

Headlines

Issue 12 - 13.03.26



MESSAGE FROM MRS FORD, HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents/Carers

It was a pleasure to welcome parents into school last week for our 'Celebration of Pupils Work' sessions; once again these were a huge success and very well attended. I hope you enjoyed the opportunity to look through your child's work and see their classroom/learning environment.

Thank you to all parents/carers who attended our Parent-Teacher Consultation Meetings held this week, which were also very well attended. If you were not able to meet your child's class teacher please contact them to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. These meetings are a valued opportunity for you to celebrate your child's achievements and support their learning.

The last two weeks have been very busy at Stepgates, with some wonderful successes! Huge congratulations to our Dance Crew who came first in the ERPSSA Dance Festival at Notre Dame School. The children performed brilliantly and were amazing ambassadors for Stepgates! What a fabulous achievement! (Please see Page 4 for further details).

RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL CIVIC AWARDS 2026

We were very honoured to be nominated for an Award at this year's Runnymede Borough Council Civic Awards by one of our parents.

The Runnymede Borough Civic Awards shine the spotlight on people making a difference to the Borough, yet whose efforts go unsung.

This could be people who: have helped a neighbour in need, coached a local sports team, gave up their free time to volunteer, achieved something amazing, or carried out an exceptional act of bravery.

There are three award categories:

- * Community awards
- * Sports and fitness awards
- * Arts award

We were informed via email that we had been judged to be a finalist at the awards held this week at Thorpe Park, which we were very proud to attend.

As I was allowed to take two guests with me to attend, Mrs White and Mrs Conn accompanied me. We fell in to the Community section of the awards, which were towards the end of the ceremony, however were confused when our school was not named as a finalist. The last section of the evening was dedicated for 'Special Recognition' awards, and we were blown away to have won this Award for our efforts in school.

I would like to thank all staff for their tireless work and compassion for all our children.

We really are truly touched and humbled by this and I am honoured to dedicate this award to Ayla-Rose Rossiter and her wonderful parents. In the face of such profound challenges, they have shown us the true meaning of bravery, courage, and dignity. They are the real heroes of this story. Their strength remains an inspiration to us all.



MESSAGE FROM MRS FORD cont'd....

TERM DATES ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-2027

I wanted to share with you the confirmed term dates for the 2026-2027 school year. As some of you may be aware Surrey have changed their school holiday timings and as a maintained school we have to follow these. From September 2026, there will be a two-week Autumn half term and five days will be taken from the summer holiday in July 2027.

The school year will still have 195 days, including 5 INSET days. Please see Page 6 for the 2026-2027 academic year term dates, including Stepgates Community School INSET days.

WORLD BOOK DAY

The staff and children had a fantastic time celebrating World Book Day last week. On Monday, each class took part in a creative workshop based around the story of Pinocchio, culminating in a whole school performance to showcase what we had learnt!

Throughout the week, children took part in the Scholastic Book Company Live Lessons to interview authors, learn to draw like illustrators and write with flare about their interests. On World Book Day itself, children and staff came to school dressed as their favourite book characters, and brought copies of their book along to share with friends.

We enjoyed a 'Masked Reader' game show assembly to reveal staff and their favourite books - a fantastic week was had by all!



I would like to say a huge thank you to all parents for providing the wonderful costumes for your child(ren) to wear. Everyone looked amazing! We also saw some fantastic costumes by the staff.

STAFFING

Finally, I am sure you would all like to join me in wishing both Miss Tibble and Mr St Gallay a speedy recovery. We look forward to welcoming them back later in the Summer Term.

**Mrs T Ford
Headteacher**

ATTENDANCE
Congratulations to Kites and Butterflies Classes for the best attendance in the last two weeks.

