

Shakespeare Week



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of Education

This week, Sydenham Primary School has been celebrating Shakespeare's birthday with our 2026 Shakespeare week! Each year group has spent time exploring the play 'King Lear' and learning about the characters and themes in this Shakespearian tragedy.

Children participated in a rehearsal room approach involving theatrical games to improve, focus, communication and team work. They explored the text actively with use of quotations, freeze frames and other theatrical devices to learn about the text in depth.





Shakespeare Week

What is Shakespeare Week?

RSC Shakespeare Week is a nationwide celebration of Shakespeare led by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Schools across the country take part by exploring one of Shakespeare's plays through drama, discussion and creative activities. The week is designed to help children build confidence, develop language and teamwork skills, and discover that Shakespeare's stories are exciting, relevant and fun to explore.

What Happens in the play, "King Lear?"

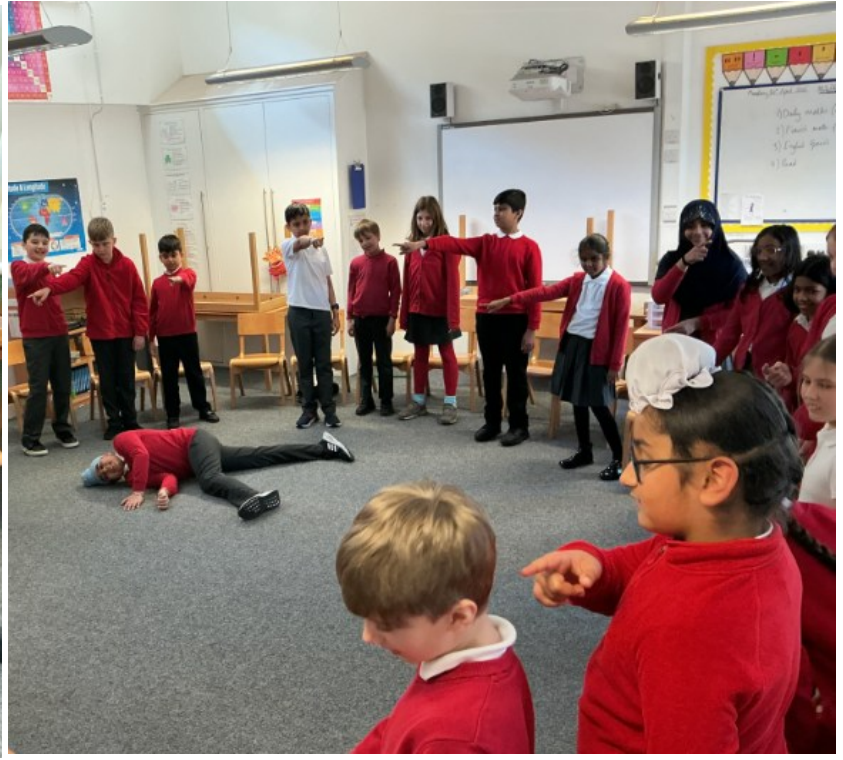
King Lear tells the story of an ageing king who decides to divide his kingdom between his three daughters. He asks them to say how much they love him, but when his youngest daughter answers honestly instead of flatteringly, he makes a serious mistake. As the story unfolds, King Lear learns important lessons about kindness, honesty and the consequences of poor choices.

The play explores themes such as family relationships, loyalty, fairness and what it truly means to be a good leader. It encourages children to think about listening carefully, treating others with respect, and understanding the difference between true kindness and empty words.



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 31: Leisure, Play and Culture.



In Year Five, the children explored the characters and themes of *King Lear* before working collaboratively to create an improvised version of the play in fifteen short scenes. They showed particular interest in themes such as power, patriarchy and mental health, while also enjoying the sound and impact of Shakespeare's language. The children explored how elements such as status and mood can be altered and interpreted through actors' choices, sharing their ideas about how lines from *King Lear* can be spoken in different ways. Finally, the children considered the thoughts and feelings of key characters and how these change over the course of the play, and have begun creating 'graffiti castles', placing the words and thoughts of their chosen character onto the walls of a model castle to represent the struggle for power within *King Lear*.

