

# The Hermitage Schools

## Newsletter



Dear Parents and Families,

As we approach the end of this term, we are filled with pride as we reflect on the incredible achievements of our students and the joyous spirit of the festive season. From the classroom to the stage, our children have worked tirelessly, demonstrating not only their academic growth but also their creativity, determination, and enthusiasm.

This year's festive productions from Early Years to Key Stage 1 and Year 4 have been nothing short of magical. Our students poured their hearts into rehearsals, and the performances were a true testament to their hard work and talent. Furthermore the Choir and Musical theatre groups entertained our community bringing tears of joy to many at both The Lighthouse and Coxhill Manor Nursing Home in Woking this month. A huge thank you once again to St. John's Church community also for hosting our two Carol Concerts and supporting us this term. We are so proud of each and every one of our children for their dedication and the way they brought the holiday spirit to life. A huge thank you goes out to our talented staff, whose time and effort made these productions possible, and to our PTA, HOPA, for their ongoing support and contribution to our school community.

It is this sense of collaboration and unity—between children, staff, and parents—that makes our school such a special place. We are grateful for the hard work, energy, and enthusiasm that everyone has put in to make this term a success.

All that is left is for me to wish all of you a joyful and restful holiday season, filled with love, laughter, and celebration. Thank you for being part of our vibrant school community!

### New Parent Governor appointment

The Local Governing Committee and I are delighted to announce the appointment of a new parent Governor. Mrs Amy Botha was our successful candidate and will start her term of office in the spring term 2025. I am sure you will join me in congratulating her and our Governing Body look forward to working with Amy in the years to come.

Warm wishes,

*Clare Spires*

*Executive Headteacher*

# Communication

## Flu cases currently highest among school children

As of 22 October 2024, the rate of confirmed cases of flu among school children aged 5 to 14 years is more than twice the rate of any other age group. Flu can be very serious for some younger children and puts many thousands in hospital every year. Please see the [Latest data shows twice as much flu among school children](#).

Over two million school-aged children (R to Y11) have received a flu vaccination so far this autumn in England. Children respond well to the flu vaccine, which reduced hospitalisation in 2–17-year-olds by 54% in winter 2023. As flu cases rise, this will also help to protect others who are more vulnerable such as grandparents and infant siblings.

Schools play a crucial role in the success of the school-aged flu immunisation programme by supporting school clinics run by the Surrey School Immunisation Team. Delivery of flu vaccines in schools will continue until mid-December. If a child has missed out on getting their flu vaccine in school, they can access NHS community clinics run by the same team. If a child is in a clinical risk group and has missed out, they can make an appointment with their GP.

Please help to support the flu programme this autumn by signposting parents and carers to the [School Immunisation Team](#) if their child has not yet had their flu vaccine. The team can also check MMR vaccination status and provide catch-up for any children missing one or both MMR doses.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL CHOSEN CHARITIES

Earlier in the term our School Council Representatives from each class asked their peers to discuss the charities that are close to their families' hearts.

The school council then met to share all of the suggestions from the children across the schools. A short list was compiled of the most popular suggestions and the representatives returned to their classes where each class voted for one charity from the short list.

The results were tallied to reveal the top three charities  
The Hermitage Schools will be support this academic year

**Autumn Term - Shooting Stars Children's Hospice**

**Spring Term - Little Roo Neonatal Fund**

**Summer Term - Woking Sam Beare Hospice**

The children designed Christmas cards in class to sell on a stall at the Christmas Fair. The sales of these cards raised £70.61 for Shooting stars Children's Hospice. Thank you parents and families for your kindness and donations towards this terms charity.

Thank you children for your choices. I know these charities will welcome the support they receive from our



generosity.

## Surrey County council– Autumn Half Term Survey

Surrey County Council is now inviting families to share their views on whether there is an appetite for the council to move to a two week autumn half term break for community and voluntary controlled schools in the future (2026/27 academic year at the earliest). Please see link below:

<https://surreyeducationsservices.surreycc.gov.uk/Article/166045?source=Newsletter&guid=7EEFE5F4-8F57-472D-980E-4362649E239D>

# Nursery & Reception

This half term, children in Reception have been exploring the theme of "What do you enjoy celebrating?" Through this engaging topic, they have delved into a variety of celebrations, including Diwali, Halloween, Hanukkah and Christmas. Furthermore, we had a discussion about how Remembrance Day is not a celebration more like a Memorial Day to honour the people who fought in wars.

