Autumn Term 1 2026 Newsletter

Welcome to our first newsletter of the academic year.



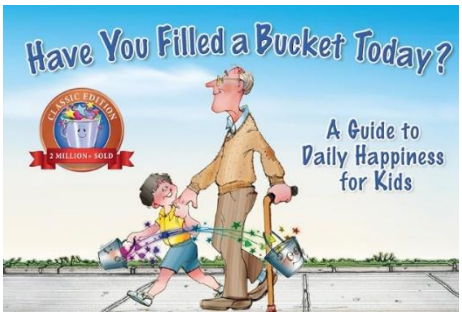
Firstly, I would like to thank all the parents, carers and children who have so warmly congratulated me on my recent appointment as Head of School at Hawthorns. As many of you know, Hawthorns holds a very special place in my heart, so I was absolutely delighted to be given the opportunity to lead the school. I am incredibly excited to continue working alongside our families, staff and wider community as we build on the many strengths of our wonderful school.

This half term has been packed with exciting experiences and opportunities for our children, including engaging learning, school trips, Expressive Arts Week, visits from special guests, sports competitions, and a fantastic range of before- and after-school clubs. It has been wonderful to see our pupils embracing every opportunity with such enthusiasm.

As we approach the half-term break, I am sure everyone is looking forward to some well-deserved rest and time with loved ones. For many, this will also include Halloween celebrations, costumes and trick-or-treating. If you are venturing out on 31st October, please take a look at our safety tips later in the newsletter to help ensure everyone has a fun and safe Halloween.

I belong….

At Hawthorns, we have been focusing on helping every child feel that they truly belong. We want all children to know that they are valued, listened to, and an important part of our school community. Throughout the year, we have worked hard to ensure that pupils' voices and opinions are heard, tailored clubs to reflect their interests, and shared inspiring stories such as *A Bucket Full of Kindness*.



The children have embraced this approach enthusiastically, regularly demonstrating how their words and actions can help to "fill each other's buckets" with kindness. It has been wonderful to see them supporting one another and helping everyone feel noticed, included and valued.

As part of our attendance focus, we have also introduced an 'I Belong' Attendance Bucket in every classroom. We love seeing our children's smiling faces in school each

day, and regular attendance is vital in giving every child the best possible opportunities to learn, thrive and achieve their full potential.



Each day a child attends school, they can place a raffle ticket into their class attendance bucket. During our Friday Celebration Assembly, one ticket is drawn, and the lucky winner becomes the Attendance Champion for the following week, enjoying some extra special rewards and responsibilities. The more often children are in school, the more chances they have of becoming an Attendance Champion!

Thank you for your continued support in helping us make attendance a priority and ensuring every child feels that they belong at Hawthorns.

Staff Updates

Over the next half term, you will begin to see some new faces around the school and nursery. We are pleased to announce that our new Pastoral Lead, Ms Qazi-Killian, will join us when we return to school on 3rd November. In the nursery, Mrs Crompton and Mrs Nicholls will be acting as Interim Nursery Managers while the recruitment process for a permanent Nursery Manager is completed. We are very grateful for their support during this transition and know they will provide continuity and stability for our youngest learners. We are also very pleased to announce that Mrs Mitchell has been permanently appointed to the role of Assistant Headteacher. We know she will continue to make a valuable contribution to the leadership of our school and support our pupils, staff, and families with great dedication.

PTA News



As you know, our Parent Teacher Association work tirelessly to organise events and raise funds for our school. If you are a new parent or carer to our community and would like to offer your support, please contact the office for contact details. This term your gorgeous children have been busying themselves doing jobs for you in order to fill up their smartie tubes. Thank you to everyone who has taken part in the challenge as these funds make a real difference to supporting the kids here.

Donaldson, Nursery - £19.11

Rosen - £31.34

Jeffers - £77.90 Potter - £77.21

Lin - £57.34

Blackman - £45.70

Coehlo - £18.55



Library news

We are delighted to announce that our old and tired library space has been transformed into an amazing Learning Resource centre. West Sussex Schools Library Service have been such a support to us with the huge job of packing up and unpacking all of our wonderful books. We have been very lucky to be able to unveil a huge new non-fiction collection as part of the refurbmishment. We can't wait to get in there and share our love of reading in a space we love just as much. Watch this space for an official launch event next month.

Before





After





Don’t forget to follow us on Facebook!

News from our Nursery and School Classes

Nursery



The children have settled beautifully back into nursery, and it has been wonderful to see their confidence grow as they build friendships, explore new experiences and become familiar with our environment. We are so proud of how well they are adapting and embracing all that nursery has to offer.

