



The Hermitage School and The Oaktree School



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that the start of 2024 has been kind to you and that your families are thriving as we navigate through the month of February. As always, I am grateful for your ongoing support and dedication to our school community.

Here are some important updates and highlights:

Upcoming Events:

- Our HOPA adult quiz night is just around the corner! Friday 1st March and is set to be another successful evening of entertainment and laughter. We invite you to book your tables quickly as tables are limited.
- Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on 12th and 14th March. Be sure to book an appointment for this excellent opportunity to discuss your child's progress with their teacher and gain valuable insights into their academic and personal development.

Safety Reminders:

- With the winter season upon us, please ensure that your child comes to school dressed appropriately for the weather. We want to keep everyone warm and safe during outdoor activities. Despite the recent warmer spell I have no doubt we are not over Winter yet

Achievements:

- Congratulations to all our children who entered the new logo design competition for their outstanding designs. Selecting a winner was a really difficult decision and we have chosen two winners - the new logo will be made from a combination of their designs and is with our graphic design team now. We also increased the number of runners up and all winners and finalists will be announced after half term.

Community Engagement:

- We are always eager to hear your feedback and suggestions for improving our school. Please complete the recently sent parent survey for us or don't hesitate to contact me or any member of our team with your ideas or concerns via the school office.
- It was a joy to see so many of you celebrating your child's work during our recent Art week across the two schools. The gallery was a huge success and it is always a pleasure to see children share their work with pride.

We look forward to entering the second half of the academic year and seeing further progress in your child's achievements. Have a restful half term.

Warm regards,

Clare Spires

Executive Headteacher

Nursery

What a busy half term the Nursery children have had. The children have enjoyed exploring our topic, "Wonderland," We went on a winter walk around the school to collect ice and investigate what happens to ice as it changes. Our role play area has been turned into the artic, where we used our binoculars to spot the different animals and what they look like.

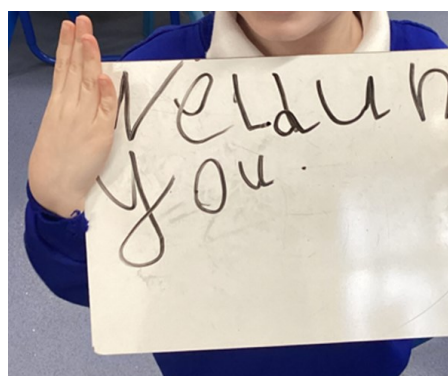
We have also been learning about night-time and the animals that wake up and sleep in the day. Ask your children what the word nocturnal means? We have been busy practicing how to say it. Next half term we look forward to exploring our new topic, dangerous dinosaurs



Reception

The children have completed their Long Ago topic. As part of the topic, the classes hosted a mother and baby. The children were able to identify the different ways that they have changed since they were babies. We also had a workshop from the Chertsey Museum. The children learned about the past through handling artefacts, role play and crafts.

We have also been lucky enough to have skateboarding or scooting workshops. We were all very impressed with the children's perseverance and resilience and it was lovely to see their confidence develop throughout. In addition to this, the children took part in a Chinese New Year dance workshop. It was an excellent way to introduce the celebration and they spent the following week applying their learning and comparing this to the other festivals and celebrations that we have explored so far this year. What a busy half term it's been!



Year 1

In DT, we have been building taxis! We learnt about the structure, designed our own and then built them. We have been very impressed with the results! We learnt all about London landmarks in our Geography and imagined our Black Cabs having to drive across our busy capital city.

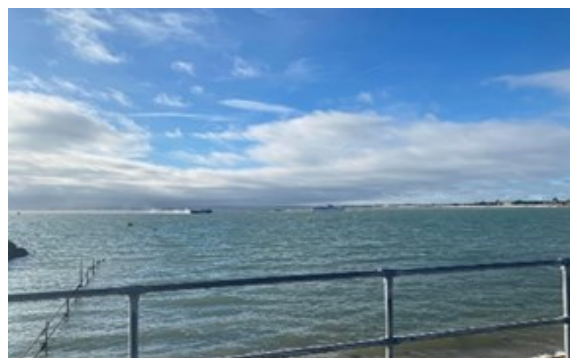


This half term we went all dotty at The Oaktree school. We learnt about Yayoi Kasama and her dotty art, which inspired us to make a variety of different pieces or artwork of our own. We were amazed by the wonderful artwork that the children made for our art exhibition and were so happy to see how well attended the exhibition was.



