Great Books Guide 2025–2026, focusing on books around the £5 - £7 mark as these have proved really popular. As always, 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!

WOW Badge Design Competition 2026

We are excited to be taking part in the WOW Badge Design Competition 2026, run by Living Streets, the UK charity that promotes everyday walking.

This year's theme is "Walk the Senses". Pupils are encouraged to design a badge showing what they see, hear, smell, taste or feel on their journey to school. This could include things such as wildlife, weather, sounds, favourite smells, or anything else that helps bring their walk to life. Designs should be bold, colourful and simple, as badges are small (around 3cm).

What is WOW?

WOW (Walk Once a Week) is Living Streets' walk to school challenge. Children who walk, wheel, scoot or cycle to school at least once a week for a month earn a WOW badge. The scheme helps reduce congestion outside school and supports children's physical and mental wellbeing.

Pupils should complete their badge design using the official template. This was sent out via email yesterday.

All entries must be handed in to Mrs Brewer by Friday 13th February.

Please ensure each design has the pupil's name and age clearly written on it.

The school will then select 3 designs to submit to the national competition, who will each receive a small prize.

National Prizes

- Winning designs will be made into official WOW badges worn by children across the UK
- Up to £500 of free WOW resources for winning schools
- WOW trophies for winners and highly commended entries
- Downloadable certificates for pupils

We look forward to seeing the children's creativity and celebrating their journeys to school!

SEND Parent Forum at Buckingham School

Have you ever wondered how ADHD and Autism interact to create unique challenges for your child? Do you ever feel like you're searching for expert advice but don't know where to turn?

We are thrilled to announce an amazing opportunity for our parent community. On Thursday, 12th February, The Buckingham School will be hosting a special SEND Parent Forum focused on the coexistence of ADHD and Autism.

Why you should attend:

- Guest speaker Lauren Castle, a Local Authority Specialist Teacher, who will share professional strategies and insights.
- High-quality specialist events like this are far and few between - don't miss out on this expert-led session
- Meet and share experiences with other parents in a supportive environment.
- A dedicated space to have your specific questions answered by a professional.

The Important Details:

- When: 12 February 2026. 5pm - 6.30pm
- Where: The Buckingham School
- Cost: This event is FREE to attend.
- Childcare: Please note that this is a no-children event to allow for focused discussion.

To secure your seat, please scan the QR code on the flyer or contact the SEN department at senadmin@buckinghamschool.org.



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 94.1%.

Well done to Year 5, who had our highest attendance this week of 98.2%. 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

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.

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 or if easier, simply

message us on social media. We look forward to celebrating and sharing lots of good news together!