

Autumn Term

Friday, 4th September 2026

Newsletter no. 1

Our value this half term is friendship



Witley C of E Infant School

Learn, love and flourish together

“Encourage and help each other” - 1 Thessalonians 5.11



Dear Everyone

Welcome back to all of our families but especially to our new families joining our school this year. We hope you had a wonderful summer and are ready for a fun filled autumn term. It's a bumper newsletter and we've only been back in school three days. Our value this half term is friendship and children have been sharing ideas about what makes a good friend and the things we love about each other!

Please remember to check the calendar further on in the newsletter for added events.

Google Classroom

Google Classroom is our online learning management system for our class teachers to communicate with parents. Please bear with us while we reset the system for this academic year.

Meet your KS1 teacher reminder

Next week we are opening our classroom doors earlier for you to meet the teachers in Year 1 and Year 2.

Tues 08.09.26 MEET the YEAR 2 TEACHER in class 2.40 – 3.10 pm for parents

Weds 09.09.26 MEET the YEAR 1 TEACHER in class 2.40 – 3.10 pm for parents

Dolphin Class meeting

Weds 16.09.26 EYFS curriculum evening for parents in Dolphin Class 7.30 – 8.30 pm

Don't worry if you can't make any of the meetings as our class teachers will share relevant information on Google Classroom over the coming weeks.

Individual photographs

Amy Blackwood will be visiting soon to take individual photographs outdoors in our forest school. Some of you may remember that Amy visited a couple of years back. There is an opportunity for siblings in school (we will arrange) to have photographs together but sadly, as it is outdoors, she will not be able to accommodate pre-schoolers/babies.

Tuesday, 15th September individual photos, back up day is Tuesday, 22nd September.

Macmillan coffee morning on Friday, 25th September at 9.10 am



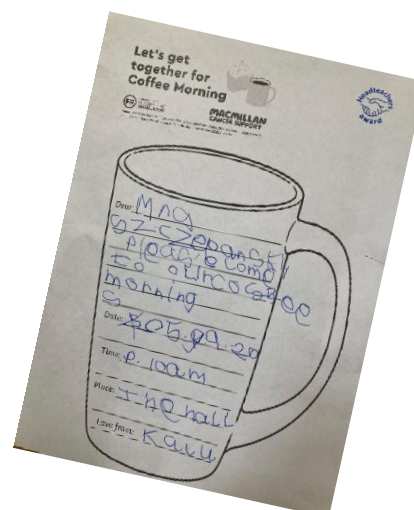
All families and pre-school children are invited. Please enter the Jubilee Hall via the staff car park where our children will serve coffee, tea and lots of cake!



Well done to Kalu who dropped an invitation to me yesterday.

Please bring cash – sorry, no card payments (the children will be sorting and counting the coins).

Can you donate a cake, biscuits or teabags for our Macmillan Coffee morning? Please bring your donations into school on Thursday, 24th. Thank you.



Autumn Term Tours

Is your child due to start school in September 2027? We have a number of tours planned and we'd love to show you around our school. Please call the office to book a tour date.

Thurs, 8th Oct 9.10-9.50am & 10-10.40am

Fri, 9th Oct 9.10-9.50am & 10-10.40am

Mon, 12th Oct 1:45-2:25pm

Tues, 13th Oct 9.10-9.50am & 10-10.40am

Fri, 6th Nov 9.10-9.50am & 10-10.40am

Mon, 9th Nov 1:45-2:25pm

Attendance

Excellent school attendance is absolutely vital for infant school children because it lays the foundation for their entire educational journey and personal development. During these early years, missing even a few days means skipping crucial lessons in foundational phonics, reading, and basic maths that build sequentially day by day. Beyond academics, consistent attendance helps young children adapt to essential daily routines, settle into the school environment comfortably, and build confidence.



Please do not book any holidays during term time as these will not be authorised in line with SCC guidelines. Please ensure you read the information further on in our newsletter regarding absence and the issuing of penalty notices.

Allergies

This September sees new statutory guidance regarding allergy safety in schools. All of our staff are trained in first aid including allergy awareness and the use of an EpiPen (auto injector pen) in the event of an anaphylactic shock. We have our own auto injector pens held in the office in school.

We do have pupils in school who have allergies including peanut, cashew, pistachio and dogs. PLEASE ensure you check food items in packed lunches that may contain these ingredients.

A reminder that we do not allow dogs on the premises as per Surrey County Council guidelines, other than our PAT (Pets as Therapy) dog. Thank for your cooperation.