Year 2

This has been an exciting term for the children as they have spent time exploring 'The Secret of Black Rock' by Joe Todd-Stanton. They have thought carefully about what the secret might have been as well as creating their own, exciting ending. They have also been experimenting with different materials as part of their Science topic, finding out which materials bend, absorb and are waterproof. To finish off an exciting half term, the children went on a school trip to the Blue Reef Aquarium in Southsea where they looked at the different sea creatures, learning about their habitats. The children also took a walk along the seafront to see the different features of a coastline including the signs, flags or windsocks that you might find there. We all had so much fun!



Year 3

Year 3 have come to the end of their topic on Ancient Egypt. A highlight of the topic was mummifying tomatoes to learn more about the process in a hands-on way. To finish off the topic, they had a History Day with a visit from Freshwater Theatre where they put their learning to the test! They entered Tutankhamun's tomb, searching for treasure and made their own amulets with hieroglyphics on.

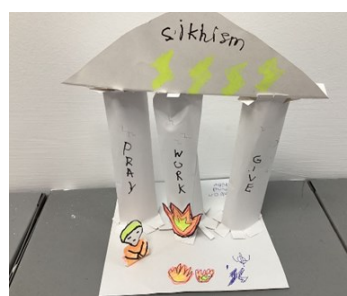


Year 4



As part of our RE studies, Year 4 have been studying Sikhism. There are three pillars of Sikhism, namely prayer, giving and work.

As a novel way to remember the three pillars, the classes put their DT skills to good use and made paper statues



Year 5

We have had lots of fun and learning this term on The Tudors. We looked at portraits of the key figures of the time and then drew our own. In English, we wrote diary entries and a persuasive letter. In DT, we used the backstitch and blanket stitch to create Tudor puppets. To show that they have a purpose, we then used them to perform a Tudor play, which we thoroughly enjoyed.



Hampton Court Palace
Manservants
East Molesey
KT8 9AU
4/11/1509

Dear King Henry VIII

I am writing to your Majesty to request ask for your permission to let me have a break. Unfortunately, I love the job of being the future King's page but I have to go back to my family. You are a wonderful kind Ruler but would you be kind enough to give me a break? You might not have heard, but my closest brother (Matthew) has died; the family will be gathering for a funeral.

As I told you earlier, my brother Matthew has died drowning. When I was working under your command I got a letter from my lonely sister

who's name is Margery, telling me that my brother was found. She said he was found by some villagers and is going to be put in a grave. I would like to pay my respect and say my final good bye to my brother. I know where his grave is please, he thought me everything to be a page. If it wasn't for him I wouldn't be here.

I also need to be there for my sister she's all alone out there. The more I think about my sister the more sadder I feel. My father is also very upset about Matthew, my brother was his favorite child. I need to go back to my family they need me there more than I am needed here.

I hope you understand my reason for going back to my home. I miss my family and they miss me. I like my family just as much as you like your son.

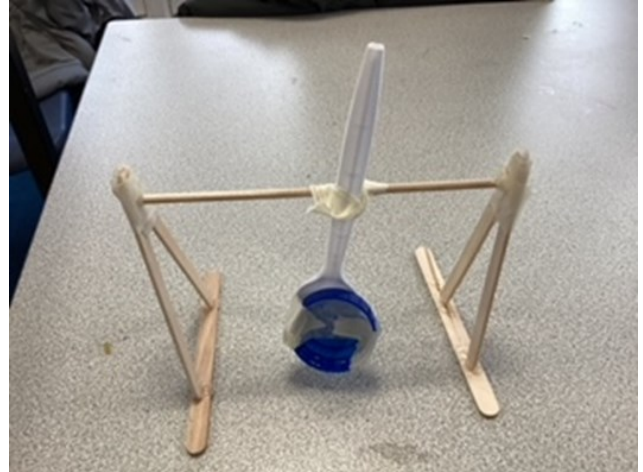
Year 6

This half term, Year 6 have been studying the artist Banksy. We examined a range of his artwork and selected pictures which particular appealed to us. We also looked at the place where the artwork was displayed and experimented with our own urban backgrounds. Finally we used stencils to create our own Banksy inspired artwork. We hope you enjoy looking at the process, from start to finish.



Orchard

The children have enjoyed the learning they have been taking part in in their afternoon classes. It has been a busy half term with Art week and various DT projects.



In The Centre, as well as our usual learning, we have been focusing on team work and exploring how to play different games together.



Some of our Year 3 children tried horse riding for the first time!