The children have enjoyed learning about the different customs and traditions associated with each celebration. They created colourful rangoli patterns for Diwali, carved pumpkins for Halloween, looked at a menorah and played with dreidel for Hanukkah, decorated Christmas trees, and made poppies for Remembrance Day. These activities have not only been fun but have also helped the children appreciate the rich diversity of cultures and traditions.

The children in Nursery have been learning about different celebrations too, although they were focusing on traditional tales through the topic of 'Who's been sitting in my chair?'

They explored the stories such as "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" or "The Three Little Pigs" through lots of engaging role-playing activities. The Nursery enjoyed acting out the characters, building bridges and houses, and even pretending to be the big bad wolf! This hands-on approach has made the stories come alive, sparking their imaginations and helping them understand the morals of these classic tales.

In addition to these celebrations, the children have been busy preparing for their Nativity play. They have been learning their lines and practicing the songs with great enthusiasm. The Nativity play is a highlight of the term, and the children were very excited to showcase their hard work to their families and friends.

This half term has been a wonderful journey of discovery and celebration, fostering a sense of community and understanding among the children. It has been heartwarming to see them embrace and enjoy the various festivities, making this a truly memorable time for everyone involved.





# Year 1

This half term we have loved our “Terrific Toys topic”. We have dived into our toy-based text “Traction Man” by Mini Grey and wrote our own stories whilst getting to grips with speech bubbles.

We looked at Toys from the past both asking our Grandparents favourites and having our Autumn trip where the Chertsey Museum came to visit. The children loved finding about old toys; what they are made of and how they worked, and even getting to play with them!

In Design and Technology, we made our own toys: Traction man Puppets, which we designed and sewed ourselves.

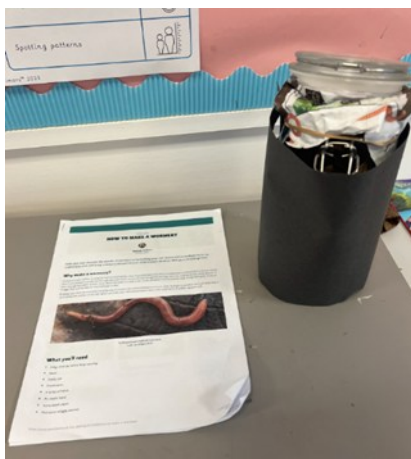
To complete the term the children performed their Nativity, they worked so hard to learn their songs and lines and put on an excellent show that made us all proud.

Well done on all your hard work Year 1!



# Year 2

What an exciting term we have had! The children have really enjoyed exploring the book ‘The Jolly Postman or Other People’s Letters’ by Janet and Allan Ahlberg. They have then written posters, letters, diary entry’s and even adverts! They even got to meet some of the characters from Little Red Riding Hood and ask them questions. In Science, the children have been exploring microhabitats and even made a class wormery! They have been checking on the wormery daily to observe what is happening. We are looking forward to our next topic ‘Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside!’.



# Year 3

Well Christmas is nearly upon us, where has the year gone?

We have had another busy term which included lots of fun writing, story planning and acting out our stories as well as singing and cooking.

In Science, we have been learning all about animals and humans, including body parts and nutrition and what is required for a healthy and balanced diet. Over the last few weeks, we have also been busy tasting different types of flat breads and dips as part of understanding about nutrition with the children really enjoying making their own flat bread and dips! The children nailed the recipe and the flatbreads were delicious.

This activity was also a great and fun way for us to use our Maths knowledge to help understand the importance of measuring correctly, adding ingredients precisely and following instructions carefully.



# Year 4

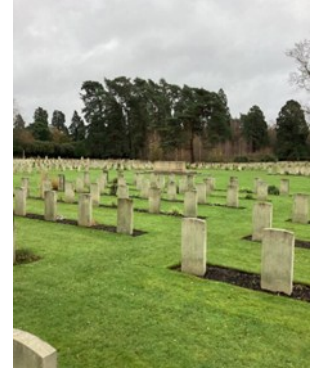
On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> November, Year 4 participated in an excellent workshop run by Mexicolore! The children enjoyed learning about the weapons the Maya and Aztec people used, why they sacrificed people, the importance of cocoa in everyday life and how this was used as the currency to buy goods and food. They also learnt how to chant from one to four in Mayan and even had a chance to play the different musical instruments and wear Mayan and Aztec clothing!