Shakespeare Week in Y5



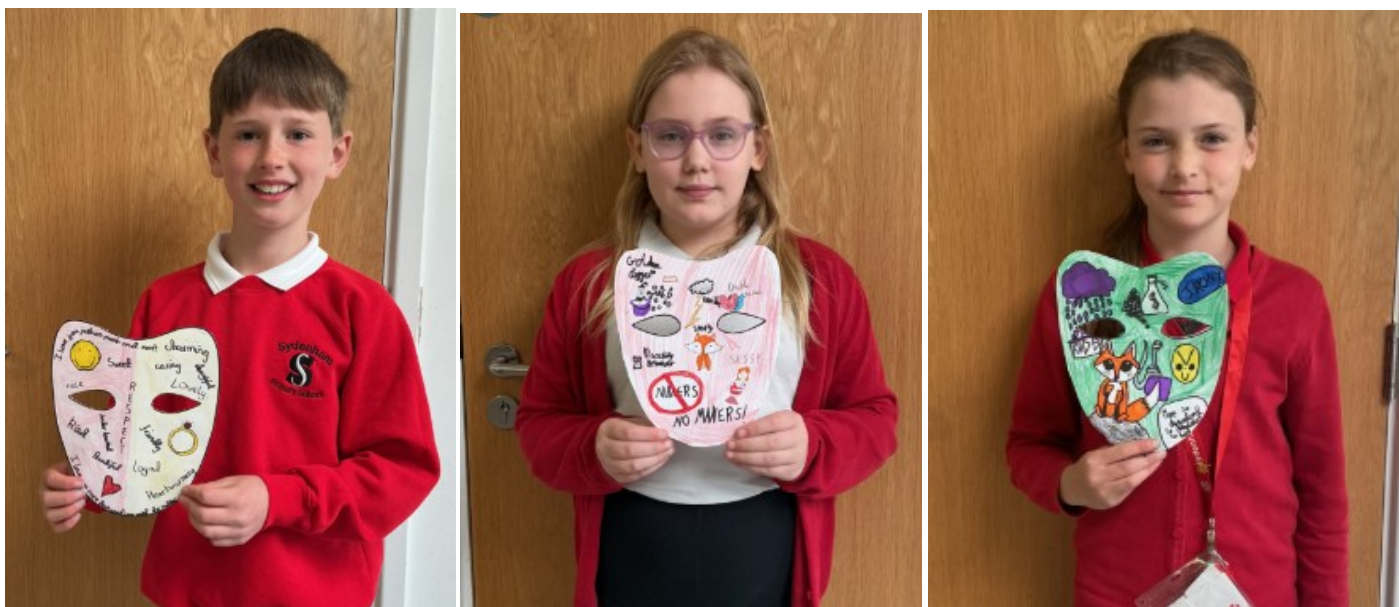
Shakespeare Week in Y4



This week, Year 4 have been immersed in Shakespeare Week, exploring the play King Lear through a range of exciting drama-based activities.

The children brought the story to life using “whoosh” activities, helping them to understand the plot in a fast-paced and engaging way. They also took part in role play, freeze frames, hot seating and conscience alley, just like a professional acting company would, to explore characters’ thoughts, feelings and motivation.

A key focus this week has been on the themes of appearance vs reality and betrayal. Pupils discussed how characters are not always what they seem and explored moments of trust and deception within the story, deepening their understanding of the play. Children also experimented with voice, movement and expression, as well as engaging with the script, building confidence in reading and performing Shakespearean language.



Year 4 also focused this week on the theme of *appearance versus reality* through their study of *King Lear*. In the play, Goneril and Regan use exaggerated and insincere flattery to persuade King Lear to give them power and part of his kingdom, even though their words do not reflect their true intentions.

The children explored the idea that words do not always reveal the truth, and discussed why honesty and integrity are more valuable than greed or empty praise. They considered how characters can present one version of themselves on the outside while feeling something very different on the inside.

To demonstrate their understanding, each child created a two-sided mask. One side represented Goneril and Regan's flattering words and outward appearance, while the reverse revealed their true thoughts and feelings. The masks provided a powerful visual reminder of the difference between what is shown and what is real.