Sport

Congratulations to our year 5 and 6 children who took part in the Sports hall Athletics event at Guildford Spectrum this half term. Hermitage came 5th out of 11 schools and their behaviour was impeccable throughout.



Wilder schools

“This year, as part of the [Wilder Schools](#) programme, [Surrey Wildlife Trust](#) are joining The Hermitage and Oaktree Schools to help students improve their school grounds for nature and take more of their learning outdoors.

Surrey’s wildlife is in decline, but by taking some simple actions at home, we can all help create a Nature Recovery Network across the county.

Action for Nature – Bee Positive this Spring!

Our disappearing pollinators need help, but fortunately [pots and containers are a great way of introducing insect-friendly flowers at home](#). They are also perfect for small gardens or spaces like window ledges or roofs.

Sow your own mini wildflower meadow in a windowbox, or use walls to create vertical herb displays.

You can use anything you like for planting! How about...

1. **Watering cans**
2. **Old kettles**
3. **Metal pails and buckets**
4. **Pans and colanders**

Old sinks - or even bathtubs!

If you don't have your own outdoor space at home, **why not take part in the [Big Plastic Count](#) next month?**

Nearly 100 billion pieces of plastic packaging are thrown away by UK households every year, and just 12% is recycled in the UK.

Join thousands and tally all the plastic packaging you throw away for one week – 11-17 March 2024, then submit your results on the website. Once all the results are in, they'll share the national picture, and the next steps on how to push the government into action against plastic waste.”

Grow an insect-friendly garden

Provide for bees, butterflies and other insects all year round by planting shrubs and plants that flower at different times of the year.

Spring	Summer	Autumn	Key
Wallflowers	Borage	Heather	Great for honeybees
Hawthorn	Fennel	Carrots	Great for bumblebees
Dandelion	Lavender	Dahlia	Great for butterflies
Sweet William	Rosemary	Mint	Great for other insects
Aubretia	Cornflower	Marjoram	Great for a balcony or plant pot
Lungwort	Honeysuckle	Yarrow	
Sweet Alyssum	Poppy	Fennel	
Cow parsley	Brambles	Ivy	
	Cosmos	Michaelmas daisy	
	Cow parsley		
	Field scabious		

www.wildlifewatch.org.uk

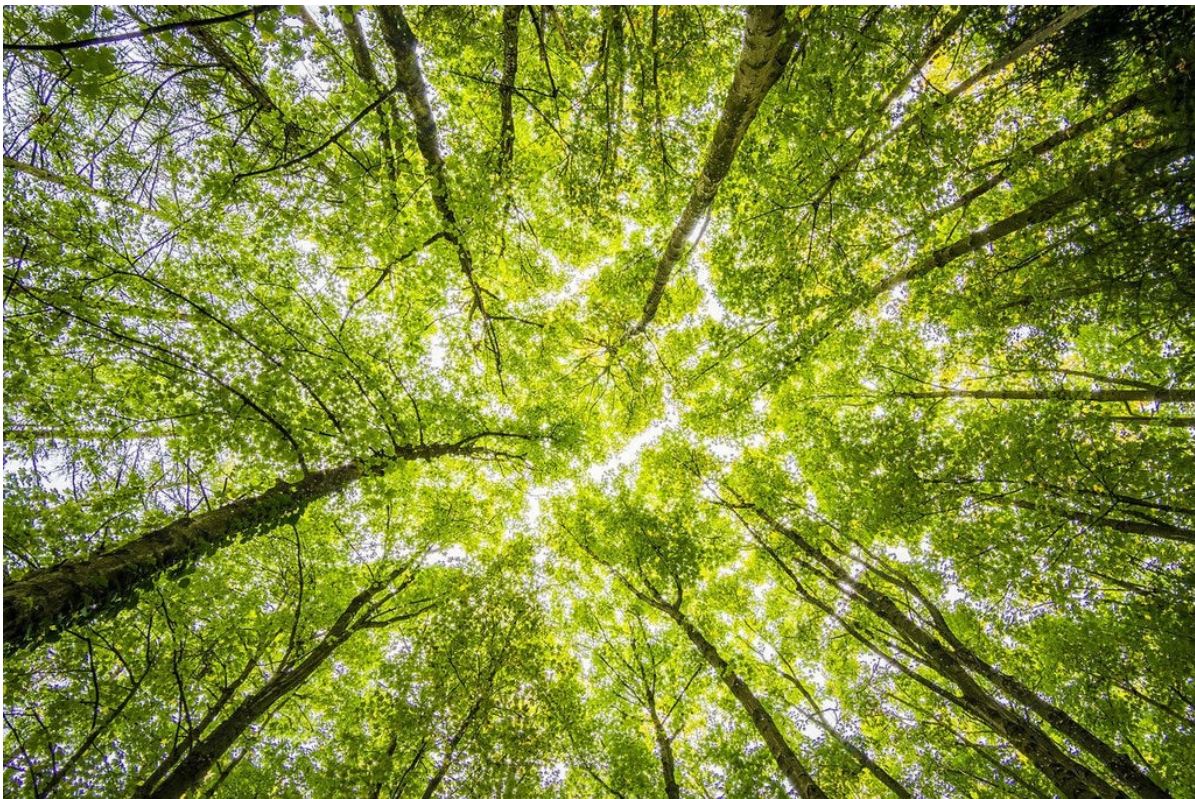
Illustration: Gemma Welch © Copyright (2024) Surrey Wildlife Trust 2024