This half term has been full of exciting autumn adventures. The children have enjoyed exploring pumpkins, investigating their size, texture and what we found inside. We have also been spotting signs of autumn around our outdoor environment, collecting natural treasures and talking about the seasonal changes we can see.



Outdoors, the mud kitchen has been a busy hub of creativity, with children mixing up delicious meals for us all. Our construction area has inspired imaginative play, with children working together to build lots of different vehicles for their adventures. It has been lovely to see their teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills developing through play.

The children have also been challenging themselves physically, practising balancing and developing their gross motor skills through a range of exciting activities. From climbing and navigating obstacles to balancing carefully on equipment, they have shown great determination and perseverance.



Nature has sparked lots of curiosity too. The children have thoroughly enjoyed searching for slugs and exploring the big puddles in our outdoor area, observing them closely and asking thoughtful questions about the natural world.

One of the highlights has been our parachute games, where the children have laughed, worked together and developed their listening skills while playing a variety of fun group games.

Rosen Class

Rosen Class have settled very well into the daily routines of life at Hawthorns School. We have been getting to know each other and been busy making new friends. We have been busy exploring lots of exciting learning opportunities. We have been focusing on what make a good friend and how we can give our friends space when needed.



In maths, we have been exploring size, creating and continuing patterns, and practising careful counting to 5. The children have enjoyed comparing objects and talking about which are bigger, smaller, longer or shorter. In phonics we have been working hard to learn our sounds so far and begin to hear blends of words. Don't forget to use the handout from the parent meeting to revisit the sounds at home.



We have been learning about the changes that happen during autumn. Thank you for all the wonderful autumn treasures that have been brought in from home. The children have enjoyed exploring leaves, conkers, acorns and other natural objects and discussing how the seasons change. We also enjoyed the story of 'The Leaf Thief' which supported our learning about Autumn.



In our Drawing Club sessions have focused on some favourite traditional tales. The children have enjoyed listening to the stories, developing their vocabulary, drawing characters and settings, and being creative with their ideas a nd marks. We have been working hard to develop our fine motor skills through a range of activities to strengthen fingers and improve pencil control. We have also been practising pre-writing shapes to support future writing development.



In PE, we have started using our gross motor skills through a variety of activities and games. The children have enjoyed learning how to move safely, balance, travel in different ways and take part in simple group games.



Thank you for your continued support. We are very proud of how well the children have settled into Reception and how

enthusiastically they are engaging with their learning. We look forward to another exciting half term ahead!

Jeffers Class



The children in Jeffers class have had a wonderful start to Year 1.



This half term in 'Plot to Plate' we have been learning about food and how it gets from the fields to our plates. We visited Splash Farm in Burpham to see the cows and sheep and learn about the produce they give us. They were very friendly cows and thought some of the children needed a wash! Sally and Andrew the farmers, said we were one of the best schools they have had visit them! We have looked at where wheat, rice and corn have come from, then melted it with some chocolate to make some delicious crispy cakes!







In English, we have been learning about the things we need in a sentence. We read a book called The Runaway Dinner and made characters out of our names for the story. We have been using adjectives and nouns and of course learned some songs about them. We play a fun game called 'Guess the Noun' which uses our excellent oracy skills.

Every day we enjoy our number circle. We are getting super speedy and counting now! We are using the vocabulary of more, fewer and same in maths and working out some tricky problems! We have just started using a counting stick which will begin to help with times tables too when we get there; we are already starting to recognise doubles and halves.

In computing, we have made our own avatars, looked at how to be safe online and learned how to log in…well nearly! We will need to keep practising this one.

In art, we have been learning how to use a brush effectively. We discovered different shades of colour and hot and cold colours. We had a special treat of drawing with an illustrator – our drawings were fabulous!

Finally, we love to sing and play instruments. We have learned about pulse (the beat) and tempo (the speed). Ms. Turner loves to sing too, so we have songs about lots of our learning.

The adults are so proud of the children in Jeffers class for all their hard work. Thank you parents, for your ongoing support. Happy Half Term!

Potter Class

We have had a blast this first half term in Potter Class! The children have settled into Year 2 really well and have had lots of fun exploring our first topic: Plot to Plate.



In KS1, we had a marvellous start to the term with our stunning start which was a trip to Splash Farm where we got to meet lots of lovely animals and had farmers teach us more about where our food comes from. The children got to explore different farm equipment and sample some delicious milkshakes that had been produced on the farm.

In maths we have been looking at adding and subtracting two-digit numbers. After half term we will start to explore our times tables so we start to prepare for starting Times Table Rockstars which we are very excited about!



In History we explored the celebration of Harvest and how it was celebrated in the past as well as how farming has changed over time. This led to lots of interesting discussion about how farming might change in the future. Potter class is full of keen and creative engineers! Our geography has taken us around the world, refreshing our memories of the continents and oceans as well as comparing farms and crops from different places.



