



School Newsletter

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Our Year 5 children having a great time at Grafham

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A Sad Farewell

It is with huge sadness that we need to inform you that the wonderful Mrs Bainbridge will be retiring and leaving the school at half term after 23 years looking after the children of Guildhall. There will be so many children who have been supported, guided and nurtured by Mrs Bainbridge over the years, and I'm sure they would all want to thank her for her kindness, patience and care offered to all who work with her. She will leave a huge hole in the team at Guildhall, but we also recognise that when a time comes to retire, then it should be taken and celebrated. As a school, we all wish her well in an enjoyable and well-deserved time to relax and we thank her for all her years of service. I'm sure many of you will also want to catch her to thank her personally.

We have already started the difficult process of finding someone to replace her, and we hope to be able to share news about this in the next newsletter.

Updates to the school Website

As stated in the last newsletter, we have been updating all of the curriculum documents shared on the school website. We have now published refreshed and updated Curriculum Overviews documents and Knowledge Organisers for the entire year. These are available on the school website in the Curriculum Overview section.

The Curriculum Overviews provide details about each of the topics taught in each half term and detail what your children will be learning about. Alongside each Curriculum Overview you will now also find the Knowledge Organiser for each topic (not used in the Reception year). These are information sheets that the children will be given in class to aid their recall of key facts to support their learning. They also provide details of the teaching sequence for each block of work. We hope that these documents provide you all with an insight into the curriculum your children will be experiencing as they move through the school.

[This link will take you directly to the page.](#)

New Lunch Menu

You should have been sent the latest set of menus from the school office. These menus relate to the last two weeks of this half term and the first week back in November.

Chocolate in School

Please remember that bars of chocolate are not acceptable for children snacks or for lunchboxes. A cereal bar containing small amounts of chocolate or an occasional chocolate covered biscuit are acceptable, but perhaps not every day! Thank you

Friends of Feoffment News

We have lots of dates to share for upcoming Friends of Feoffment meetings until January. We would love to see some additional members at the D&P at 7pm on the following dates.

Mon 3rd Nov

Tues 9th Dec

Tues 13th Jan

Please try and find some time to support this group, as the more people who help out, the more we can achieve for the children.

Year 5 Grafham Water Residential

Our Year 5 children had a simply fantastic time at The Grafham Water Centre last week. It was wonderful to see the children take part in so many new activities across the three days. They really demonstrated determination, bravery and independence, whilst also looking after and encouraging one-another. We were very proud of them all.



Upcoming Year 4 Residential

We have now arranged the dates for the first Year 4 residential stay. This will take place at Burwell House between the 13th and the 14th April 2026. Year 4 parents should have received a letter regarding this from the school office. If you have not, then please contact the school office for details.

This will be a one night residential, building on the experience from the Year 3 sleepover last year.

Winners of this week's

House Point Cup

The winners of the recent weekly house point cups have been the Rubies Team and the Emeralds Team. Well done to them.



Year 3 Stone Age Day

The children in Year 3 have enjoyed a Stone Age Day in the school, learning about all things from the Mesolithic to the Neolithic period.



Parent Consultations next week

You will have hopefully booked your parent consultations for next week. If not please use the booking system to book your now. This meeting will be an opportunity to share how your child has settled into the year, but also to share a few things that you can be doing to help your child in their learning.

We have also set the dates for the Spring parent consultations too. These will be during the week of the 26th January 2026. These are slightly earlier, as we wanted to meet with you as soon as is practical following the end of term assessments. This should give you the greatest opportunity for supporting the learning needs of your children during the remainder of the year.

KS2 Autumn Disco

We have set the date of the 12th November for the Autumn KS2 disco. This event will be at 5pm -7pm and will feature pizza from the school kitchens, snacks and drinks all included in the disco ticket. Tickets for the disco will be on sale on School Money until 6th November, so that appropriate amounts of food and drink can be arranged. We will not be able to sell tickets for this event after this date, so please buy yours before the 6th November. Tickets are £5 per child, inclusive of all food and drink.

If you have any specific dietary requirements, we will take these from the school system, so can you please update the office of any changes to this information us prior to the 6th November, so that we can cater for your child's needs.



A Harvest thank you

Thank you all so much for all of your generosity for the Harvest Festival. We have collected all of your donations together and shared them between three local charities (Women's Refuge, Tayfen House and The Bridge Community Shop). These are all great local causes and supportive of our broad community.

Thank you



Individual School Photos

Next Monday (20th October) the school will have its annual individual school photos. This is just a note incase you'd like to ensure that your child has correct uniform, combed hair etc for that day.

Young Carers

If you feel that your child is a Young Carer, and the school is not currently aware of this, then please contact Mrs Thompson. She will then enable them to access the Young Carer support and opportunities within the school.

Pupil Governor and Deputy

We recently held elections for the roles of Pupil Governor and their Deputy. There were lots of great applicants, who wrote fantastic application letters, but elected were Ben Odogwu, with Sylvie Appleton as his deputy. They will be helping me lead the School Council this year. We are now electing house captains this week from an even bigger field of candidates. What wonderfully engaged children we are privileged to work with!

Medical Appointments

Please can parents remember to request medical appoint forms from the school office and provide us with as much notice as possible and provide evidence of this appointment on the form. Thanks you

New Style Maths Newsletter

This half term we are launching our 'new-look' maths newsletter (attached with this newsletter). Each half term we will feature a different resource that can be used at home to develop and enhance maths learning at home.

The Importance of Math Manipulatives at Home

Maths manipulatives — such as blocks, counters, beads, dice, measuring cups, or even everyday items like buttons and coins — help children **see and touch** maths concepts instead of just hearing about them. Using these hands-on tools at home builds understanding, confidence and a positive attitude toward maths.