Our Forest School

As part of our commitment to providing quality educational experiences, The Oaktree and The Hermitage Schools are proud to offer pupils the chance to participate in Forest School sessions. We have three fully qualified employees working with our schools who have a timetable to ensure that ALL children will experience a full programme of forest school during their education at The Oaktree School and again during their four years at The Hermitage School.

During Forest School, challenging outdoor experiences promote the development of the key skills of communication, problem solving and decision making, which have value across a range of occupations. They encourage a positive "opting in" and "can do" attitude. Children's horizons are broadened, new challenges come to be relished and perseverance and determination are reinforced. Skills such as emotional growth, self-esteem, confidence and independence are nurtured and the woodland environment gives learners time and space to be by themselves, find peace and communicate with others. Risk is experienced by children in a managed way, teaching them about the importance of risk awareness and risk management – not risk avoidance.

If you wish to know more or would like to volunteer to help in our Forest School sessions please contact the school office who will put you in touch with our leaders



Thursday 15 February

Amplify are hosting a free wellbeing festival on Thursday 15th February from 10am-4pm at Rosebery School in Epsom.

Amplify is the Shadow Leadership Board for Mindworks Surrey (Surrey's Children, Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service). This means that they are expected to attend meetings and be involved in decision making at the highest levels of Mindworks. Their main purpose is to diversify the voices in these meetings to make sure that the voices of children and young people are included in key decision making.

The family friendly event will see performances, treasure hunts, arts, and crafts as well as stalls run by the Mindworks Team. The event is a fantastic way to have your say in mental health services and how they are run but also find out more about the resources available to young people in the area. Amplify want to hear from you as to what you might find useful at the event, so please fill out [this survey](#) if you have any ideas that might be useful.

For those with sensory sensitivities there is a quiet hour planned from 10am-11am. This does not need to be booked simply speak to a member of the team on arrival who will direct you to the appropriate area.

If you would like to attend the event there is no pre-registration so simply turn up on the day. If you would like any further information on the event, please email: amplify.mindworks@sabp.nhs.uk

Please see the event poster below.

The poster features the Amplify logo in orange and purple, with 'Mindworks Surrey' in the top right. The main title 'Young People, Big Voices' is in large purple font, with 'Surrey Wellbeing Festival' below it. A yellow arrow-shaped banner lists activities: Treasure Hunt, Focus Groups, Arts and Crafts, Stalls run by Mindworks wellbeing services, Giveaways, and Performances. The event date and time are 'Thursday 15th February 2024, 10am - 4pm', with a note about a 10am-11am quiet hour. The location is 'Rosebery School, Epsom, KT18 7NQ' and it's a 'FREE family friendly event!'. A QR code is provided for a survey, and contact information is at the bottom. The footer includes social media handles and a row of colorful emotion icons.

Amplify presents...
Young People, Big Voices
Surrey Wellbeing Festival

Have your voice heard!

Join us for...

Treasure Hunt
Focus Groups
Arts and Crafts
Stalls run by Mindworks wellbeing services
Giveaways
Performances
...And so much more!

Thursday 15th February 2024
10am - 4pm
(10am-11am quiet hour for those with sensory sensitivities)
Rosebery School, Epsom, KT18 7NQ
A FREE family friendly event!