We are very much looking forward to Expressive Arts Week where we will be learning about many forms of art and some exciting artists. The children in Potter Class have certainly worked hard this first half-term and we look forward to seeing the children flourish throughout the year.

Lin Class

What a brilliant half term we have had, full of lots of hands-on learning!



In Geography, we have been learning about how fold mountains are formed, using layers of felt to model the movement of the tectonic plates. This helped the children to see how layers of rock can be pushed and folded over time to create mountains. History has been a real highlight as we have taken a deep dive into the Romans in Britain and the story of Boudicca and her rebellion. Our

learning was brought to life during our fantastic trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace, where we had the chance write, play and live like a Roman for the day.



In Art, we have been experimenting with texture by painting with unusual materials, such as golf balls, cork and pipe cleaners. The children enjoyed testing new techniques and getting creative with the paint.





In Music, we have been developing our understanding of note lengths and creating our own four-beat rhythms using crotchets, quavers and minims. We have also enjoyed singing our key song 'Like a Roman'!

It has been wonderful to see the children so enthusiastic and engaged, particularly when learning through practical experiences and exploring new ideas together.

Blackman Class



What an exciting start to the year it has been! As well as settling into our new class, building friendships and thinking about the importance of kindness and belonging, the children have thrown themselves into our new theme, *Ever Changing Earth*. From Roman Britain and rebellious queens to earthquakes, volcanoes and mountain formation, our class have been very busy.



Our theme got off to a fantastic start with a trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace. The children were fascinated by seeing real Roman life in our local area and enjoyed discovering how the Roman legacy continues to shape our world today. A particular highlight was creating their own Bulla, giving them a glimpse into life as a Roman child. Back in the classroom, our investigations have continued as we explored the story of Boudicca and learned how her rebellion became a significant turning point for the Romans in Britain.

In geography, we have been discovering how our planet has changed over millions of years. The children have explored mountain formation, creating their own models of fold and fault-block mountains using felt and card. They have also investigated the structure of the Earth by using a hard-boiled egg to represent its different layers, helping them understand what lies beneath our feet. This was a messy and smelly lesson! Learning about tectonic plates, earthquakes and volcanoes has captured everyone's imagination. Our human volcano demonstration was a particularly popular experience.





In PE, we have been developing our basketball skills through a range of increasingly challenging activities and mini-games. The children have shown great determination as they have practised dribbling, passing, movement and teamwork. It has been wonderful to see their confidence grow as they begin to bring these skills together and apply them in game situations.

As we continue our *Ever Changing Earth* journey, we are looking forward to discovering even more about the forces that have shaped our world and the people who have influenced its history. With plenty of exciting learning still ahead, we cannot wait to see where our investigations take us next.

Coelho Class





In Coelho class, we have been learning about our Humanities-based topic called 'Ever Changing Earth' where we have been finding out about the Romans invasion of Britain. We particularly enjoyed our recent school trip to Fishbourne Roman Palace, where we stepped back in time and discover what everyday life was like nearly 2,000 years ago. One of the most popular activities is making flour from wheat grains, just as Roman people would have done. Using a replica quern stone, children grind wheat by hand to produce flour, learning how much effort was needed to prepare food before modern machines existed. Back at school, in English, we have really enjoyed studying Shaun Tan's The Arrival and have produced a range of diary entries from the point of view of a number of different characters. Meanwhile in Maths, we have been



building on our place value knowledge and have also recapped formal written methods in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

Whereas in Science, we have learnt about Earth and Space and considered the movement of the Earth and other planets relative to the Sun in the solar system. As artists, the children have been working towards creating their own mixed-media painting. They will be focusing on exploring how we can use paint, collage and mosaic to recreate the landscapes and decorative art of Ancient Rome. In P.E, we have been improving our teamwork skills using netball as our focus sport of this initial half-term.

In other news, we are continuing to encourage the children in Coelho class to make sure they are practising their times tables and reading at home for 15 minutes each day as part of their daily home learning activities

Lighthouse and Hub



What a great start to the new school year in the Lighthouse and Hub!

We have all settled back into school life beautifully and have embraced all our learning opportunities with enthusiasm and positivity.





A particular success this term has been the opening of our sensory circuit room. We have welcomed having the opportunity to use the space to recover and reset throughout the day.



As always, we have loved our cooking lessons this term! We have enjoyed making (and eating!) many different things, from pizzas to fruit kebabs, and savoury to sweet biscuits – all building on the skills that some of us learnt last year, whilst also teaching our new friends the skills they need too.



Subject Focus – Arts Week

A Week of Creativity and Belonging

What a truly amazing Arts Week we have had at Hawthorns!