	23rd-27th February	2nd-6th March
WHOLE SCHOOL	92.5%	94.7%
Ladybirds	94.1%	95.3%
Butterflies	89.1%	96.4%
Grasshoppers	92.1%	96.1%
Falcons	90.6%	92.7%
Hawks	95.4%	95.4%
Owls	89.4%	92.4%
Kites	97.3%	93.9%

PROUD CORNER

Well done to:

- ◆ Dakota B, Year 3 - Skiing Certificates and Medals
- ◆ Archie L, Year 4 - Sports Club Trophy for 'Doing His Best'
- ◆ Albert M, Year 2 - Man Of The Match Medal for Football
- ◆ Bella C, Year 6 - Gymnastics Medals And Flowers
- ◆ Kit C, Year 1 - Football Trophy
- ◆ Alfie G, Year 3, Man Of The Match Trophy
- ◆ Kallum B, Year 2 - Football Medal & Trophy
- ◆ Harry C, Year 1 - Trophy

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:

- Summer S, Year 5
- Ella C, Year 5
- Marley C, Year 2
- Piper C, Year 5

GRASSHOPPERS CLASS ASSEMBLY

It was Grasshoppers' turn to lead the class assemblies last week. They presented to us information they have learned all about The Great Fire of London in the style of a newscast. There were interviews, reporters, eyewitnesses and local villagers galore!

The performance was finished with the debut performance of the Grasshoppers recorder band playing 'London's Burning'. They were so proud of their performance and we know the grown ups were too!

FALCON CLASS ASSEMBLY

Falcons assembly this term was a celebration of World Book Day and the love of reading. The children were able to dress up again for the day and shared some of their favourite authors and books such as Julia Donaldson, Roald Dahl, Tom Gates and the magic of Harry Potter books. We hope we have inspired more children to read and enjoy the wonderful world of books.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

ERPSSA DANCE FESTIVAL 2026

On Thursday 5th March 2026, Stepgates dance crew competed in the ERPSSA Dance Festival at Notre Dame School. Every year there is an overall theme; the theme for this year was 'A Moment in History'.

Our dance was based on World War II, showing not one but many different stories; it demonstrates how families were separated, friends were parted and how stepping up to fight for your country felt!

When dance crew arrived at the festival, there were five other schools waiting to compete (including Notre Dame), Ongar's Headteacher gave us a preview of how the day was going to go - we also got informed as to when we were going to compete.

After a while, we got changed into our WW2 themed costumes, warmed up and ran through our routine before going into the dress rehearsal. We had a short amount of time, 10 minutes, to practice our routine on the theatre stage.

Once everyone had completed their rehearsals, we made our way into the theatre - where everyone sat down. We then had a warm up which was led by Notre Dame's dance coach.

It was now time to perform! Our dance showcased every single one of our talents with daring, eye-catching tricks and intricate choreography!

All the dances were very impressive and helped us understand moments in time, showing emotion and bravery; every dance put across a strong message.

Everyone felt nervous hoping that they impressed the teachers (who were voting for their favourite dance). In first place was...STEPGATES!

Overall, dance crew felt proud and relieved that all our hard-work throughout the weeks had paid off! We were very grateful for how supportive all the schools were. Thank you to all the teachers who supported us and made this all happen!

By Ellie and Shola (Kites Class)



BUTTERFLIES CLASS WALK

On 26th February Butterflies Class had their annual walk into Chertsey to see the old and new buildings and some of the interesting sites in Chertsey. We were very lucky to have three adult helpers which meant the whole class could explore and take the time to notice our local community; they were also able to see how new buildings differ to old ones. We walked to Abbey Fields and looked at the ponds, the bakery furnace area and discussed how life would have been different.

It was a great trip and we have lots to talk about that will help us with our learning. We are now looking forward to our summer trip!

IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR PARENTS

THE MINI EGG CHOKING HAZARD PARENTS NEED TO BE AWARE OF THIS EASTER!

Parents are being reminded of the age warnings on chocolate treats such as Mini Eggs this Easter. While great attention is given to the risks involved with common foods such as grapes - and the need to chop them up correctly - families can sometimes be unaware of the dangers posed by seemingly harmless treats.

An anonymous mother decided to recall her harrowing ordeal, after her daughter tragically choked on the treat. Filled with milk chocolate and containing a crispy sugar shell, chocolate Mini Eggs are often a go-to sweet treat during the Easter season. However, the size of the chocolate pieces make them unsuitable for young children. A visible warning about this is clearly marked on some packets, stating that they are not suitable for children under the age of four. However, sadly Sophie the little girl who died was five, so care must be taken whatever the age of the child.