Shakespeare Week in Y4



During Shakespeare Week, Year 3 pupils explored the symbolism of the feather alongside the importance of honesty, linking their learning to *King Lear* and the powerful quote, “*Say what you feel, not what you ought to say.*”

The week began with pupils recognising and naming a range of emotions. Afterwards, the children played drama games, experimenting how feelings can be portrayed on stage through facial expression, body posture and movement.

Pupils then selected contrasting emotions and represented them through detailed drawings, using pencils and a variety of colours to convey mood and expression. To conclude the work, each child designed a unique feather to represent themselves, choosing colours, shapes and, in some cases, small illustrations to reflect their personality and individuality.





Shakespeare Week in Y1

Year 1 pupils have thoroughly enjoyed exploring the language and messages of *King Lear* as part of our Shakespeare Week celebrations. Through storytelling and discussion, the children focused on the important theme of kindness.

To bring this learning to life, they created their own *kindness crowns*, choosing and sharing a range of rich synonyms for the word *kind*. A particular favourite was the word *benevolent*, which the children were very proud to learn and use.

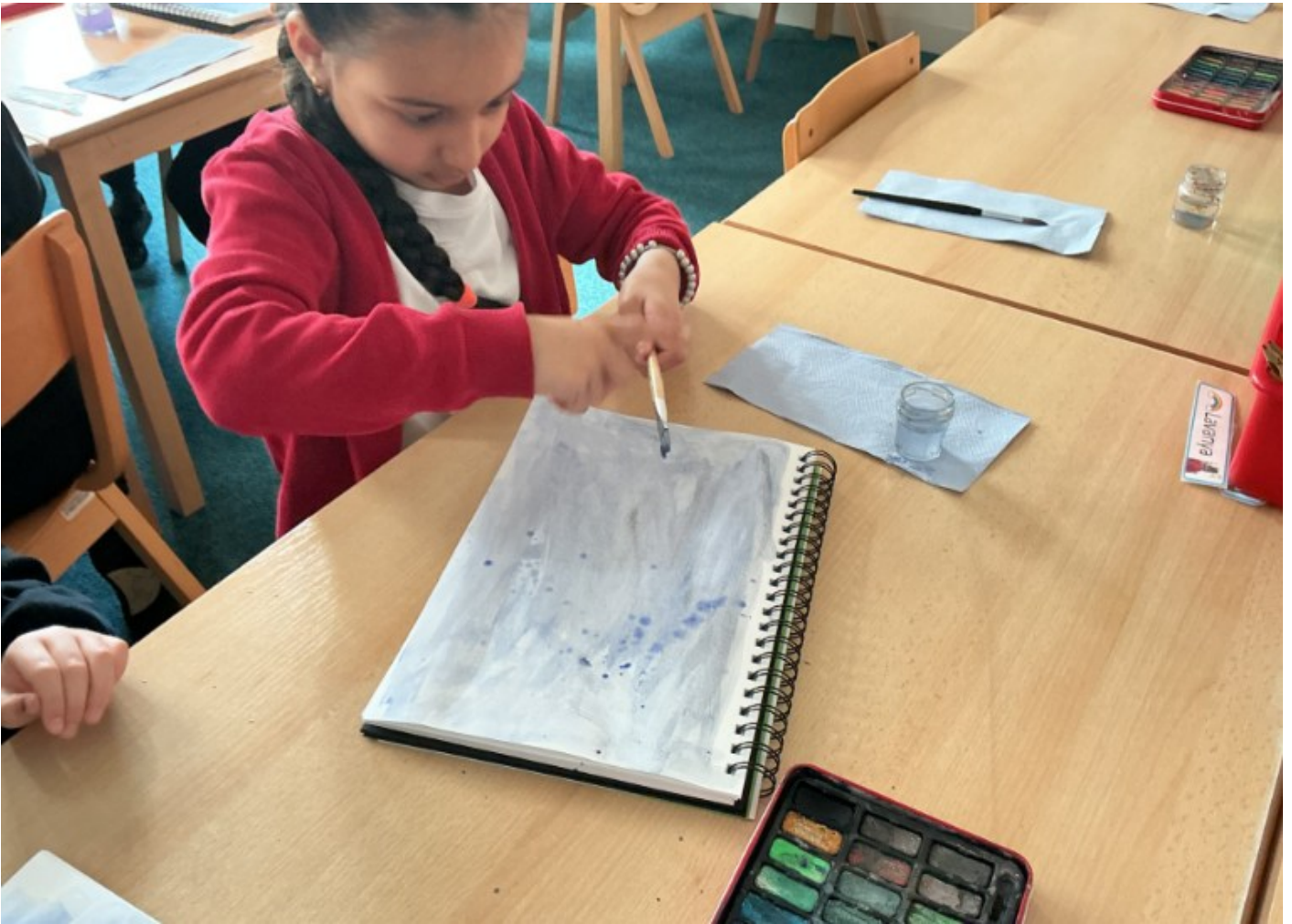