# Year 5

It has been an exciting and busy half term in Year 5, with lots of enjoyable learning and activities taking place. As part of our topic of World War One, we visited Brookwood Cemetery. The children enjoyed learning about the War graves and the soldiers who died in World War One. This was a thoroughly moving and interesting experience for the children and really brought their learning to life. We were very proud of how the children demonstrated of Respect whilst on the trip. In Art, the children have been enjoying creating their own Poppy Art, using water colours and silhouettes. In our Science topic, Materials, the children have been scientists by testing different materials by strength, absorbency and durability.



# Year 6

This half term, Year 6 have had a lot of fun combining their learning of Science with Design & Technology (DT). The Science has been about electricity and building circuits and DT has been designing buggies. First, the class built chassis, arranged a series of cogs in such a way that the buggies became front wheel drive and then they added battery packs and motors.



Even using the minimum of materials, the inventiveness of some of the children has been interesting. Add a little colour to the wheels and put some flames for the exhaust is one way of sprucing up the buggy, or you could even build a prototype shell, then do the hard cover version as shown here. The project certainly caught the children's attention – and their imagination.



# Sports News

We have been very busy during this term with lots of different football tournaments! We have been impressed with the attitude of the children throughout the term – who have all represented the school well whilst wearing the school colours! A special well done to our girls' team who won the district competition and will now be representing Woking Schools in a county competition at Dorking Football Stadium.



Another congratulations to both our Year 6 and Year 5 boys' teams who both won their fixtures in the Surrey School's County cups and have their next round matches coming up in the Spring Term.







# Want to make a difference? Teach!

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challenge, a change of career  
or just getting started after  
university?

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“ I can honestly say the support I have  
received through South Farnham SCITT  
has been second to none. ”

*Abi Silvestre, past trainee.*

## Why us?

- Expert and skilful programme team.
- Learn from, and be inspired by, accomplished teachers.
- Access to personalised and effective support through our local cohort model.
- Well equipped and ready to thrive, for the start of your teaching career.
- South Farnham SCITT is widely recognised as the best place to train for school centred initial teacher training.





# What we offer

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options  
available

- A school-based one-year post graduate programme.
- Primary and secondary placements available.
- A commitment to finding a placement school in your local community.
- A research-informed, carefully sequenced training curriculum.
- Flexibility to work around other commitments whilst studying.
- Programmes include:
  - QTS (Qualified teacher status)
  - QTS & PGCE



## Where we are



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Brighton and Hove  
East and West Sussex  
Hampshire  
Surrey  
Slough  
London Boroughs



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## Term dates and INSET days for 2024-25

<b>Autumn Term 2024</b>		
Monday & Tuesday	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> September	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY
Wednesday	4 <sup>th</sup> September	First day of Autumn Term 1
Friday	25 <sup>th</sup> October	Last day of Autumn Term 1
	28 <sup>th</sup> – 1 <sup>st</sup> November	AUTUMN HALF TERM
Monday & Tuesday	4 <sup>th</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> November	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAYS
Wednesday	6 <sup>th</sup> November	First day of Autumn Term 2
Friday	20 <sup>th</sup> December	Last day of Autumn Term 2
<b>Spring Term 2025</b>		
Monday	6 <sup>th</sup> January	SCHOOL CLOSED - INSET DAY
Tuesday	7 <sup>th</sup> January	First day of Spring Term 1
Friday	14 <sup>th</sup> February	Last day of Spring Term 1
	17 <sup>th</sup> – 21 <sup>st</sup> February	SPRING HALF TERM
Monday	24 <sup>th</sup> February	First day of Spring Term 2
Friday	4 <sup>th</sup> April	Last day of Spring Term 2
<b>Summer Term 2025</b>		
Tuesday	22 <sup>nd</sup> April	First day of Summer Term 1
Monday	5 <sup>th</sup> May	May Day Bank Holiday
Friday	23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Last day of Summer Term 1
	25 <sup>th</sup> May – 6 <sup>th</sup> June	SUMMER HALF TERM
Monday	9 <sup>th</sup> June	First day of Summer Term 2
Tuesday	22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Last day of Summer term 2