



School Newsletter

FRIDAY 16TH OCTOBER 2026

Headteacher's insight

This week, I would like to focus on something that plays an important role in every child's learning journey – **handwriting**. In a world where technology is increasingly part of our everyday lives, the ability to write fluently, neatly and confidently remains an essential skill.



Good handwriting is about much more than presentation. When children can form letters automatically, they are able to concentrate on the content of their writing rather than the physical process of getting words onto the page. This frees up their thinking for vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and expressing their wonderful ideas. Handwriting also supports fine motor development, coordination and confidence.

Getting a grip!

One of the foundations of successful handwriting is how children hold their pencil. There are several different pencil grips, and you may notice your child using one of these:

Fisted grip: The pencil is held in the whole fist, common in very young children.

Digital pronate grip: The pencil is held with the fingers, but the wrist is turned downwards.

Four-finger grip: The pencil is supported by the thumb and three fingers.

Tripod grip: The pencil rests on the middle finger and is controlled by the thumb and index finger.



At school, we encourage children towards a **comfortable, dynamic tripod grip**, where the thumb and index finger guide the pencil while it rests on the middle finger. This allows for small, controlled movements and helps children write with greater ease and stamina. However, some children develop alternative functional grips that work equally well, and our priority is always comfort, control and avoiding unnecessary strain.

Our approach to handwriting

Across our schools, we follow the **Letter-join handwriting programme**, which provides a consistent approach to letter formation, positioning, sizing and joining. Children begin by developing the movements and control needed to form letters correctly, progressing towards a fluent, joined cursive style as they become ready.

Like reading, handwriting is a skill that improves through **regular, purposeful practice**. Little and often is far more effective than a long session once a week. Just five minutes of focused practice can make a real difference over time.





Continued.....

How can you help at home?

There are lots of simple, enjoyable ways to support handwriting development:

Write for a purpose: Encourage your child to write shopping lists, birthday cards, thank-you notes, invitations or messages to family members.

Practise letter formation: Spend a few minutes forming letters carefully, paying attention to where each letter starts and the direction of movement.

Make it fun: Try writing letters in sand, flour, shaving foam or with chalk outdoors.

Build finger strength: Activities such as threading beads, using tweezers, playing with dough, colouring and cutting all help develop the muscles needed for writing.

Write together: Let your child see you writing by hand and talk about how you form your letters.

Celebrate progress: Praise careful formation, effort and improvement rather than expecting perfect handwriting every time.

It is also worth checking that your child is sitting comfortably, with their feet supported, their paper positioned appropriately and their non-writing hand helping to steady the page.

Most importantly, we must remember that **handwriting is a journey, not a race**. Children develop their fine motor control at different rates, and confidence is just as important as accuracy. We want every child to see themselves as a capable writer, able to communicate their thoughts and ideas with pride.

Thank you, as always, for supporting your child's learning at home. Those small moments of practice really do add up!



Mrs Thompson

Mrs Emily Thompson
Executive Headteacher



Learner Review Meetings



The Learner Review meetings will take place during the week beginning Monday **17th November**.

Each class teacher will offer a **10-minute appointment for each child**, where the parent/carer and the child (where appropriate) will have the opportunity to review their learning and progress so far this academic year. For our youngest children, it may not be appropriate for them to attend, and teachers will advise accordingly.

Appointments will be available between **08.30 - 16.00 (please see the table below)**. If you require more flexibility, please do contact us so we can see what we can do to support.

Bookings are open on My Child at School (MCAS). If you experience any difficulties accessing the system or booking your slot, please contact the school office who will be happy to help.

We look forward to welcoming you to these valuable conversations about your child's learning journey.

Date	Class	Times
Tuesday 17th November	Owls (Year 5)	08.30- 16.00
Thursday 19th November	Dragonflies (Year 1/2) Squirrels (Year 3/4)	08.30 - 16.00
Friday 20th November	Butterflies (Reception)	08.30 - 11.30
Friday 20th November	Badgers (Year 6)	08.30 - 12.00



News from our classrooms

Dragonflies Class

Dragonflies have been busy and loving all the new learning they are exploring!