During Shakespeare Week, Reception pupils explored the dramatic scene in King Lear where he is cast out into a raging storm. They created a stormy landscape using watercolours for the backdrop, blending dark blues and greys. They then mixed black and white poster paints to create different shades of grey, which were applied to cotton wool to form textured storm clouds.



Shakespeare Week in YR





Shakespeare Week in YR



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of Education



Fun at the Farm

Reception had a fantastic trip to Cotswold Farm Park on Tuesday, which provided rich opportunities to support learning within the EYFS curriculum, particularly Understanding the World. The children enjoyed a range of hands-on experiences, interacting closely with animals and their young, including feeding goats and sheep and gently handling guinea pigs, rabbits and chicks, helping to develop care and respect for living things.

During the visit, the children learned about animals and their life cycles, discovering which creatures lay eggs, such as fish, butterflies, birds, lizards and frogs, and that mammals including horses, cows and sheep give birth to live young. The visit also promoted communication and language as children asked questions, shared observations and used new vocabulary.

The children were also incredibly lucky with the weather, which allowed them to enjoy some fantastic playtime outdoors in the sunshine.



Fun at the Farm



Feeding the goats.



Making feathered friends.



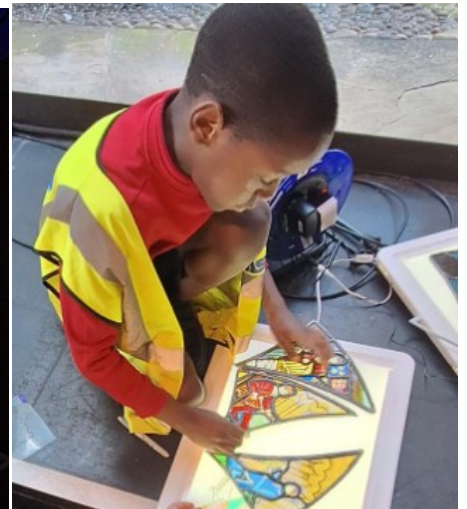
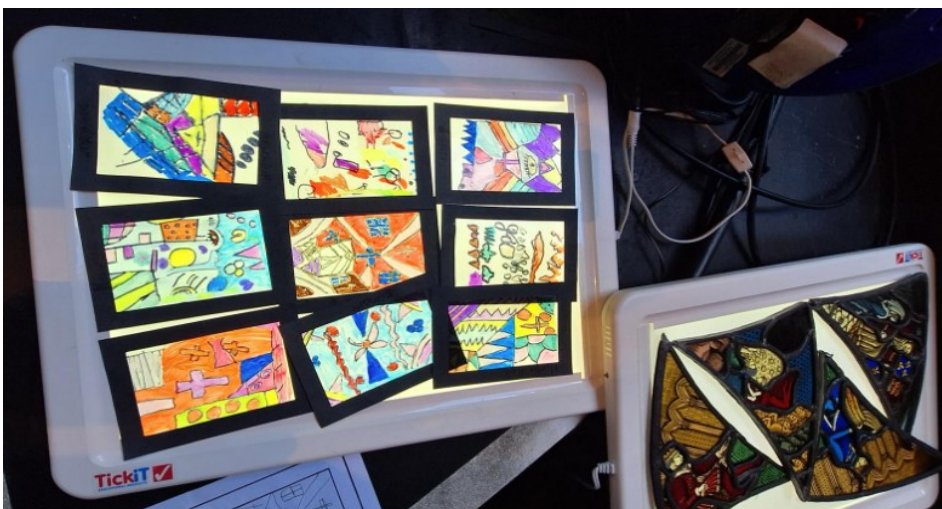
Fun at the Farm