Tell us what you'd like to see by filling in our survey.
Just scan our QR code:

For more info: please email amplify.mindworks@sabp.nhs.uk

Find us on social media: @amplifysurrey @mindworkssurrey

Attendance

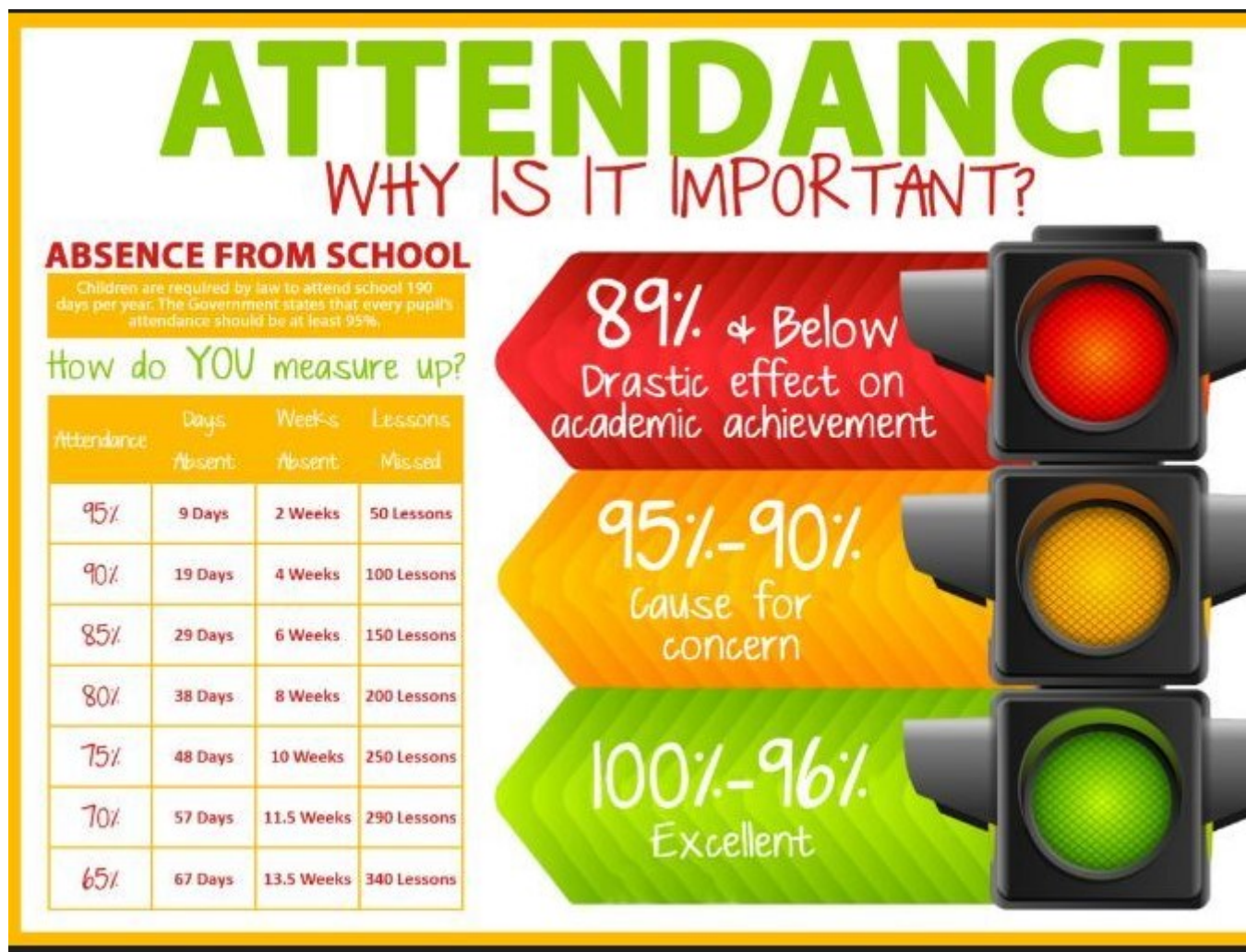
We are delighted to share that the attendance and persistent absence figures for both The Oaktree and The Hermitage Schools have improved dramatically in the past year and I would like to thank all of you, for your support in ensuring your child is not only punctual to school in the mornings, arriving before the register closes, but also attends daily. There are a small number of families we are working with to help bring about greater improvements still, but I attach the poster below to highlight the impact of missing school, whether for a matter of hours each week, one day each week or for weeks in a year.

If ever you are in doubt about whether to keep your child off school or not when poorly please click on the links below to see government guidance and advice. Thank you again for supporting us in making sure we prioritise education in these critical primary years.