Uniform

Starting September 1, 2026, new legal requirements under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 take effect in the UK, limits the number of compulsory branded items schools can require. These rules aim to lower clothing costs for families by capping mandatory logo or single-supplier items. At Witley we updated our policy last year to reflect these requirements. For further information please see our website

www.witley.surrey.sch.uk

Summer maintenance

There are always repairs to carry out at school, parts of which date back to 1836. This summer we mended the decking of the pirate ship which is a firm favourite with the children. Our policy is always to repair where we can and reuse materials, so we were pleased we were able to fix the ship for the children.

We also installed some much-needed shade in the Penguins outdoor area which has really brightened the space. In addition, we have covered the pond decking with a non-slip surface to enable us to visit the wildlife area all year round.



Thank you to FWS who supplied the materials for these much-needed repairs to keep the school tip top!



The Pantry

Thank you for your patience while we introduce our menu from our new caterers, The Pantry. We have had a few teething issues but hopefully the systems are now settling down.

If you have any problems or queries regarding your account or ordering lunches please contact their customer service team on 02088137040 or office@thepantrycatering.co.uk The school cannot assist with account/ordering queries as this is all done directly with The Pantry.



Please do try to find time to talk to your child about the choices they now have as they get very excited in the queue asking their friends all about 'what's for lunch'.

Online Safety



Please look out for our monthly Online Safety Newsletter for parents, which arrives separately via email, at the beginning of each month. This September we have a video to share on the theme of -back to school (see link below).

This video provides a quick overview on establishing family tech rules and tips on how to use AI. (2 mins)

Your child will be watching the video in class too as it stimulates a lot of conversation on what games are popular at home. [Staying safe online](#)

Wishing you all a fabulous weekend,

Mrs Szczepanski and all the staff

DAY	DATE	ACADEMIC YEAR 2026 - 27
AUTUMN TERM 2026		
Tues	01.09.26	INSET DAY no 1 SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS
Weds	02.09.26	Welcome back Years 1 and 2. EYFS home visits – all day
Thurs	03.09.26	EYFS home visits – all day
Fri	04.09.26	Welcome all EYFS children - 8.45 am – 1.15 pm
Mon	07.09.26	All EYFS children can start full time 8.45 am – 3.15 pm
Tues	08.09.26	MEET the YEAR 2 TEACHER in class 2.40 – 3.10 pm for parents
Weds	09.09.26	MEET the YEAR 1 TEACHER in class 2.40 – 3.10 pm for parents
Tues	15.09.26	Individual photos – all children
Weds	16.09.26	EYFS curriculum evening for parents in Dolphin Class 7.30 – 8.30 pm
Fri	25.09.26	Year 2 Macmillan Coffee Morning – all parents 9.10 - 10.10 am
SAT	26.09.26	Messy Church at All Saints 3.30 – 5.30 pm
Weds	07.10.26	Harvest Festival at All Saints Church – families welcome at 2.30pm
Tues	13.10.26	Year 2 trip to Marwell Zoo – details to follow
Tues	13.10.26	All year groups Parent/Pupil Progress meetings after school
Weds	14.10.26	Year R and Year 2 Parent/Pupil Progress meetings after school
Fri	16.10.26	Last day of term
HALF TERM – Mon, 19 Oct to Fri 30 Oct 2026 – TWO WEEKS		
Mon	02.11	INSET Day no 2 SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS
Weds	04.11	FLU vaccinations – details to follow
SAT	05.12	Messy Church at All Saints 3.30 – 5.30 pm
Thurs	10.12	Christmas Jumper Day in aid of Save the Children
Mon	14.12	Christmas Service at All Saints Church – families welcome at 9.10 am

Fri	18.12	Last day of term – early finish at 1.05 pm
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS – Mon 21 Dec 2026 – Fri 01 Jan 2027		
SPRING TERM 2027		
Mon	04.01.27	Welcome back all year groups
Fri	12.02	INSET Day no 3 SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS
HALF TERM – Mon, 15 Feb to Fri, 19 Feb 2027		
Thurs	25.03	Last day of term – early finish at 1.05 pm
EASTER HOLIDAYS – Fri 26 March – Fri 09 April 2027		
SUMMER TERM 2027		
Mon	12.04	INSET DAY no 4 SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS
Tues	13.04	Welcome back all year groups
BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY 03 May – SCHOOL CLOSED		
Fri	28.05	INSET Day no 5 SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS
HALF TERM – Mon 31 May to Fri 04 June 2027		
Thurs	15.07	Dolphins Class trip to Tuesley Farm – all day
Fri	23.07	SPORTS MORNING – approx. 9 – 10 am Families welcome
Weds	28.07	Last day of term - early finish at 1.05 pm

Have you updated your mobile number, moved house or has your child's medical details changed?



Please check and update your details via Arbor. If you have any problems logging on or using Arbor please contact the school office.

SCHOOL ABSENCE REQUESTS

Date: 4th September 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

If you consider that there are exceptional circumstances relating to your request, please let the school have full details. Each application for a leave of absence will be considered on a case by case basis.

Penalty Notices to Address Poor Attendance at School

A Penalty Notice may be issued as an alternative to the prosecution of a parent/carers for their child's unauthorised absence from school (absence without the agreement of the school or not covered by a medical note) and will be used by Surrey County Council in the following circumstances: -

1. Pupils identified by police and Attendance Advice Officers (formerly Inclusion Officers) engaged on Truancy Patrols and who have incurred unauthorised absences.
2. Leave of absence in term time (5 days or 10 sessions or more).
 - **Please be aware that The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.**
 - They may request that Surrey County Council issue Penalty Notices when the absence is not authorised.

Warnings will not be given where it can be shown that parents have been notified that such absences will not be authorised.

3. Finally, the issuing of a Penalty Notice will also be considered where it is judged that a parent is failing to ensure their child's regular school attendance.

This will be considered when a pupil has incurred 10 or more unauthorised sessions in the previous 10 school weeks, which may include a pupil arriving late after close of registration.

If you believe at any stage that your child's absence from school may leave you liable to receive a Penalty Notice, it is extremely important that you act without delay to secure their regular attendance.

If you have any questions or require further support to achieve an improvement in your child's attendance, please contact your child's school or the Attendance Advice Officer.

Penalty Notice relating to Exclusions

If a child is excluded from school, Section 103 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 places a duty on parents/carers to ensure that their child is not in a public place without justifiable cause during school hours.

This duty applies to the **first five days of each exclusion**. Failure to do so will render the parent/carers liable to a Penalty Notice. (Alternative education provision will be made available from the sixth day of any exclusion.)

Amount Payable for a Penalty Notice and Consequences for repeat unauthorised absences

1. If you have not incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children in a rolling 3 year period since 19 August 2024, then the penalty notice will be charged at the rate of £160.00, **per parent/carers per child**, if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80.00 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.
2. If you have incurred a penalty notice relating to this child/children since 19 August 2024, the rolling 3 year period will be activated from the date of the first penalty notice and the second penalty

notice will be charged at the flat rate of £160.00, **per parent/carer per child**, if paid within 28 days. There will be no reduction for payment within 21 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice will result in Surrey County Council considering legal proceedings against you in the Magistrates Court.

3. If you have incurred 2 penalty notices relating to this child/children in the rolling 3 year period since the first penalty notice was issued, then you will NOT receive a third penalty notice – Surrey County Council will have no option but to consider a prosecution, **per parent/carer per child**, in the Magistrates Court under s 444 Education Act 1996.

Surrey County Council is not responsible for authorising pupil absence and therefore cannot withdraw any Penalty Notice requests without the written permission of the Headteacher.

Advice and support is available from an Attendance Advice Officer by contacting Surrey Attendance Service as follows:

North West	-	Tel: 01483 518130	South West	-	Tel: 01483 517874
North East	-	Tel: 01372 833588	South East	-	Tel: 01737 737777



A message from The Children's
Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza

Good morning,

As Children's Commissioner, I am writing to ask you to ensure all of your children complete my new survey, [The Big Future](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigfuture).

Under the Children Act 2004, it is my role to promote the views and interests of children in England, and I have done this so far by conducting the two largest ever children's surveys: The Big Ask and The Big Ambition.

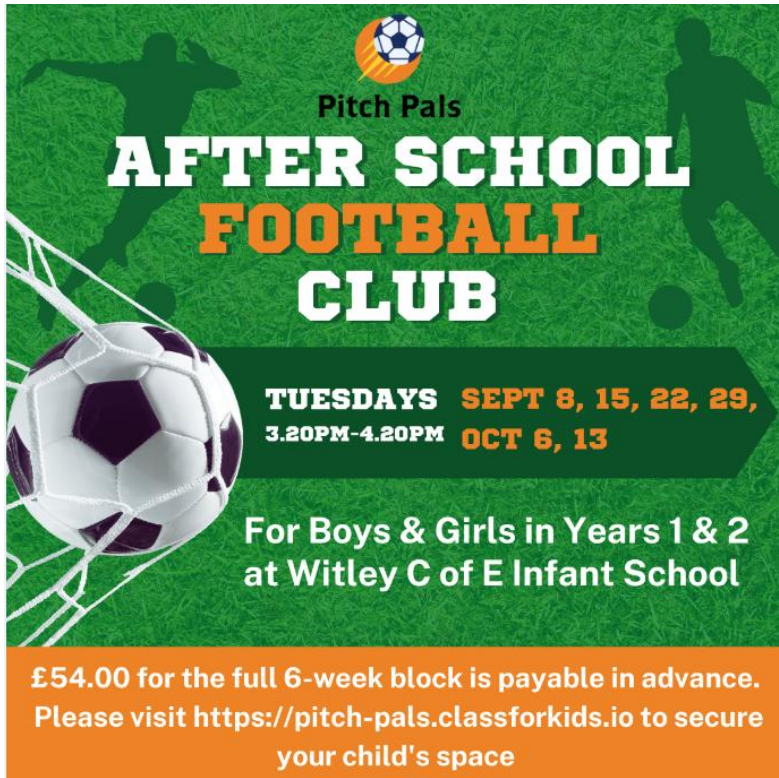
Now, for the first time, hundreds of thousands of children will be eligible to vote in the next general election, the biggest change to the franchise in half a century. Yet just one in five children say politicians listen to them. That's why I'm launching my final survey, The Big Future.

Pupils can complete the survey here: <http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigfuture>.

I want to make sure that I hear from as many children as possible, aged 0-18, from all backgrounds, in all schools and colleges, and in every part of the country.

I will be publishing my findings next year, and they will be used to advocate at the highest level for solutions that children want to see, to the problems that they tell me are most important to them. Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely, **Dame Rachel de Souza, Children's Commissioner**



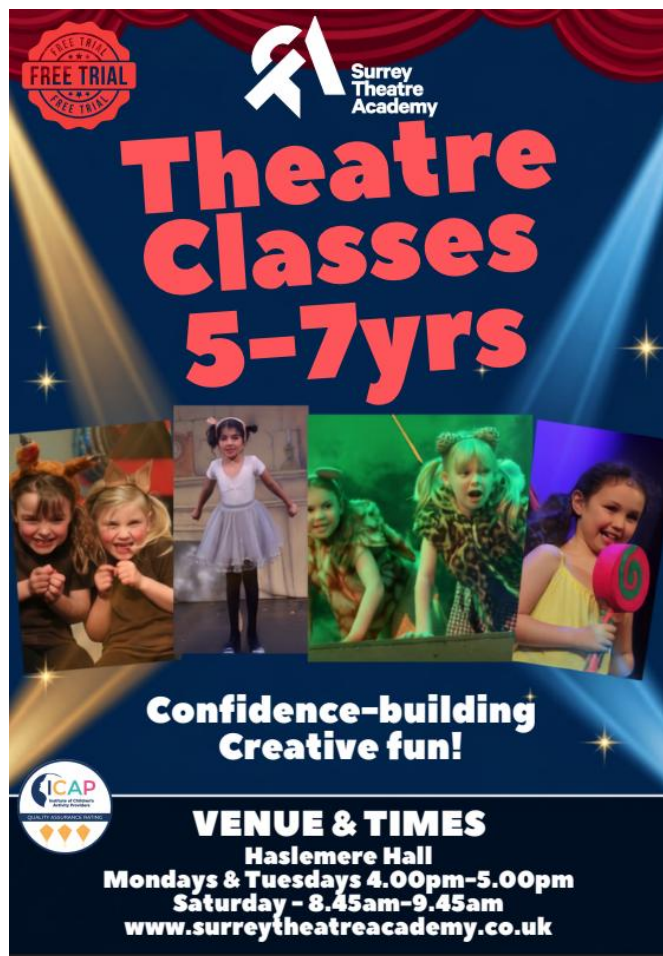
Pitch Pals

AFTER SCHOOL FOOTBALL CLUB

TUESDAYS **SEPT 8, 15, 22, 29,**
3.20PM-4.20PM **OCT 6, 13**

For Boys & Girls in Years 1 & 2
at Witley C of E Infant School

£54.00 for the full 6-week block is payable in advance.
Please visit <https://pitch-pals.classforkids.io> to secure
your child's space



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