In RE lessons, Year 3 pupils have been exploring the links between art, architecture and faith, learning how religious beliefs and worldviews can be expressed visually and physically, rather than only through words or texts. On Thursday, they visited Coventry Cathedral to explore these ideas first hand and deepen their understanding through real-life experience

Pupils were awestruck by the cathedral and enjoyed looking closely at different elements of Sir Basil Spence's innovative design, including the beautiful stained glass windows. The children also had the opportunity to marvel at Graham Sutherland's *Christ in Glory* tapestry and to study the engraved glass screen depicting saints and angels, which marks the building as a sacred space. In addition, pupils toured the ruins of the former cathedral, which was destroyed during the Blitz of the Second World War.





Sacred Art



Convention on the Rights of the Child
Article 14: Freedom of Thought, Belief and Religion



Ducklings in School



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of Education

We have been lucky enough to have duckling eggs in school recently, which has been an exciting experience for the children. The ducklings have now hatched and have been moved from their incubator into a run, where they are settling well. We are very much looking forward to watching them learn to swim over the coming days. This hands-on experience links closely with our science learning, helping pupils to understand animal lifecycles.

Thank You!

“1 in 2” – that is the current cancer statistic, and for many of us it was this number that carried us through the toughest parts of our Snowdon climb. What began as a simple message back in June 2025 – “Does anyone want to climb Snowdon for Cancer Research?” – quickly grew into something far bigger than we ever imagined.

A staff WhatsApp group was created, and after a short period of hesitation, plans began to take shape. Dates were discussed, votes were cast, and soon 18th April was confirmed. Over the following months, preparations were in full swing. Staff took part in training walks and organised a range of fundraising events to involve the whole school community, including a yoga class, a bake sale, and a sponsored run.

Before sharing highlights from the climb itself, we would like to say a huge thank you. The support from our families and wider community has been incredible. Together, we have raised nearly **£7,500** for Cancer Research – a total that has made us immensely proud.

On the day of the climb, 11 staff members set off along the Llanberis Path. The journey began steadily, with time to chat and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. However, the challenge soon intensified as we reached a steep incline, accompanied by rain and colder conditions. Despite this, spirits remained strong. Small moments – like sharing sweets along the way – kept everyone motivated.

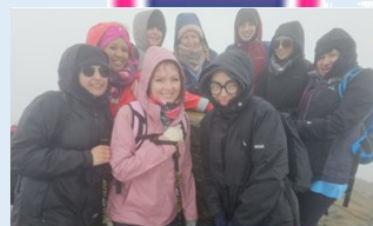
Reaching the summit was a proud and emotional moment. Although we had to queue to reach the trig point, it gave us time to reflect on why we were there and who we were climbing for. Every step taken was for a cause close to all of our hearts.

The descent brought a welcome change, as clearer weather revealed stunning views across the landscape. As we walked, there was a real sense of achievement, teamwork, and reflection.

This challenge meant a great deal to many of us, and we know it has resonated across our school community too. Thank you once again for your generosity and encouragement.

Well done to everyone involved in our charity mission 2026 – an inspiring effort for a truly important cause. We are already looking forward to what challenge we might take on next!

£7,500



CANCER
RESEARCH
UK

Spotlight on Inclusion



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 29: Goals of Education

In last week's newsletter, we began to explain Sydenham Primary School's graduated approach to inclusion and the different "waves" of support available to pupils, ensuring they feel welcomed, valued and able to take part fully in all aspects of school life.

Our focus last week was on Wave 1 provision. This week, we move on to Wave 2 support.

Wave 2 Provision

Wave 2 support is provided for pupils who may require additional help alongside quality-first classroom teaching. This support is delivered through targeted, evidence-based interventions led by trained teaching assistants, helping groups of pupils to catch up or consolidate key skills, knowledge and understanding.

At the heart of our graduated approach is the **assess, plan, do, review** cycle. This ensures that support is carefully matched to pupils' needs and is regularly reviewed for impact. Pupils receiving Wave 2 support are assessed to identify specific areas of need, a clear plan is put in place, the intervention is delivered, and progress is then reviewed.

