



[www.stonehill.herts.sch.uk](http://www.stonehill.herts.sch.uk)

# Newsletter

24<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

There has been so much to enjoy in school this half term. The children have settled really well into the routine of the new school year and have shown great enthusiasm both in their learning and in participating in our Stonehill 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities.

We started our celebrations with our whole school picnic lunch on 26<sup>th</sup> September and it was a great success. We ate together outside and enjoyed an outdoor 70's disco, which included everyone dancing to YMCA at the end! The feedback from the children was very positive, with many saying it was one of their best school days ever! The children voted to have another picnic lunch at the end of the academic year to end our celebration year. Other anniversary activities the children engaged in this half-term included designing a special 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary logo for our school letterhead, new logos for the four House teams and Christmas card designs.

As always at this time of year, we have been thinking about harvest and had our special Harvest assembly on 17<sup>th</sup> October. We were fortunate to have Shane Cole, the founder of Feed Up Warm Up, visit us to talk about the charity and explain the vital work they do to support the homeless. Thank you to everyone who donated much needed food and toiletries for the charity. It was gratefully received and will be used to support local people and families.

It was Diwali on 20<sup>th</sup> October and our children enjoyed finding out about the festival in lessons and participating in assemblies and special activities. We hope all of our children and families who celebrate Diwali had a wonderful day.

Thank you to everyone who attended our recent parent consultation evenings; it was lovely to see so many of you over the two evenings. If you were unable to attend, please do contact your child's teacher who will be happy to arrange a meeting with you.

Looking forward to next half term, we have our whole school pantomime Beauty and the Beast on 5<sup>th</sup> November and in December our Year 3 and Year 4 carol concert and our Year 1 and Year 2 Christmas nativity. We will send more information regarding our Christmas celebrations nearer the time.

I hope your children have a relaxing half-term break and I look forward to seeing you all again on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

Best wishes,

*Elaine Close*

Head teacher



## GARDENING CLUB

The children at Gardening Club have had lots of fun while working hard to tidy up the school garden: weeding, digging over the beds and clearing the Autumn leaves.

Gardening is a very good activity for our mental health as it is collaborative and connects us with nature. It is actually one of the best forms of exercise, all while teaching children where our food comes from. It is mindful and an excellent opportunity to learn about wildlife too.

The club has closed now for the Winter but will re-open after the February half-term and will run on Wednesdays, until the Summer holidays. It is open to children from Reception through to Year 6.

Well done to all the children who have been part of Gardening Club this term.



*Mrs Devonshire*

## YEAR 6 NEWS

What an exciting half term it has been for our Year 6 students! As we settle into our routines, it's wonderful to reflect on all the vibrant activities we've engaged in.

This half term, our budding scientists have been exploring the fascinating adaptation of birds, conducting experiments that spark curiosity and deepen their understanding of nature.

In English, our creative writers have mesmerised us with their amazing stories themed 'Things That Go Bump in the Night'. The creativity and imagination displayed by our students have been truly remarkable!

Additionally, our non-chronological reports have been nothing short of fantastic! We've tackled various topics, showcasing our research skills and learning how to present information clearly and engagingly.

To top it all off, we enjoyed a fantastic walk to town, where students conducted valuable road safety questionnaires. This hands-on experience raised awareness about safety.

As we look back on this busy half term, we are proud of our students' achievements and growth. We are looking forward to next half term.

*Mrs Freeston, Miss Segard and Miss McMenamin*

## YEAR 5 NEWS

The children have had a positive first half-term. A number of children are enjoying reading a wide variety of books and several have met their Accelerated Reader points target. Our slightly modified guided reading sessions are also going well, with children showing good comprehension of 'Friend and Foe' and improving their reading fluency.

Our first English unit ended with a non-chronological report about a mythical creature. Following this, we read 'Cloud Tea Monkeys' and children wrote a vivid description of a scene. In both pieces, children worked hard to show their writing skills.

In Maths, we have been looking at place value and the number system. We went to numbers up to one million. Following that, we went the other way and looked at decimal numbers. Finally, we have been looking at factors and multiples in preparation for our work on fractions.

We have also looked a lot at the world around as we learned to read maps in geography, investigated forces in science, learned about Sikhism in RE and thought about ourselves and our place in the world in PSHE.

*Mr Chan, Mrs Geddis and Miss Watson*

## YEAR 4 NEWS

Year 4 have made an excellent start to their academic year. They have really enjoyed the class texts in English and have produced some effective writing in response to them.

In Maths, Year 4 have been working on written methods for addition and subtraction. They are already practising their times tables, in order to give them confidence for the multiplication times tables check in June.

In Geography, Year 4 have been learning about the Earth's climate zones. They have revised the Seven Continents of the World, and have been considering the benefits and drawbacks of producing renewable and non-renewable energy. The pupils have been looking at transport links in the local area, and have discovered how the whole planet can be described as 'interconnected'.

In Science, Year 4 have been exploring the digestive system of humans and other animals. In Art they have been weaving samplers using yarn of different colours and textures. In Music, the class have started learning to play the recorder, and look forward to showcasing their progress during the Year 3 and Year 4 Christmas concert in December.

During our Computing lessons, we have been making sure that we understand how to stay safe online through our Online Safety unit.

In PE, the children have been choreographing their own dance routines in the Bollywood style.

*Mrs Devonshire and Ms Rasool*

## YEAR 3 NEWS

I am really proud of all the children in Year 3 for settling in well and working hard so far. We have achieved so much already! On Tuesday mornings, the children have been learning the djembe drum with Caz from the Herts Music Services. They have been learning how to play solos as well as playing in a group. The children are able to discuss the tone and the bass of a drum!

Our class have worked hard on writing so far. The children published their own story about a Mini Rabbit and the different adventures he has been on. They also created their own descriptive poems, which I know they are very proud of!

I look forward to the next half term, where we will begin to start practising for our Christmas Concert, and we have our visit to Hitchin Museum!

*Mrs Boshoff and Miss Noble*

## YEAR 2 NEWS

Year 2 have made a brilliant start to the school year.

We have enjoyed reading 'How to make friends with a ghost' and writing our own instructions on how to be a good friend. In Geography, we learned all about the equator and different climate zones. Did you know that the UK has a temperate climate? Neither did we, but we do now!

Thanks to our Science learning, we know what humans need to survive as well as how washing our hands keeps germs away. We used pepper and soap for an investigation into hand washing and it turns out that the pepper (germs) really doesn't like the soap!

It turns out that we also really enjoy collecting Pokémon! Our times tables are improving every day!

Well done Year 2. Keep up the Pokétastic learning!

*Mr Phillips and Mrs Wilson*

## YEAR 1 NEWS

What a fantastic start to Year 1! In English we have been very busy writing our own colour poems and writing our endings for the Puffin Peter story.

We learned about different materials in Science and had a great time testing which material would make the best umbrella to keep a teddy dry in the rain!

We are working very hard to form all our letters and numbers correctly and have been practising these on whiteboards and in our books.

*Ms Gunther, Mrs Jones and Mrs Fearn*

## RECEPTION NEWS

What a lovely start to the school year Reception have had! The children should be very proud of their achievements and how well they have settled into daily routines and tasks.

This half term we have been focusing on ourselves, people who help us and all things autumn. The children really enjoyed going on an autumn walk and making leaf pictures using the things they found. We were lucky enough to have a paramedic visitor come to talk to us about his job, and we've really enjoyed learning about different people and how they help others.

We can't wait to see what the next half term brings and we wish the children a well-deserved break.

*Miss Webster, Miss Sawyer, Miss Watson and Mrs Willis*

## NURSERY NEWS

It has been lovely to welcome so many new children to nursery this year. Everyone settled quickly and we have had so many brilliant achievements to celebrate already.

This half term we have enjoyed getting to know each other by learning through play and lots of first-hand experiences. We have learned about families and shared photos and stories of people who are important to us at home. We've explored our feelings, understood how different emotions might affect us and who we can ask if we need help.

Learning about autumn has given us lots of opportunity to think about the world around us and notice seasonal changes in the garden. We made beautiful sun catchers for our classroom to celebrate the autumn colours we've noticed.

We are so proud of all the children who have taken on the challenge of starting nursery in such a positive and enthusiastic way. We look forward to welcoming you back again after half term.

*Mrs Denton, Mrs Anderson and Mrs Jones*

## FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER NEWS

We enjoyed meeting lots of parents and carers at the class meetings at the beginning of term and have enjoyed connecting with you at our Tea and Talk coffee morning. We also enjoyed the online workshop 'Understanding Behaviour', led by our Education Mental Health Practitioners. The slides from this workshop are available for anyone who was unable to attend. Please let us know if you would like a copy.

Please remember to put your child's name in their clothing. We already have more than 50 unnamed and unclaimed jumpers, coats and cardigans gathered in lost property!

### **Attendance matters**

Our whole school attendance for this half term is 93%, and 141 of our pupils have an attendance of 95% and above. Thank you for all your hard work ensuring that your children are in school and on time every day. Good attendance enhances our sense of belonging to our school community, and having a strong sense of belonging improves our mental health.

### **Citizens Advice Bureau**

We recently met with Kate Beed from the Citizens Advice Bureau. We are really excited to be working closely with Kate as she will be able to give us a smooth link into accessing all the support that the CAB offer. If you would like to connect with Kate or the CAB, please let us know and we can give you more details.



"Hi everyone - I'm Kate and I work as the Community Engagement lead at Citizens Advice North Herts. We are your local Citizens Advice based at 49 Station Road in Letchworth. We can help with debt, claiming benefits or housing problems (and we have lots of information about other things too). We know times are really tough at the moment for most people and it can be hard to ask for help or even have the time to think things through. I can maybe make that a bit easier by coming in to school for a quick chat over coffee. Looking forward to meeting you soon. (Our website is [www.northhertscab.org.uk](http://www.northhertscab.org.uk) or follow us on Facebook or Instagram #northhertscab)"

*Mrs Burnett and Mrs Read*

## NEW LUNCH MENU

There will be a new lunch menu after half-term. a copy is attached to this newsletter. If your child has a special menu, we will email this to you as soon as we receive it from Herts Catering.

## APPLICATIONS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

If your child is due to start secondary school in September 2026, you need to apply for a place online at:

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

The closing date for applications is **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025**.

## APPLICATIONS FOR RECEPTION PLACES

If your child is due to join Reception in September 2026, you need to apply for a Reception place online *even if they currently attend our Nursery*. Applications must be made online at:

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions)

The application system opens on **Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November** and applications must be made by **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January**.

We have tours for prospective Reception 2026 parents at the following times:

**Tuesday 11th November between 3.30 pm and 6 pm**

**Open Classroom**

The school will be open for prospective Reception 2026 parents to look round any time between 3.30 pm and 6 pm.

**Wednesday 3rd December 9.15 am to 10.30 am**

Mrs Close will give a brief talk, then parents can look round our Early Years unit.

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January 9.15 am to 10.30 am**

Mrs Close will give a brief talk, then parents can look round our Early Years unit.

To book a place, please click on the link below:

[Click here to book a place on a tour](#)

## APPLICATIONS FOR NURSERY PLACES

If your child will be three years of age at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026 and you would like them to join our Nursery, applications are made directly to our school. Please click on the link below to complete the application form:

[Click here to complete Nursery application form](#)

Applications close on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026 and places will be offered on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026.

## GOVERNORS

Stonehill's Governing Board comprises some members of the school staff, elected parents, a member appointed by the Local Authority and members co-opted because of their particular skills and experience. The purpose of the Governing Board is to establish the strategic direction of the school, hold the school to account and to ensure financial probity.

We are active in the life of the school. Every term we visit the school to meet staff and monitor how the school makes progress towards its Development Plan. This term we have been focussing on the school's value of Belonging, and we have been seeing how the writing curriculum is taught across the school. We look forward to sharing more about what we do in future newsletters. You can find out more about us on the Governors page on the school website.

## ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY APPEAL

We are very pleased to be able to support the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal again this year. When the children return to school after half-term, we will have **poppies** (suggested donation 50p), **reflectors** to attach to coats or bags (suggested donation £1), **festival bands** (suggested donation £1.50) and **snap bands** (suggested donation £2). If you would like to support the Appeal, please send your child in with cash after half-term. Please send the correct amount, as we do not keep cash in school to be able to give change.

## FLU IMMUNISATION

We have Vaccination UK in school on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November to give flu vaccinations to children from Reception to Year 6. The consent form has been sent to parents, but if you have not yet completed it for your child, please do so by Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October. If you do not wish your child to have the vaccine, please decline using the same form. Please note that the vaccine will not be given unless parents have completed a consent form.

[CLICK HERE TO GO TO CONSENT FORM](#)

## WRAPAROUND CARE

We are very excited that we are now able to offer parents wraparound care!

Breakfast Club starts at 8 o'clock each day and costs £4 per child per session. There is no need to book.

Our new after school club, run by Clubs Complete, started when we returned in September. They offer activities and care until 5.30 pm each day. A letter giving details of each day's activities and pricing is attached to this newsletter.

## PLEASE RESPECT OUR NEIGHBOURS

We have had complaints from both parents and neighbours about parking. Please remember that parking is not allowed on the zig zag markings at the front of the school, and that the grass mound between the school and the garages next to Sax House is an area where children play and is not a parking area. If necessary, please allow a few extra minutes when dropping off and collecting your child and park further up Western Close.

## THANK YOU

Thank you for all the generous donations for our harvest festival collection. The donations have been collected by Feed Up Warm Up and will be used to support homeless people and those at risk of homelessness.



*We wish you an enjoyable half-term and look forward to seeing the children again on*

*Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 8.45 am.*