DATES - 2025/2026

UPCOMING EVENTS - SPRING TERM 2026

Wed 18th - Fri 20th March	Hawks Class (Year 4) Residential Trip
Friday 20th March	Red Nose Day
Wednesday 25th March	FOSS Spring Disco
Friday 27th March	Last day of Spring Term - Children finish at 1pm
Mon 30th March to Fri 10th April	Easter Holidays

SUMMER TERM 2025

DURING MAY ASSESSMENTS FOR ALL CLASSES WILL TAKE PLACE. NO AUTHORISED ABSENCES WILL BE GRANTED DURING THIS TIME

Monday 13th April	Children return to school
Tuesday 14th April	FOSS Happy School Bag 'Drop Off'
Monday 4th May	Bank Holiday - School Closed
Mon 11th - Thurs 14th May	SATs (Standard Assessment Tests) Week
Wednesday 20th May	Class Photographs
Thursday 21st May	Sports Day (Weather Permitting)
Thursday 21st May	Children finish at normal time for half term
Friday 22nd May	INSET Day - School closed
Mon 25th to Fri 29th May	Half Term
Monday 1st June	Children return to school
Monday 8th June	INSET Day - School closed
Wednesday 22nd July	Last day of Summer term - Children finish at 1pm

TERM DATES ACADEMIC YEAR - 2026/2027

PLEASE NOTE THERE ARE 5 INSET DAYS WHEN THE SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED TO CHILDREN. THESE ARE:

- Tuesday 1st September 2026
- Monday 26th July 2027
- Tuesday 27th July 2027
- Wednesday 28th July 2027
- **There will be one further INSET Day to add, which will be in June. This will be advised as soon as possible**

AUTUMN TERM 2026

Tuesday 1st September 2026 - INSET Day - School closed

Wednesday 2nd September 2026 - Children in Years 1-6 start school

Friday 16th October 2026 - Children finish at normal time for half term

(Half Term - Monday 19th October to Friday 30th October 2026) - **Two weeks**

Monday 2nd November 2026 - Children return to school

Friday 18th December 2026 - Last day of Autumn term - Children finish at 1pm

(Christmas holidays - Monday 21st December 2026 to Friday 1st January 2027)

SPRING TERM 2027

Monday 4th January 2027 - Children return to school

Friday 12th February 2027 - Children finish at normal time for half term

(Half Term - Monday 15th to Friday 19th February 2027)

Monday 22nd February 2027 - Children return to school

Thursday 25th March 2027 - Last day of Spring term - Children finish at 1pm

(Easter holidays - Friday 26th March to Friday 9th April 2027)

SUMMER TERM 2027

Monday 12th April 2027 - Children return to school

Monday 3rd May 2027 - Bank Holiday - School closed

Friday 28th May 2027 - Children finish at normal time for half term

(Half Term - Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June 2027)

Monday 7th June 2027 - Children return to school

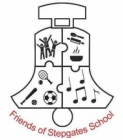
Friday 23rd July 2027 - Last day of Summer term - Children finish at 1pm

Monday 26th July 2027 - INSET Day - School closed

Tuesday 27th July 2027 - INSET Day - School closed

Wednesday 28th July 2027 - INSET Day - School closed

FOSS NEWS AND EVENTS



HAPPYSCHOOLBAG CLOTHES COLLECTION

HappySchoolBag is an organisation that helps raise funds for schools and other charities by collecting unwanted clothes.

If you have recently had a sort out, or are planning a 'clear out' but have nowhere to take your unwanted clothes and items, look no further than here!

Please return filled bags to the collection point (school car park gates) on Tuesday 14th April between 8.00am and 9.00am and 3.00pm and 4.00pm.

Thank you for your support!

Thank you

We would like to say a very big thank you to everyone for their help and support with the Mother's Day Gift Shop, including all who helped with the wrapping behind the scenes and those who helped on the day. We would also like to say a huge thank you to parents/carers for supporting this FOSS event.

FOSS

SPRING DISCO

WEDNESDAY 25th March
Infants 3:20 - 4:30
Juniors 4:45 - 6:00
Ticket Price: £5*

*Price includes	Entrance, bag of sweets, ice-pop, drink and glitter tattoo/face paint.
Sibling discount	£9.50 for two siblings; £14 for 3 siblings.

Tickets will be sold on 20th and 23rd March in the playground after school. Alternatively, please hand money to reception.