[Is my child too ill for school?](#)

[everything you need to know about school attendance](#)

[school attendance and absence](#)



Dear Parents/Carers,

Further to my previous messages, newsletters and reminders I continue to get concerns from local residents and other parents about poor parking around our site. But this week I have sadly received an email from JP Mealing, the General Manager of The Surrey Public house on Hermitage Road.



He shares *“There have been numerous incidents where parents are what I would describe as nuisance parking, this includes using the disabled bays when they do not have a blue badge, blocking gates and fire exits, and blocking in my customers cars. I have plenty of photo evidence of this.”*

The Surrey have kindly extended a privilege to our parents who are not using their facilities, to use the car park but he has shared If this driving behaviour persists, he will begin barring parents from using their car park.

So I ask for this

- Do not use the disabled parking bay unless you have a blue badge
- Do not block the rear gates or any fire exits
- Do not block in any other cars

If there are no spaces, either wait, or go somewhere else

We kindly ask for all parents of The Hermitage and The Oaktree Schools to show consideration for our locals, his customers and our children when parking.

Kind regards,

Clare Spires

The Hermitage School
Spring Term 2023/2024

12.02.24 — 16.02.24	School Closed for Half Term
19.02.24	Closed—INSET Day
26.02.24	Dogs Trust School Workshops
26.02.24	Year 4 Anglo Saxon Day
27.02.24	Dogs Trust School Workshops
28.02.24	Dogs Trust School Workshops
28.02.24	Silver Birch Class Assembly
04.03.24	Book Week
04.03.24	Year 4 and The Orchard Book Look
05.03.24	Year 3 Book Look
06.03.24	SEND Parents /Teacher Consultations
07.03.24	Year 6 Book Look
07.03.24	Bounce for Books
08.03.24	Book Character Dress Up Day
08.03.24	Year 5 Book Look
11.03.24	Science Week
12.03.24	Parent /Teacher Consultations—Virtual
14.03.24	Willow Class Assembly
14.03.24	Parent /Teacher Consultations—Virtual
18.03.24	Year 3 Spring Celebration Assembly
20.03.24—22.02.24	Year 4 Residential to Hindleap Warren
25.03.24	Easter Egg Competition
27.03.24	Talent Show Final to Parents
28.03.24	Last Day of Term—School Finishes at 1:30pm
29.03.24 — 14.04.24	School Closed Easter

The Oaktree School
Spring Term 2023/2024

12.02.24 — 16.02.24	School Closed for Half Term
19.02.24	Closed—INSET Day
22.02.24	Fox Class Assembly
27.02.24	EYFS Book Celebration
28.02.24	Year 2 Book Celebration
29.02.24	Owl Class Assembly
29.02.24	Year 1 Book Celebration
01.03.24	HOPA Bears at Bedtime
02.03.24	Groundforce Morning
04.03.24	Book Week
06.03.24	SEND Parent Consultations
07.03.24	Bounce for Books
08.03.24	Book Character Dress Up Day
11.03.24	Science Week
12.03.24	Parent / Teacher Consultations—Virtual
14.03.24	Parent / Teacher Consultations—Virtual
21.03.24	Ladybird Class Assembly
22.03.24	Grandparents Festival
28.03.24	Last Day of Term—School Finishes at 1:30pm
29.03.24 — 14.04.23	School Closed Easter

The Hermitage School and The Oaktree School
Term dates and INSET days for 2023-24

	23 rd – 27 th October	AUTUMN HALF TERM
Monday	30 th October	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY
Tuesday	31 st October	First day of Autumn Term 2
Friday	15 th December	Last day of Autumn Term 2
Spring Term 2024		
Tuesday	2 nd January	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY
Wednesday	3 rd January	First day of Spring Term 1
Friday	9 th February	Last day of Spring Term 1
	12 th – 16 th February	SPRING HALF TERM
Monday	19 th February	SCHOOL CLOSED – INSET DAY
Tuesday	20 th February	First day of Spring Term 2
Thursday	28 th March	Last day of Spring Term 2
Summer Term 2024		
Monday	15 th April	First day of Summer Term 1
Monday	6 th May	May Day Bank Holiday
Friday	24 th May	Last day of Summer Term 1
	27 th May – 7 th June	SUMMER HALF TERM
Monday	3 rd June	First day of Summer Term 2
Monday	22 nd July	Last Day of Summer Term 2
Tuesday	23 rd July	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY