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Newsletter 2 - October 2025

What a busy first term our pupils have had! Everyone has fully settled back into school life now and the children have been involved in some fantastic experiences already. Towards the end of this term, we have held Diwali assemblies and workshops as well as our Harvest Festival as we continue to encourage children to display Respect and Empathy to all in our community! Thank you for your support over the term and we look forward to seeing you all back in the new term.

School values

This term the children have been focusing on our value of respect. After familiarising themselves on what respect is, the children have been demonstrating this value around the school in abundance. We have loved seeing the children show good manners and respect to our visitors and each other. We look forward to this continuing across the academic year as we learn about another key value each term.



RESPECT

Ellenor charity support - Dartford Bear Hunt

I am pleased to tell you about an exciting project we will be involved in this year! The Ellenor Hospice in Gravesend are organising "The Dartford Bear Hunt" as part of their ongoing fundraising work.



Next Summer, thirty large Bear sculptures—created by local and national artists—will appear across Dartford's streets,

parks, and open spaces, forming a free and fun trail for everyone to enjoy. Alongside them, 30 smaller "Bear Cubs," decorated by schools and community groups, will be displayed in indoor venues such as museums, libraries, and shop windows. We have managed to secure one of these bears!

We have our first event this Friday, an own clothes day, to begin our fundraising.

Sports Update

Highland Games 2025

A group of children from years 3 & 4 took part in the exciting Highland Games event in Gravesend, braving the September weather to represent the school outside at Wombwell Park. The children completed a carousel of activities with an emphasis on fun, teamwork and personal growth. As you can see from the photos the children had a wonderful time and came back to school with many stories to share.



Year 3/4 Champions Trophy

In our latest football event, 24 schools took part in the Year 3 & 4 Championship Trophy. In the group stages our team did incredibly well winning three games and drawing 2 games, not conceding a single goal.

After getting through to the semi finals the team were unfortunate to lose on penalties!

However, they had done enough to secure a place in the finals day in May and will get the chance to play on the stadium pitch.



Rugby Skills Festival

A group of budding rugby stars from Year 5 and 6 headed to the Rugby Skills Festival at Dartford Valley Rugby Club. The festival brought together primary schools from Dartford and Gravesham for a fun-filled morning of teamwork, learning and sportsmanship. The children took part in a range of rugby activities, including passing drills, tackling techniques, and agility games.



The focus of the morning was on building skills and confidence in a fun and friendly environment and our children certainly rose to the challenge. Their energy, enthusiasm and excellent attitudes made us very proud.

Year 6 take on the Orienteering Challenge

On Wednesday, some of our Year 6 children swapped the classroom for the countryside as they set off on an exciting orienteering adventure at Lullingstone Country Park.

With maps in hand and teamwork at the ready, the children tackled a series of navigation challenges, using their problem-solving skills to locate hidden checkpoints spread-out across the course.

There was a lot of laughter, clever thinking and a few muddy trainers but most of all there was a fantastic display of teamwork, perseverance and enthusiasm. The event gave all of the children the chance to build their navigation skills, enjoy the great outdoors and show how well they can work together as a team under pressure.



Outside of school

Cricket Success

Well done to Theo in Year 6 who has been chosen to play as part of the Kent cricket team!

Rugby news

Edward and Robert (Bobby) in Year 4 recently took part in their first contact match at Eltham college. Edward scored a try in the last game and they both made some amazing tackles!



We would love to hear more about your outside school events and share in your success. Please send them to Mr Harrington.

SEND/Wellbeing Coffee Afternoon



We are holding our next Coffee Afternoon for parents on Thursday 27th November in the afternoon, from 2.00 - 3.15pm in the canteen (next to the KS1 hall). Members of staff will be on hand to share how we support our pupils and answer any questions you may have.

Site safety

We would like to clarify the drop off and pick up arrangements from the school site.

