

Headlines

Issue 18 - 30.06.23



MESSAGE FROM MRS FORD, HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents/Carers

We have had a busy half term in school with many things to celebrate, including sporting successes, exciting school trips, and most of all fantastic learning.

OFSTED

I would like to thank my wonderful staff and our amazing children for their hard work during our Ofsted Inspection last week. I would also like to thank all parents/carers and Governors for your support and the contributions you made to the Inspection.

Our Ofsted Report now needs to be written and will then go through a process to be quality assured which, whilst extremely unlikely, can sometimes change the judgements made. As a result, the full report will not be available to parents until September.

The Ofsted Inspectors were very complimentary about Stepgates Community School and we are very pleased with the feedback we received. I am enormously proud of the staff and children, who were wonderful ambassadors for the school.

A huge thank you must go to our FOSS members who worked tirelessly organising the Summer Fair. Once again, this was very well attended and enjoyed by all. A huge thank you too, to the Mayor of Runnymede for 2023-24, Cllr Saise-Marshall, for attending this event.

I would also like to say thank you to all parents/carers who supported Sports Day yesterday.

On Tuesday 27th June the children were able to visit their new classroom and spend an afternoon with their new class teacher, as part of our transition for their move up to the next year group in September. (Please see separate letter sent to parents on Tuesday 27th June for full staffing details for next academic year). This was a very exciting afternoon for the children, who all enjoyed finding out a little more about the things they will be learning in the next school year.

Transition visits for the new Reception and Nursery children have also taken place and were very successful. We look forward to welcoming all the new starters in September.

Year 6 have been making their preparations for moving on to their new secondary schools and on Monday 10th July they will present their end of term production *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*.

We still have a range of exciting activities to enjoy before the end of term, including our 'Big Splash Week' from Monday 3rd to Friday 7th July. On Saturday 8th July we will be taking part in the Black Cherry Fair Parade. As we did last year, we are planning to shine within our community by creating a simple walking procession. (Please see separate flyer from FOSS for further details). Dance Club will also be performing two dances in the main arena at the Black Cherry Fair at approximately 12:30pm, and many of our own pupils will be performing with their own external clubs.

SAFE PARKING REMINDER

I fully appreciate how difficult it can be to park near the school when picking up and dropping off your children, however, can I ask parents to show consideration to the residents of Stepgates by not parking across driveways, the school's electronic gates or on the yellow 'keep clear' zig zag road markings. Please can I also ask you to take care with your speed when pulling in to park, pulling out or driving along Stepgates. It is dangerous and makes crossing the road unsafe for our children, as well as being very irritating for our neighbours. If you or your child has difficulty accessing the school then you are welcome to park directly outside the school entrance with your 'Disability Badge'. Thank you in advance for your consideration and safe parking.

MUFTI DAY - MONDAY 3RD JULY

Monday 3rd July is a Mufti Day in school. If you are able to send in a bag of sweets (No chocolate or multipacks please) to support the Black Cherry Fair stall this would be very gratefully received.

MESSAGE FROM MRS FORD, HEADTEACHER Cont'd....

ABSENCE & HOLIDAY REQUESTS

As of September 2023 (Autumn term), I would like to inform parents of my expectations regarding absence and holiday requests. The Head Teacher, on behalf of the Governing Body, can grant leave, at their discretion, for up to five days in any school year in EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES. (Please note - A 'Family Holiday' does not meet the criteria for 'exceptional circumstances'). This includes leaving school early. In accordance with guidance from Surrey County Council no holidays will be authorised at the beginning of the academic year, or during May due to end of year assessments. No parents/carers can demand leave of absence for their children as a right. Holidays taken without the permission of the Governing Body may result in legal action being taken against each parent.

As a school we are obliged to inform you that you may be subject to a Penalty Notice if your child's absence from school is unauthorised. It is important your child attends school to get a good education. **By law**, as a parent or carer, you must make sure that if your child is aged 5 to 16 (compulsory school age), he or she receives a suitable full-time education. This means that your child should not have sessions of unauthorised absence. During term time your child should attend school regularly unless he or she is ill or the school has authorised their absence.

