

23rd October 2026



Courage, Compassion, Community

Headteachers Update

As we reach the end of our first half term, I have been reflecting on just how much has happened in seven short weeks. It has been a busy, purposeful and enormously productive start to the school year. There is still much to do, of course, but I am immensely proud of the way our whole school community has embraced the changes and opportunities of this term.

One of the things I have been most struck by this week is the wonderful conduct of our children. While the autumn weather has been doing its best to create a storm outside, there has been a lovely sense of calm and purpose inside our classrooms! We have welcomed a number of prospective families who are considering William Gilpin for their children next September, and it has been a genuine pleasure to show them around. I am always so proud when children greet visitors politely and confidently, and even more so when they are eager to explain what they are learning. There is something very special about children who feel that their school belongs to them and who take pride in sharing it with others.

Our Year 5 and 6 children also had a wonderful opportunity this week when they visited Priestlands to watch a live performance of Harry Potter. Experiences like this are an important part of a broad and ambitious education. Watching live theatre allows children to experience storytelling in a completely different way, appreciating how language, character, music, movement and performance can bring a story to life. It also develops cultural awareness, imagination and an appreciation of the creative arts. The children returned full of enthusiasm and inspiration, which is exactly what we hope these opportunities will achieve. Who knows what interests or ambitions might have been sparked?

As we look ahead to next half term, we will also be beginning an exciting piece of work around refreshing our Christian Values. Our values are at the heart of who we are as a Church school. They help shape not only how we behave towards one another, but also how we understand ourselves, our responsibilities and the world around us.

From January, we will be adopting three Christian Values which will provide a focus for our school community over the next three years. This is not about suggesting that some values are more important than others, but about giving children the opportunity to explore different aspects of life, faith and relationships in greater depth.

Our staff have already worked with Sue Bowen from the Diocese of Winchester to consider a wide range of Christian Values, narrowing an initial selection of twelve down to seven. Now we want to hear from you. I will be writing separately with further information and a Google Form inviting you to choose the three values that resonate most strongly with you. Rather than simply presenting a list of words, we have focused on what the values actually mean and the qualities we hope to nurture in our children.

During the coming half term, the children will also have opportunities to explore the different ideas and share their thoughts. We want every voice to be heard, because the values we choose should genuinely reflect the hopes and aspirations of our whole school community. Please do take a few moments to complete the form when it arrives.

Finally, I am very much looking forward to this evening's Laser Spectacular! What a wonderful to bring our community together at the end of a busy half term. Huge congratulations to Becci White, who has been interviewed on BBC Radio Solent and featured in a BBC article about our environmentally and community-friendly alternative to traditional fireworks. It is fantastic to see such a positive initiative receiving wider recognition, and I hope everyone attending has a brilliant evening.



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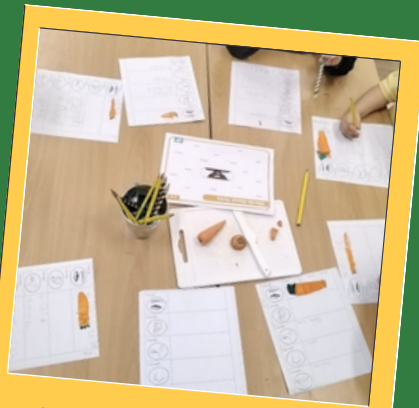
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As we head into the holiday, I want to thank our staff, children and families for all they have contributed to this first half term. School improvement is not simply about introducing new systems or refreshing a curriculum. It is about creating a culture in which children feel happy, secure, curious and ambitious, where they are proud of their achievements and excited about what they might learn next. I feel that we are making real progress towards that vision.

Autumn is most definitely here, so I hope you all enjoy a well-deserved half term break. Make time for those precious family moments, pull on your wellies, enjoy a walk in our beautiful New Forest and perhaps jump in a few muddy puddles along the way!

I look forward to welcoming everyone back, refreshed and ready for the next chapter of our William Gilpin journey.

Elizabeth Cox
Headteacher

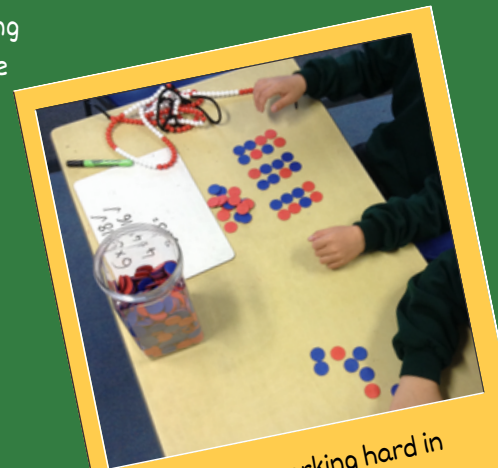


Acorns learning about taste



Saplings

This week in Saplings, the children have been reflecting on their finished pavilions in DT, taking time to explore and appreciate each other's designs. In Maths, we have been developing our skills in measuring, comparing and ordering mass and capacity. The children have also shown fantastic dedication to learning their times tables, confidently recalling multiplication facts such as $8 \times 7 = 56$! Well done, Saplings, for all your hard work and enthusiasm throughout this first half term. You should be very proud of everything you have achieved. Have a wonderful, well-deserved half-term break!



saplings working hard in maths



Oak Class enjoyed their visit to watch the Priestlands performance

Class Updates

Acorns

What a fantastic end to half term! The children have been adding symbols and keys to their maps to finish off their unit! We explored our sense through food and all became writers creating short stories and writing letters to friends and family! We are very proud of the children's efforts and progress this term!

Oak

Oak have had another busy week inside and outside the classroom. On Wednesday, we were fortunate to be invited to Priestlands to see their excellent production of Harry Potter and the Cursed Child. The children were thoroughly impressed with all the performances and inspired to be a part of things next year. We have continued to work hard in Maths and English and finished our half-term units in Computing, Science and History. We will look forward to new topics after the half term break.