Wave 2 interventions are time-limited and carefully planned. Pupils are assessed at the start and end of each intervention to measure progress and inform next steps, ensuring that support remains purposeful and effective.

Evidence-Based Interventions

Interventions can address support pupils with:

- Reading, writing or maths.
- Gross or fine motor skills,
- Speech and language development.
- Social and emotional skills.

Examples of some of our Wave 2 interventions are on the next few pages.

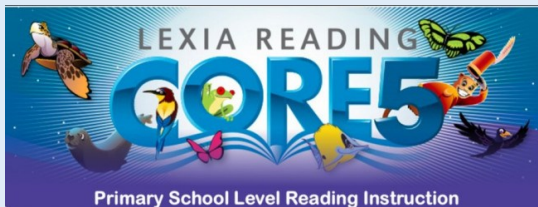
The Graduated Approach

A continuous cycle of support which is reviewed, adapted and refined to give children the best chance to make good progress and secure good outcomes.



Spotlight on Inclusion

Lexia



Lexia is a personalised digital programme that supports pupils' reading development in phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. It adapts to each child's needs, helping to build confidence and independence while supporting targeted progress.

Boosting Reading at Primary (BRaP)



BRaP is a short-term, one-to-one reading intervention for pupils working below age-related expectations. Through structured sessions, it develops fluency, comprehension and enjoyment of reading, helping pupils become more confident readers.

Success at Arithmetic



Success at Arithmetic is a targeted maths intervention supporting pupils with number and calculation skills. Through short, structured sessions, pupils build fluency in the four operations and develop confidence in their mathematical thinking.

Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI)



NELI is an evidence-based programme for reception-aged pupils who need support with spoken language. Through short, structured sessions, it develops vocabulary, listening and speaking skills, helping build confidence and strong foundations for learning and reading.

Bucket Time



Bucket Time is a structured attention-building intervention that supports pupils with listening, focus and shared attention skills. Delivered in short, engaging sessions, it helps pupils learn to sit, watch and enjoy activities together, building the foundations needed for communication, social interaction and learning in the classroom.

Happy 100th
Birthday

SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

8th May 2026



(v) Ocean Fish Finger Bap with Ketchup (E.G)

or

(v) Wildlife Wonder Pizza Pinwheel (D.G)



Served with Attenbite Chips, Centenary Peas,
Sir David's Beany Wonders or Planet Earth Salad

(v) Lemon Expedition Whoopie Pie (G.D.E)

or


(v) Coral Reef Raspberry Frozen Mousse (D)



Allergens
H-Home made
G-Gluten
D-Dairy
SD-Soya
SU-Sulphites
E-Egg
VG-Vegan
V-Vegetarian

Allergen Free alternatives
are also available





CENSUS DAY

A Day at the Beach

THURSDAY 21ST MAY 2026

The High Tide Wrap
[Chicken with Roasted Vegetables] [G]

or

[v] Sandy Sea Sticks [Pizza Twist]
[D.G.SB]

Served with Sun-Kissed Wedges, Sea Pearl Peas, Sunset Surf Corn or Ocean Breeze Bowl Salad.

[v] Rubber Ring Donuts with Dipping Sauce [G.E.D.SB]

or

[v][h] Sunny Beach Bite
Cornflake Cookie [G.E]

Allergens
H-Homemade
G-Gluten
D-Dairy
SB-Soya
E-Egg
VG-Vegan
V-Vegetarian

Allergen Free alternatives are also available



Mental Health in Schools Team Tips For Wellness



Dimensions tool



Free online personalised self-care information & support for adults and children in Coventry & Warwickshire

Get Outdoors

Spending time outdoors is great for your body and mind! It can improve your mood, reduce feelings of stress, improve your confidence, helps you to be more active and can reduce loneliness.

How to get outside more:

- 1. Take a Nature Walk**
Find a park, trail, or even your garden and take a walk. Look around for birds, trees, and flowers that you can spot. You could try taking photographs and share them with a friend.
- 2. Play a Sport or Game**
Whether it's football, netball or running, outdoor sports are a great way to get moving. They also help us develop our communication skills when we play as part of a team!
- 3. Do a Scavenger Hunt**
Make a list of things to find outside—like a particular leaf or a butterfly—and go on a hunt to find them!
- 4. Bring Your Hobby Outside**
Do you like drawing, reading, or listening to music? Try doing it outside! Find a comfy spot on the grass and enjoy your favourite activities in the fresh air.
- 5. Have a snack outside**
Try taking a snack outside and eating it while focusing on the food and what is going on around you.
- 6. Watch the Stars**
On a clear night, lie on a blanket and look up at the stars. You might even see a shooting star or spot constellations.
- 7. Meet up with a friend outside**

It can be helpful to get outdoors every day, even if only for a short time. You could try walking to a friend's house or to the shop instead of travelling by car or getting public transport. You could try to make getting outside part of your daily routine, whether it is riding a bike or sitting in a garden or park while you listen to music.

In Coventry and Warwickshire, for any urgent mental health concerns, contact the RISE Crisis Helpline available 24/7, by calling NHS 111. Alternatively, call 999 or visit A&E in an emergency, for example if medical attention is required.



Onside
Coaching

Reception to Yr 6

Unlock the Fun This May Half Term!

from only
£24
per day

or save money **4 days** for **£84**



Tuesday **26th**
to Friday **29th May**

Times
9.30am to 3.30pm

Early Drop off 8.:30 - 9:30am

Late Pick up 3:30 - 4:30pm

+£3.50
each

**WE ACCEPT CHILDCARE VOUCHERS &
TAX-FREE CHILDCARE** search 'Onside Wraparound'

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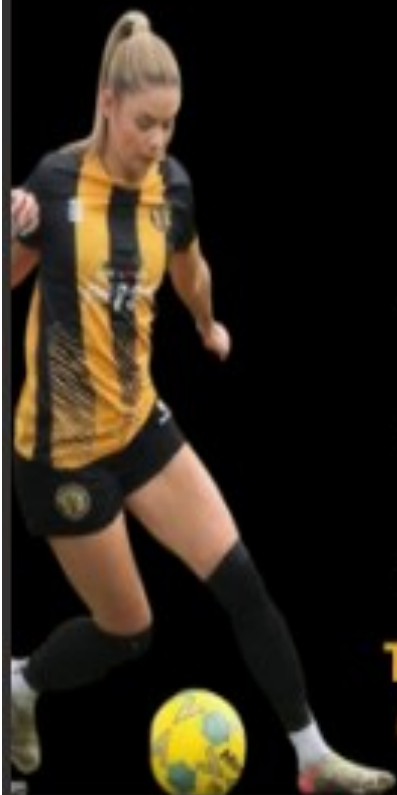
**GIRLS FOOTBALL SESSION
RECEPTION, YEAR 1, 2 AND 3**

**SATURDAY 25TH APRIL
10.00 - 11.00AM**

**LEAMINGTON FOOTBALL CLUB
HARBURY LANE, CV33 9QB**

- NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NECESSARY
- TRAINING SESSION & INTRODUCTION TO THE CLUB
- PATHWAY INTO NEW GIRLS TEAMS

**TO BOOK YOUR PLACE PLEASE EMAIL
CHRIS.KNOTT@LEAMINGTONFC.CO.UK**





KHALSA AID
INTERNATIONAL

DRAWING COMPETITION

CELEBRATING 27 YEARS OF HUMANITY
1999 - 2026

Ages 5-7

Ages 8-11

Ages 12-15

What does Khalsa Aid mean to you?

Submit a drawing inspired by **compassion**, **service**, and helping others.

One winner will be chosen from each age category –
and **here's** the exciting part...

Your artwork will be featured on exclusive,
limited edition Khalsa Aid T-Shirts.

HOW TO ENTER

- 1 Draw your artwork on A4 paper.
- 2 Scan or photograph your drawing
- 3 Send to: events@khalsaaid.org



DEADLINE
10th May 2026

Let your imagination shine bright!