Maths

This week, the children have been developing their addition skills by using concrete resources and number lines to solve number problems. We have also started exploring subtraction and learning different strategies to successfully subtract from a given number. The children have shown great enthusiasm as they build their confidence with these important maths skills.

English

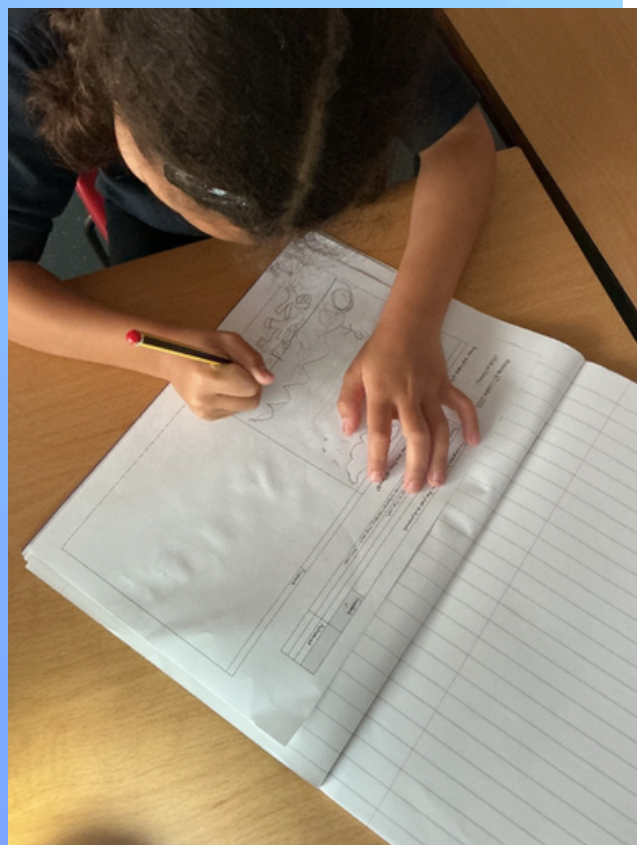
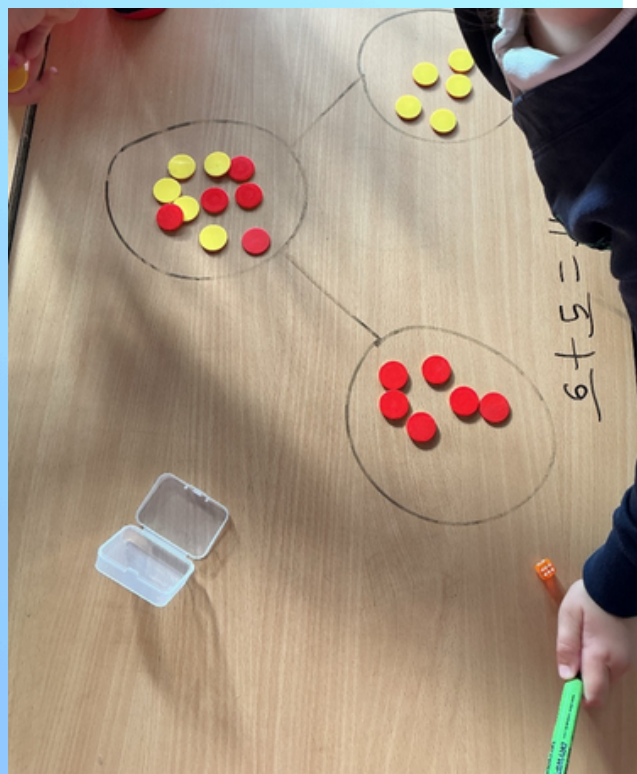
In English, we have continued exploring the wonderful story *The Journey Home*. The children are becoming increasingly engaged in learning about the different animals featured in the story. Alongside this, we have been learning about different sentence types and developing our confidence in writing super sentences. We are so impressed with the children's growing independence and enthusiasm for writing!

Science

Our learning about the five senses continues. This week, we recapped all five senses and investigated how people use them in different ways. We also explored why certain jobs rely on particular senses and how these help people to be successful in their roles.