- In the morning, the James Road gate will be open to allow entry for children attending Breakfast Club and will remain open until 8.55am.
- The gate at Wentworth Drive will be open from 8:30am to allow for drop-off between 8:45 and 8:55am.
- Both entrances will be closed shortly after 9am and we ask that you leave the site promptly.
- In the afternoon, both entrances will open at 3:00pm and will close at 4:30pm.
- Children attending after-school clubs will continue to be supervised by staff during this time.
- We kindly ask that parents and carers leave the site promptly after collecting their children to help us keep everyone safe.
- If you need to collect your child from the after-school club after 4:30pm, please use the duty phone number provided by West Hill Life.

As a gentle reminder, parents and carers are asked not to enter the school building unless you have a pre-arranged appointment with a member of staff or have signed in at the school office.

We also request that you don't allow your child(ren) to play on any equipment unsupervised as this could lead to accidents. Similarly, children shouldn't be climbing over or under any fences.

We will continue to review these arrangements regularly and would like to thank you for your continued support and cooperation in helping us maintain a safe and welcoming school site.

Black History Month

October is Black History Month in the UK and we are marking Black History Month by recognising and valuing the inspirational individuals and events that have shaped the black generation in the United Kingdom. During Black History Month, we remember and celebrate the important people from the past and also those who contribute to and help our society today.

We had the Zamble Dance Company visit us again who ran dance workshops for the whole school. Once again these were fantastic and the children had so much fun.



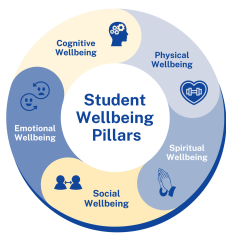
Halloween Safety

Halloween is fast approaching and we know many of you have a family tradition of going trick or treating. We recommend parents take a look at this guide on [how to keep children safe at this time of year](#).



Hello Yellow Day

The children had a wonderful day celebrating Hello Yellow in their bright clothes. We all loved the dancing and daily mile before school, it set a really positive tone for the day ahead. The children all took part in a range of activities in the afternoon linked to the different areas of wellbeing.



Dartford Swimming Club, Central Park Athletics, Dartford Rugby Club and so many more.

The children were also told about Dartford's Junior Parkrun which is a free event held every Sunday morning at Central Park at 9am - many asked for more information so here is a link to their website -

<https://www.parkrun.org.uk/dartford-juniors/>

Please share any sporting success that your child has out of school - we always love to hear about their achievements!

Harvest

Thank you for your very generous donations at harvest time for Dartford Food Bank.



The children have talked in assembly this week about the harvest and sharing what we have with others less fortunate.

Children's "Spy" Books

Sporting Heritage

In a recent assembly about National Sporting Heritage Day, the children learnt about the sporting heritage in our local area. We celebrated the success of ex-pupils in sports, including: Shauni Griffiths (ladies Dartford Football Club), Daniel Kanu (Charlton Football Club), Sion Margrave (British Youth Mountain Downhill Team) and Adam Gemili (British 100m & 200m runner).

The children were very interested in the range of clubs in the local area including



We want to make you aware of a recent issue affecting some popular children's books by Andrew Cope, including the *Spy Dogs*, *Spy Cats*, and *Spy Pups* series.

Some editions of these books include a printed web address at the back. This link used to go to the author's website, but it has since been taken over by a third party and now leads to inappropriate adult content.

The publisher, Puffin, has paused sales and distribution of the books and is working with schools, libraries, and retailers to remove copies from circulation. They have stressed that the website has no connection to the author or publisher.

What this means for you:

- If your child has any *Spy Dog*, *Spy Cat* or *Spy Pups* books at home, please check the back for website links and make sure they do not try to visit the site.
- It is safe for children to continue reading the stories themselves — the concern is only with the outdated link.
- We recommend talking with your child about the importance of not following web addresses in books without checking with an adult first.

Attendance

Attendance Matters!



Every Student, Every School, Every Day

Our whole School attendance is 95.8% and the national picture is 95.5% so we are in line with this. Well done everyone.

We would like to highlight some strengths across the school -

- Year 3 and 4 who both have 97% attendance

- Two classes have 98% attendance which is superb - 1GA and RKS.

Informing school of any absence

It is crucial that parents/carers telephone the school office to inform them of any absence. We must stress how important this is.

Parents/carers must call us to let us know the reason(s) for any absence and a likely return date, and give an update daily.

Punctuality

We expect all children to arrive on time ready to start the day and to be punctual to all lessons. The doors open for our soft start 8.45 - 8.55am.

Arriving on time is a great start to the day, putting your child in the right frame of mind to make the most of the day's learning. Good punctuality is linked to good attendance which we know leads to better outcomes for children and young people.

Term Time holidays

Holidays in term time are not permitted and will not be authorised.

Regular attendance is crucial for a child's learning and progress, and missing school time means they fall behind on their studies.

Children have 13 weeks of holiday from school per year and holidays must be taken during this time.

Parents may request leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. A letter must be written or emailed to the school office, for the attention of the Headteacher, with as much notice as possible. A response will be given.

Online safety

When you provide your child/children with mobile devices, you have a duty of responsibility as parents/carers, to ensure that you set appropriate parental controls that restrict the content available to your child, and that you frequently check your children's devices, which includes smart TVs and games consoles, as well as mobile phones and tablets, to ensure that you know who they are in contact with and what they are doing online. [This guide](#) gives parents/carers some great advice and information on how to do this.

Wellbeing

Autumn is a wonderful time of year – the change of season, the light, the colours, the harvest festivals, the family pumpkin carving. Here are our five steps to a relaxed, fun, revitalising and happy half-term.



1. Plan ahead for the half term break.
2. Take some time to relax.
3. Calmly sort any sibling struggles by helping them to find solutions to their problems and compromise.
4. Improve wellbeing through conversation; help your child to talk about their feelings and emotions in different situations.
5. Acknowledge that there isn't a perfect half term, perfect parent or perfect child. It's about doing our best, being ourselves, learning from our mistakes and remembering that we are human.

Please feel free to share any good news stories to be included in future newsletters!

Road safety - could you be our school crossing patrol?

We are looking for a member of our community to support children and families crossing the road before and after school for 7.5 hours per week. The paid role is term-time only and would require training from Kent. For more information, please contact Mr Pollock through the school office.

Everyone Reading Together

Today all pupils in Years 1-6 took part in Everyone Reading Together, a wonderful collaborative whole school activity designed to promote reading for pleasure. Our classes pair up and the children are invited to share their favourite books and stories and enjoy books together.



Upcoming dates for the diary

Fri 17th Oct - last day of term 1

Mon 27th Oct - first day of term 2

Tues 28/29/30th Oct - EYFS Autumn Walks

Thurs 30th Oct - Flu vaccination

Thurs 30th Oct - PTA Halloween film night

Tues 11th Nov - Open Evening 3.30 - 5.30pm

Wed 12th Nov - Open Evening 5.30 - 7.30pm

Fri 14th November - Children in Need - Own clothes

Fri 21st Nov - INSET day - closed to pupils

Wed 26th Nov - eve - PTA wreath making workshop

Thurs 27th Nov - SEND/Wellbeing Coffee afternoon at 2pm

Fri 1st Dec - last week of clubs

Tues 2nd Dec - 9.30 - Y2/3 nativity for parents

Tues 2nd Dec - 5pm - Christmas Music Concert

Wed 3rd Dec - Y5 swimming finishes

Wed 3rd Dec - Bag to Schools collection

Thurs 4th Dec - 1.45 - Y2/3 nativity for parents

Thurs 4th - 3.30pm EAL Christmas Workshop

Fri 5th Dec - PTA Christmas Fair (children in own clothes)

Tues 9th Dec - 9.30 - EYFS/Y1 nativity for parents

Tues 9th Dec - Y6 Christmas Concert

Wed 10th Dec - Y4/5 Christmas production to parents at Christchurch - 1:30pm

Thurs 11th - 1.45 - EYFS/Y1 nativity to parents

Fri 19th Dec - last day of term 2

Mon 5th Jan - first day of term 3