By entering, you agree that Khalsa Aid may use your artwork for promotional and fundraising purposes. Full details are available on our website



Diary Dates

Monday 27th April	YR dental survey.
Tuesday 28th April	Arts Ambassadors for Peace session—preparation for Leamington Peace Festival
Thursday 30th April	Family Learning, “Soothing Sacks” workshop, 1.50—3.15
Monday 4th May	Bank holiday—school closed
Thursday 7th May	Family Learning, “Soothing Sacks” workshop, 1.50—3.15
Friday 8th May	Arts Ambassadors for Peace session—preparation for Leamington Peace Festival
Monday 11th May	Y6 SAT’s - Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling papers.
Tuesday 12th May	Y1 Kingfishers class assembly at 10.15am.
Tuesday 12th May	Y6 SAT’s—Reading paper.
Wednesday 13th May	Y6 SAT’s—Maths Arithmetic and Reasoning papers.
Thursday 14th May	Y1 trip to The Black Country Living Museum.
Thursday 14th May	Y2 trip to Coventry Cathedral.
Thursday 14th May	Y6 SAT’s—Maths Reasoning paper.
Monday 18th May	School photographer visiting to take class photo’s.
Monday 18th May	YR vision screening.
Tuesday 19th May	Y1 Puffins class assembly at 10.15am.
Monday 22nd May	MUFTI (non-uniform) day—please make a donation to School Fund via Parent Pay if your child chooses to wear their own choice of clothes.

School closed for the half-term holiday from

Monday 25th March—Friday 29th March.

Monday 1st June—school closed for staff training (INSET)

Pupils return to school on Tuesday 2nd June

Diary Dates

Tuesday 2nd June	Y4 Starlings class assembly at 9.05am
Tuesday 2nd June	Y2 Wrens assembly at 10.15am
Tuesday 2nd June	Y4 statutory multiplication screen—delivered to pupils all week.
Wednesday 3rd June	Flourish workshop for Y6 girls.
Thursday 4th June	Y6 residential trip to Longridge Outdoor Activity Centre.
Friday 5th June	Y6 residential trip to Longridge Outdoor Activity Centre.
Monday 8th June	Y1 statutory phonics screen—delivered to pupils all week.
Monday 8th June	Y4 statutory multiplication screen— week 2 of delivery to pupils.
Tuesday 9th June	Y4 Wagtails class assembly at 9.05am
Tuesday 9th June	Y2 Swallows class assembly at 10.15am.
Tuesday 16th June	Y3 Doves class assembly at 9.05am
Tuesday 16th June	YR Goldfinches class assembly at 10.15am.
Tuesday 16th June	Instrumental concert at 2.30pm.
Tuesday 23rd June	Y3 Herons class assembly at 9.05am
Tuesday 23rd June	Y1/2 Sport's Day, 10.00—11.15am. Parents and carers are warmly invited to attend.
Tuesday 23rd June	YR Robins class assembly at 10.15am
Wednesday 24th June	Y3/4 Sport's Day, 10.00—11.15am. Parents and carers are warmly invited to attend.
Wednesday 24th June	Y4 Starlings Upbeat concert at 2.20pm.
Thursday 25th June	Y4 Wagtails Upbeat concert at 2.30pm.
Friday 26th June	YR Sport's Day, 10.00—11.15am. Parents and carers are warmly invited to attend.
Friday 26th June	Y5/6 Sport's Day, 1.15—2.30pm. Parents and carers are warmly invited to attend.

Diary Dates

Friday 26th June	MUFTI (non-uniform) day—please make a donation to School Fund via Parent Pay if your child chooses to wear their own choice of clothes.
Wednesday 1st July	Glow in the Dark Dodgeball event—a group of Y6 pupils attending.
Monday 6th July	End of year reports sent out to parents/carers.
Wednesday 8th July	Changeover Day—pupils move up to spend the day with their new class teacher.
Thursday 16th July	Y3 Doves swimming (to replace the lesson missed due to the trip to Coventry Cathedral.)
Wednesday 15th July	Leavers' show and awards ceremony for Y6 Moorhens. Estimated running time 9.30—11.30am
Thursday 16th July	Leavers' show and awards ceremony for Y6 Swans. Estimated running time 9.30—11.30am

School ends on Friday 17th July.

Academic year 2026/27 begins on Wednesday 2nd September

Diary Dates



Sydenham Superstars



YR and Key Stage One



Key Stage Two