The Penalty Notice fine would be :-

- £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days, rising to
- £120 per parent, per child if paid between 21-28 days.
- If the fine is not paid within 28 days you may be prosecuted under S444.1 of the Education Act 1996.

I must advise you that if the prosecution takes place, the maximum fine is £1,000 per parent, per child. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school.

Our inclusion Officer also expects school to provide evidence of illness if attendance is below 90%.

Our key priority is to ensure your child(ren) are as successful as possible, are able to reach his/her full potential and gains maximum benefits from his/her educational experience.

I would hope that upon reflection you are able to support this decision in line with the Local Authority and Government policy, that leave should be restricted to the 13 weeks school holidays except in exceptional circumstances.

REMINDERS

Finally, please could I ask all parents/carers to ensure your children are supervised at all times during 'pick-up' and 'drop-off' - siblings and all children, once collected, should remain in your care at all times. Please also don't forget bikes and scooters are not permitted on the school grounds.

As always, thank you for your continued support and generosity.

Mrs T Ford
Headteacher

ATTENDANCE
Congratulations to
Ladybirds Class and Hawks
Class for the best
attendance in the last two
weeks.

	12th-16th June	19th-23rd June
WHOLE SCHOOL	96.1%	91.4%
Ladybirds	97.9%	91.6%
Butterflies	96.9%	86.9%
Grasshoppers	93.8%	90.6%
Falcons	95.8%	88.5%
Hawks	96.2%	97.9%
Owls	96.1%	90.3%
Kites	96.3%	94.4%

PROUD CORNER

WELL DONE TO:

- ♦ John E, Year 4 - Football Trophy Player of the Year and Team Trophy
- ♦ Max P, Year 2 - Cubs Enrolment Certificate ,Football Tournament Medal and Football Trophy for scoring most goals
- ♦ Clay H, Year 1 - Football Trophy
- ♦ Owen J, Year 5 - Manager's Player of the Season Football Trophy
- ♦ Delilah S, Year 1 - Level 1 Gym Certificate
- ♦ Isla-Rose S, Year 1 - Gymnastic Medal
- ♦ Ella C, Year 2 - Gymnastic Medal
- ♦ Sonny S, Reception - Playball Trophy
- ♦ Sebbie H, Year 2 - Beavers Badge Paddle Boarding
- ♦ Kyffin C, Year 4 - Beginners Archery Certificate

Thank you for sharing your success with the children at our Whole School Assembly.

HEADTEACHER AWARDS

Well done to the following children who have been presented with Headteacher Awards:

- * James F, Year 4
- * Malena B, Year 5
- * Mika I, Year 5
- * Maggie M, Year 4
- * Penelope De G, Year 1
- * Sean-Paul S, Year 3

STEPGATES CHOIR THEATRE TRIP



On Wednesday 21st June, Choir Club went to the theatre in Woking to see Annie. When we arrived on the school minibus some of us bought a programme, then we found our seats. It took a while to start, but we didn't mind because it gave us time to look at the programmes. Within minutes we were laughing! Miss Hannigan was played by Craig Revel Horwood, and was VERY funny. In the interval, we had tubs of ice cream, which were quite messy, but cooled us down as the theatre was even hotter than outside!



The performance had some amazing dancing, singing and great jokes!

We really enjoyed it, and all of us were singing for a long time afterwards. Some people even danced outside. The whole thing was a lot of fun and very useful because we are currently rehearsing for our very own performance of Annie, which we are doing every Tuesday lunchtime.

Written by Alannah B, Year 5

YEAR 6 RESIDENTIAL TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT



This week was the best week of my life! I was so surprised how quickly the trip went. We were so lucky to travel to the Isle of Wight on such a sunny day. After saying goodbye to a few classmates, who were staying in school, we took our first coach to Portsmouth Harbour, where we had our lunch in the sunshine whilst taking in views of the sea and HMS Warrior. We then took the FastCat over to Ryde Pier where we then walked to our second coach, that only took 20 minutes to get to PGL.

In no time, we were shown to our cabins to unpack and get ready for fun! My favourite activity was the Giant Swing. Our team had to work together to pull a rope, which lifted us into the sky, then you or your partner had to pull another rope which launched you into the summer breeze! During the week, we did so many different activities such as; zip wire, climbing, abseiling, kayaking, camp fire, sensory trail, survivor, beach walks and so much more!

Now I'm telling you, the food we had was AMAZING! All meals were fantastic, with hot food choices at breakfast, lunch and dinner, but my favourite was definitely the breakfast!

Thanks to everyone involved for an awesome week. I would definitely recommend it!



Written by Rosie



YEAR 6 ACTIVITY WEEK

I was so excited for all this fun to begin! We first said our farewells to our classmates because they were off to the Isle of Wight! We then began to start our first activity, which was to make glitter jars. This was so much fun. Later that day, we went to St Peter's Church, where we learnt all about bellringing and had a go at some of this ourselves!



During the week, we participated in so many different activities such as; visits to the park, Forest School, swimming, making photo frames, tie dye and so much more.

Wednesday was my favourite day, because we spent the morning baking and making pizzas ready for our movie afternoon. On Thursday we were allowed to bring our bikes or scooters into school and then we had a party.

Overall, Activity week was great fun and I'm thankful that I got this opportunity and an amazing experience out of this.

Written by Nayeema

YEAR 6 LEAVERS SERVICE AT GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL



On Tuesday 13th June Kites Class enjoyed a trip to Guildford Cathedral for their Leavers Service. The children enjoyed activities to reflect on their years at Primary School, before joining other schools for a Service of Thanksgiving.



DISTRICT SPORTS

On Wednesday 14th June, a group of children from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 represented Stepgates Community School at the annual District Sports Event.

Events included sprints, 600m, ball throwing, long jump and relay races. Every child can be very proud of their achievements on the day – they represented Stepgates with great pride, participated in their individual events with courage and determination and worked so well together as a team in the relay races. The children had an amazing day and it was a great experience for all.

A huge well done to the whole team, but a special mention to the following for achieving medal positions:

Bronze Medals:

Year 5 Boys Standing Long Jump – Arthur M-B

Year 6 Girls 600m – Amelia W

Year 6 Boys 600m – Harrison M

Silver Medals:

Year 3 Girls Ball Throw – Ellie J

Year 4 Boys Ball Throw – Oliver B

Gold Medals:

Year 5 Boys Ball Throw – Oliver W

Year 6 Boys Standing Long Jump – Olly B



A special mention to Freddie C and Subhan K who stepped into two events on the day to replace absentees and to Owen J and Oliver W in Year 5 for stepping up to the Year 6 Boys relay final when two Year 6 boys were poorly.

A huge thank you to all parents involved, especially to those who provided lifts or endured the heat by helping out at the event. We couldn't have done it without you!

Thank you

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone for their help and support with the Father's Day Stall.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to parents/carers for supporting this FOSS event.

FOSS

Falcons Class

Falcons has finished their exploration of Ancient Egypt with a bang. Our assembly showed everything the children have learnt and how inspired they have been by the topic. We hope it was enjoyed by all, even though we did mummify some of the children! We were then privileged to visit Haslemere Museum where we could showcase our Egyptian knowledge, learn even more amazing facts, and all the children mummified their own toy to take home. The children have said that 'this is the best History topic ever!'

RNLI VISIT





On Wednesday 21st June we welcomed Colin Brown from the RNLI into our school to talk about Water Safety both at the beach and in rivers and lakes.

The children were amazing and listened so well. They learnt how to call for help when in the sea and practiced putting their hand (squeezed fist) up in the air whilst shouting help. They learnt about the importance of floating if you fall in the water and that after 90 seconds, once calm calling for help or swimming to safety.

We had two children who dressed as lifeguards and held up different beach flags to reinforce which flags you can swim between. We found out about inflatables that drift out to sea and that an orange windsock warns against using inflatables when strong winds are blowing out to sea.

If paddle boarding they reinforced the importance of parents having their phones charged and in a waterproof case to be able to call for help.