History

We have been investigating how holidays have changed over time. The children examined a range of artefacts linked to holidays from the past and compared them to holidays today, identifying similarities and differences between then and now.





Continued.....

😊 PSHE

In PSHE, we are continuing our work on managing emotions. This week, we focused on the feelings of calm and happy, discussing situations that might make people feel these emotions and why recognising our feelings is important.

🎵 Music

Everyone is loving their music lessons with Mr Madden! This week, the children explored pulse and learnt about different instrument families, discovering how a variety of instruments create sound.

🏃 PE

With Mr Parker, the class have been developing their fundamental movement skills through a wide range of games and activities. The children have practised running, jumping, skipping and throwing, showing excellent effort and perseverance.

🎨 Art

This week, we began creating our final art pieces linked to self-identity. The children have designed self-portraits inspired by the artist Frida Kahlo and will be using mixed media techniques to bring their artwork to life. We can't wait to see the finished results!





This Week's House Points

Franklin



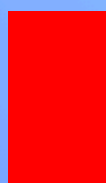
137

Darwin



116

Hawking



90

Blackburn



65

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Olive, Dragonflies Class

Pip, Dragonflies Class



REMINDER

Christmas cards

If you have chosen to place an order, you must return your child's art work to your child's class teacher by **Friday 23rd October**. Art work will be picked up from school when school reopens after the half term break so the printers can work their magic with your child's art work. All profits will go towards enhancing your children's experiences in school and for that we thank you in advance for your support.

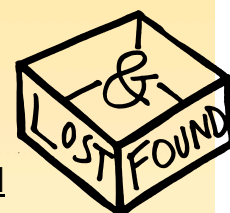


Lost Property

Lost property is now stored in the foyer near the school office. Parents and carers are encouraged to check this area regularly for any missing items.

Please be advised that all unclaimed items will be **cleared at the end of each half term, so please come and check before next week!**

We kindly remind families of the importance of clearly labelling all clothing and personal belongings that are brought to school. This enables staff to return lost items to their owners promptly and helps to reduce the volume of lost property.



Thank you for your continued support.



**Calling All Reception
& Year 1 Parents!**



**Parent and Child Phonics Workshop Reception
and Year 1– Monday 19th October**

Come and learn phonics together!

We warmly invite parents and carers to join their children for a short, fun and interactive phonics workshop on **Monday 19th October, starting at 3:30pm.**

In just 15–20 minutes, you'll have the opportunity to explore how we teach phonics in school, practise some of the techniques your child uses in lessons and pick up practical tips for supporting reading and phonics at home.

We really encourage you to come along! It will be a fantastic opportunity to learn alongside your child, build their confidence and strengthen the connection between learning at school and at home.

We look forward to seeing you there!

**Parent/Carer Information Sessions
– We Want Your Views!**



We are keen to offer a range of useful and informative sessions for our parents and carers, focusing on topics that matter most to you and your family. To help us plan these sessions, we would love to hear your thoughts and suggestions. Please take a few moments to complete our Parent/Carer Information Sessions Microsoft Form using the link below. Your feedback will help us shape sessions that are relevant, practical and supportive of our whole school community.

[Parent/Carer Information Sessions – Fill in form](#)



Fen Ditton PTFA



HalloweenBAKE SALE

3.30pm - 4pm

Fen Ditton CP Playground

23
Oct



**Cupcakes, Brownies, Biscuits, Cake,
Doughnuts and more!**

Cash and card payments taken
All proceeds to benefit Fen Ditton CP School

Shop bought or baked donations welcome. Please drop baked donations to the school office by 9am on the 23rd October

Questions? Please contact
ptfa@fendittonprimary.org



Scholastic Book Fair

**THANK
YOU!**

2026

**WHAT AN AMAZING
COMMUNITY!**

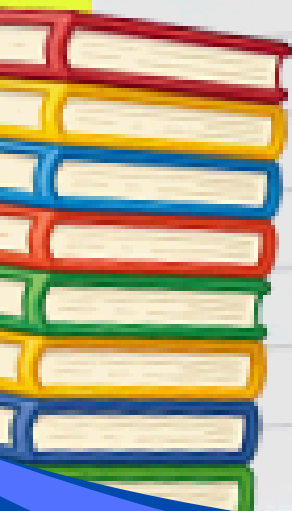
TOTAL SPENT: £890

SCHOOL RECEIVES 50% BACK

**THAT EQUALS £445 FOR OUR
SCHOOL!**

*Thank you to everyone who took part
in and bought books at our Scholastic
Book Fair!*