Throughout the week, our talented children have immersed themselves in a wide range of creative experiences, producing songs, poetry, dance performances, artwork and much more, all centred around our theme of belonging at Hawthorns.

Family, community, school, friends
These things make our friendships mend
Happiness, kindness, smiling and laughter
At Hawthorns, we learn happy ever after
Joining in, safe place-THIS IS HOW WE BELONG!
Someone to talk to-JOIN IN OUR SONG!
Love in our community-THIS IS HOW WE BELONG!
Count, connected-BUILD A DREAM!
Join our song-LET'S MAKE A TEAM!





The children explored the work of a diverse range of artists and composers, from Picasso to Haring and from Vivaldi to Dolly Parton, developing their appreciation of different creative styles and traditions.



We were also delighted to welcome a number of inspiring visitors and organisations, including Rocksteady Music School, NextGen DJ, Triple Threat, West Sussex Music and Siggi Mwasote, who helped bring the arts to life through engaging workshops and performances.

If your child has been inspired by their experiences this week, there are opportunities to continue developing their talents beyond the school day:

- Rocksteady Music School and NextGen DJ can offer lessons in school.
- Triple Threat and West Sussex Music Choirs provide weekend opportunities for children to get involved.

Please click on the links for further information or contact the School Office, who will be happy to help.

A huge well done to all of our children for their enthusiasm, creativity and confidence throughout the week. We are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved!





Trick or Treat!

Halloween should be a fun occasion, but not everyone feels comfortable with it, so it is important to respect this. If you, are heading out this year, here are some simple steps you can take to help keep everyone safe and for the children at Hawthorns to have fun if they are trick or treating

If you're going out...



Plan ahead. Halloween isn't everyone's cup of tea. Some streets and neighbourhoods embrace it, while others don't, so it's worth planning ahead. Ask neighbours for recommendations and plan your route. It's safest to visit houses you know or the homes of people your family and friends know.

Always stay outside when trick-or-treating and never go into someone's home, even if you are invited in. Remember to stay on the doorstep and only approach homes where it is clear that visitors are welcome.

Look out for pumpkins. The general rule of thumb is that if someone is displaying a carved pumpkin, they are happy for trick-or-treaters to call. It's equally important to respect "No Trick or Treat" signs and posters. Some people find Halloween a difficult or anxious time, so if a household has asked not to be disturbed, please respect their wishes. If in doubt, simply move on.

Children should always be accompanied by a responsible adult. In many communities, younger trick-or-treaters tend to go out earlier in the evening when it is still light, and they often get the best choice of treats. Older children and teenagers may be more independent, but they should stay together in groups and avoid trick-or-treating alone.

Be visible. Stick to well-lit areas and use torches, glow sticks, or light-up accessories so that you can see clearly and be seen by others. Take extra care around roads, stay on pavements where possible, and use designated crossing points. Bright or reflective costumes can help improve visibility.

Check your treats. Do not eat your treats until the person who loves and cares for you has checked them – We need to avoid choking hazards and allergies!

If you are staying home....

Make it clear if you are taking part or not. If you don't have a carved pumpkin or decorations but you want to offer treats, you can use a 'Trick or Treaters Welcome'

poster. Or display a 'No Trick or Treat' sign in your window or on your front door if you do not wish to be disturbed.

Keep your door secure: If you choose to answer the door, consider using a door chain. If you feel unsure or vulnerable, there is no obligation to answer.

Check who is at the door: Use a spyhole, window, or video doorbell before opening the door.

Keep your pets safe: Store all chocolate, sweets, and treats where pets cannot access them. Chocolate contains theobromine, which is toxic to dogs and cats.

Dispose of pumpkins and decorations safely: Consider using LED lights instead of candles to reduce the risk of fire. Dispose of pumpkins and decorations responsibly once Halloween is over.



Dates for the Diary

October

23rd – INSET

November

2nd – Closure Day

11th – New Parents 2027/28 School Tour

11th – Parents'/Guardians Consultation Evening

12th – Parents'/Guardians Consultation Evening

17th – Parents'/Guardians Evening (Lighthouse only)

18th – Stay & Play New Parents 2027/28

20th – Family Friday

23rd - New Parents 2027/28 School Tour

27th – Author Visit & Library Launch

December

11th – Carol Concert, St Symphorian's Church

16th – Christmas Lunch

2027

4th January – INSET

5TH January – Start of term

15th February-19th February – Half Term

25th March – End of term

12th April – INSET

13th April - Start of term

10th – 13th May – SATs week Yr 6

31st May-4th June – Half term

7th – 18th June – Multiplication Check Yr 4

20th July – End of Term

21st July - INSET