We watched a video about a life boat named 'Shannon' and discussed that the crew have other jobs and volunteer their time. If you want to find out more RNLI.org has lots of information.

Flags: If the beach you're at is not lifeguarded, please take extra care if you are going into the water. If lifeguards are on patrol, then you'll need to know your flags.	
Beach flags	
	<u>Red and yellow beach flag</u> Lifeguard-patrolled swimming and body boarding zone or lifeguard on duty. This shows the lifeguarded area and is the safest place to swim and bodyboard
	<u>Black and white chequered beach flag</u> Surfboard and other water craft zone or zone boundary. For surfboards, stand-up paddleboards, kayaks and other non-powered craft. Launch and recovery area for kite surfers and windsurfers. Never swim or bodyboard here.
	<u>Red beach flag</u> Dangerous conditions: do not enter the water. Signifies a severe hazard, that water conditions are unsafe for swimming and other water activities, and people should not enter the water.
	<u>Orange windsock</u> Danger: no inflatables to be used on the water. Indicates offshore or strong wind conditions. Never use inflatables when the windsock is flying.

In addition to lessons in schools and outside speakers such as the RNLI we try to signpost opportunities in the local area.

Surrey Fire and Rescue service are holding a Water Safety Event 'Walton Water Safety Day' on Saturday 22nd July from 10am to 4pm at Cowey Sale, under Walton Bridge, Walton.

Further information on Fire Station open days and water safety events can be found here <https://orlo.uk/x4q93> and more will be added as they are booked in.

DATES - 2022/2023

UPCOMING EVENTS - SUMMER TERM 2023

Monday 3rd July	Mufti Day - Bag of sweets * for the Black Cherry Fair Stall * (No chocolate or multipacks please)
Mon 3rd-Fri 7th July	Big Splash Week
Thursday 6th July	Year 6 (Kites) to Harry Potter Studios
Friday 7th July	Grasshoppers Class (Year 2) trip to Wisley
Friday 7th July	Butterflies (Year 1) Class Assembly 9:05am
Saturday 8th July	Black Cherry Fair
Monday 10th July	Kites Class (Year 6) Production
Thursday 13th July	3:30-5pm - Parents Celebration of Work Opening Evening
Thursday 13th July	Grasshoppers (Year 2) Class Assembly 9:05am
Friday 21st July	Last day of Summer term - Children finish at 1pm

TERM DATES - 2023/2024

Friday 1st September 2023 - INSET Day - School closed

AUTUMN TERM 2023

Monday 4th September 2023 - Children in Years 1-6 start school

Friday 20th October 2023 - Children finish at normal time for half term

(Half Term - Mon 23rd October to Friday 27th October 2023)

Monday 30th October 2023 - Children return to school

Monday 4th December 2023 - INSET Day - School closed

Friday 15th December 2023 - Last day of Autumn term - Children finish at 1pm

(Christmas holidays - Mon 18th December 2023 to Mon 1st January 2024)

SPRING TERM 2024

Tuesday 2nd January 2024 - Children return to school

Friday 9th February 2024 - Children finish at normal time for half term

(Half Term - Mon 12th February to Fri 16th February 2024)

Monday 19th February 2024 - Children return to school

Thursday 28th March 2024 - Last day of Spring term - Children finish at 1pm

(Easter holidays - Friday 29th March to Friday 12th April 2024)

SUMMER TERM 2024

Monday 15th April 2024 - Children return to school

Monday 6th May 2024 - Bank Holiday - School closed

Friday 24th May 2024 - Children finish at normal time for half term

(Half Term - Mon 27th May to Fri 31st May 2024)

Monday 3rd June 2024 - Children return to school

Monday 10th June 2024 - INSET Day - School closed

Friday 19th July 2024 - Last day of Summer term - Children finish at 1pm

Monday 22nd July 2024 - INSET Day - School closed

Tuesday 23rd July 2024 - INSET Day - School closed

INSET DAYS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024

Friday 1st September 2023

Monday 4th December 2023

Monday 10th June 2024

Monday 22nd July 2024

Tuesday 23rd July 2024