Manipulatives help children:

- **Visualise abstract ideas** (like addition, fractions, or patterns).
- **Explore and experiment** to find solutions independently.
- **Develop problem-solving and reasoning skills.**
- **Connect math to real life**, making learning meaningful and fun.

Encouraging children to use simple objects during homework or play can make a big difference — turning maths from something they “do” into something they **understand and enjoy**.

This first edition will be all about how dice can be used to support maths learning across each year group.

The Get Britain Reading Campaign

The Sunday Times has launched a campaign to Get Britain Reading as new data shows that people of all ages now read social media posts more often than books.

Decades of research shows that reading for fun can transform lives. It boosts children's and adults' mental health and has been found to be more important for a child's cognitive development between the ages of 10 and 16 than their parents' level of education. Yet the proportion of children who never read for enjoyment is rising across every age bracket, according to the National Literacy Trust. One in five children aged 11 to 13 now never pick up a book voluntarily, and parents are reading less frequently to their children. One in eight children aged five to 18 surveyed by the National Literacy Trust do not have a book of their own.

With the Get Britain Reading campaign you can:

- [Donate](#) to Bookbanks to put books in the hands of those most in need of them
- [Volunteer](#) to read in schools with Coram Beanstalk
- Above all, take the [pledge](#) to read for pleasure for at least ten minutes a day for the next six weeks

Books at Home

Can we also ask for you to check again around your home for school reading books that might have found their way under beds and onto home bookcases. We are missing a good few titles and there will be other children who would love to read them.



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SOCIAL MEDIA & MENTAL HEALTH

An estimated one-third of children have a social media account, so it's important that trusted adults know what content young people are consuming, what they're posting and the interactions they're having. On social media, it can be easy to go down 'rabbit holes' that aren't beneficial to our wellbeing. As platforms grapple with managing such 'legal but harmful' content, lives are being impacted – sometimes to tragic effect. We might be daunted by the scale of the tech giants and their content which so enthralls young people, but we can still help children to be aware of their mental wellness: recognising when something isn't OK... and knowing what to do about content that upsets them.

1. UNDERSTAND THE ALGORITHM

Algorithms rank content by user interest: someone who regularly interacts with sports news, say, will see the latest results at the top of their feed. Likewise, if a user browses content that can cause harm, that's what will be recommended to them in future. Someone who's had a bad day and looks for posts which reflect their mood will find similar content being suggested to them more and more.

2. AVOID THE MAIN FEEDS

Avoiding the default feeds on social media platforms limits the amount of recommended content that's shown. Users can opt to only scroll through the accounts they follow, use restricted modes, or highlight posts that they don't want to see more of. Explore the platform safety settings to see how you can take control of what your child's phone shows them when they open the app.

3. DISCUSS WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

Chatting about what your child's seen online keeps you aware of the content they're interacting with. Don't assume that platforms are screening out inappropriate material, or even that your child would recognise content as being harmful. Discuss who they follow, what posts they like and what comes up in their feeds: if alarm bells ring, it could be time for a more in-depth talk or to seek support.

4. LEARN HOW TO HIDE CONTENT

If your child stumbles across unsuitable content on social media, there's the option to hide that post as well as indicating you'd prefer any similar material not to be suggested in future. On some platforms, you might also be able to block posts that contain specific words, which is an excellent way to start taking control of what your child sees online.

5. SET DAILY LIMITS

Phones and most apps can tell you how much they're being used. Spending too long online can mean a child misses out on other activities that are important to all-round wellbeing. You could set some family rules – for everyone to follow – around device use, such as screen time limits and tech-free spaces: Involving your child in creating this agreement makes them more likely to stick to it.

6. MONITOR THEIR ACTIVITY

Keeping a discreet eye on how your child is using social media can help ensure they're not entering potentially dangerous situations. As they grow up, of course, children need space to exercise their independence – but you can still occasionally ask to see what they're looking at. Be transparent about your own social media use and try not to sound judgemental about your child's.

7. TURN OFF PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Even for adults, it's tempting to check an email or message as soon as the alert sound pings. Push notifications encourage people to open their apps and spend time on their device, so turning them off will help your child to practise mindful use of tech. Most of us have other things that we need to focus on as a priority – and those notifications will still be there later, when we have more time.

8. USE DEVICES TOGETHER

Giving children internet-enabled devices and complete freedom to explore platforms on their own can result in exposure to hugely damaging content. You could consider making a particular area at home a designated space to use phones, tablets and so on – making it much easier to monitor what content your child is viewing and (if necessary) steer them away from any potentially harmful paths.

9. ENCOURAGE OTHER ACTIVITIES

Mental health professionals often highlight the importance of exercise, quality time with loved ones, a balanced diet and restful sleep for our mental wellbeing. Spending hours on social media can cause us to sacrifice other activities that our brains need to feel well – so encouraging your child to put down their phone and enjoy something that doesn't involve a screen can be immensely beneficial.

10. TALK ABOUT PEER PRESSURE

Most platforms default children's accounts to private, so only people they've accepted as friends can see their posts. This reduces the risk of bullying or unkind comments, but – just like offline life – the digital world can still make children feel as if they need to act or look a certain way to fit in. Talk to your child about peer pressure, and listen to any concerns so you can provide the support they need.

Meet Our Expert

Shazia Sarwar-Azim is executive headteacher at a specialist primary school and, as an emotional therapy coach, works with school leaders to focus on the SEND, mental health and wellbeing agenda. A passionate advocate for vulnerable learners, Shazia is a Fellow of the Chartered College of Teaching and the author of *The Rainbow Within*, a book which supports children with SEMH needs.



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Sources: <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-53204595>
<https://www.prosocial.com/insights/social-media-algorithms/>