*Every book purchased helps our school
grow — thank you!*



ANGLIAN LEARNING



Key Dates/Events

Events - Autumn term

There are several curriculum events being held during school time that your child will be able to tell you about and we will share in the newsletter and on social media. Below are a list of only dates that we feel are most important for parents to be aware of or may require some support/action. We hope it is helpful to have these dates in advance.

OCTOBER

- **Monday 19th October:** Parent and Child Workshop Reception and Year 1 - Phonics 3:30-4pm
- **Friday 23rd October:** PTFA Halloween Bake Sale
- **October half term:** 26th - 30th October

NOVEMBER

- **Monday 2nd November:** INSET Day - School not open for children
- **Monday 2nd November:** Book Advent Calendar Raffle tickets go on sale
- **Tuesday 3rd November:** Tea towel order deadline for parents and carers
- **Tuesday 10th November, 3pm - 3.20pm:** **Badgers** class assembly (Parents/Carers invited)
- **Friday 13th November:** Non uniform day - donations welcomed to support the Christmas Fair
- **Monday 16th to Friday 20th November:** Learner Review meetings for each pupil and parent/carer from Reception to Year 6. Each family will make a 10 minute appointment and attend in person or online to review their child's learning with the class teacher.
- **Tuesday 17th November, 3pm - 3.20pm:** **Owls** class assembly (Parents/Carers invited)
- **Tuesday 24th November, 3pm - 3.20pm:** **Squirrels** class assembly (Parents/Carers invited)
- **Friday 27th November:** Confirmation of Spring term clubs schedule and arrangements for securing places to be shared with parents and carers
- **Sunday 29th November:** Deadline for Book Advent Calendar Raffle tickets purchasing
- **Monday 30th November:** Winners of Book Advent Calendar Raffle announced and prizes given

DECEMBER

- **Thursday 10th December:** Parent and Child Workshop Year 3 and 4 - Times Tables 3:30-4pm
- **Friday 11th December:** Christmas Fair 3:30-4:45pm
- **Friday 11th December:** Christmas Jumper Day
- **Thursday 17th December:** Last Day of Term - School closes for Christmas

Reception Open Day 2027

We invite you to visit **Fen Ditton Community Primary School**, register today for a group tour.

Group Tour Dates & Times

Monday 5 Oct, 11am - 11:45am

Monday 12 Oct, 2pm - 2:45pm

Monday 19 Oct, 4pm - 4:45pm

Monday 9 Nov, 11am - 11:45am

Monday 16 Nov, 2pm - 2:45pm



REGISTER NOW



If your child was born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023 you need to apply for Reception for September 2027.

Deadline for applications is 15th January 2027



FOLLOW US



AUTUMN TERM 2026

Autumn 1 Term Starts – Friday 4 September
Autumn 1 Term Ends – Friday 23 October
Half Term - 26 October - 30 October
Inset Day – Monday 2 November
Autumn 2 Term Starts– Tuesday 3 November
Autumn 2 Term Ends – Thursday 17 December
Inset Day – Friday 18 December
21 December – 1 January – Christmas Holidays

SPRING TERM 2027

Inset Day – Monday 4 January
Spring Term 1 Starts – Tuesday 5 January
Spring Term 1 Ends – Friday 12 February
Half Term - 15 February - 19 February
Spring Term 2 Starts – Monday 22 February
Spring Term 2 Ends – Thursday 25 March
Friday 26 March – Friday 10 April – Easter Holidays

SUMMER TERM 2027

Summer Term 1 Starts – Monday 12 April
May Bank Holiday – Monday 3 May
Summer Term 1 Ends – Friday 28 May
Half Term - 31 May – 4 June
Summer Term 2 Starts – Monday 7 June
Inset Day – Friday 2 July
Summer Term 2 Ends – Wednesday 21 July

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Instagram!**

