Honesty, Respect, Kindness, Perseverance

Lower Halstow School Newsletter October 2026

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Update from Mrs Deevoy and Miss Crowe

We have been very lucky with the weather this term, which has meant that we have been able to enjoy our usual outdoor activities even more - including GFC football coaching, Chance to Shine cricket and other outdoor learning. We have definitely made the most of being back together after the long summer break. It has been a pleasure to welcome our new Reception children, and Year 6 have demonstrated how mature and caring they can be by stepping seamlessly into the buddies role and helping them to settle into the routines of school.

Hopefully you've seen what the children have been up to in term 1 on the Class Dojo story or on our school Instagram feed. A few highlights are also contained in this newsletter.

A Few Reminders

Uniform

Thank you to everyone for ensuring your child brings a drawstring / tote bag instead of a rucksack. Please name all clothing so it can easily be returned if lost. The majority of items in the Lost Property box are un-named, there is already a lost property mountain!

Trainers or shoes should be PLAIN black.

School hoodies, jumpers or fleeces should be worn every day even on PE days. General hoodies and tracksuit tops are not permitted.

Football kits are not needed for GFC football coaching, a change of joggers or leggings can be put in their drawstring bag, in case they slip over when playing.

White polo shirts are now commonly worn for PE but white T-shirts can still be worn on PE days if preferred.

PLAIN black, navy or dark grey leggings, joggers or sports shorts can be worn on any day. Traditional skirts or trousers should be dark grey (Year 2 upwards).

Reading

We are still seeing children in KS2 struggling with their reading fluency (they can read but not at a speed sufficient for good comprehension). This only comes with practice so please continue to read with your child and write in their reading record. Reading the same short passage several times to develop accuracy, speed, expression and a 'reading rhythm' is worthwhile - quality not quantity.

Medical

Children may bring medicated lip salve in for chapped lips, however this must be handed to the class teacher and should not be lip gloss.

Photos

The children looked really smart for their school photos, please remember to order your photos via the Julian Austin link. We hope you are happy with the quality of the photos – we were very pleased with how they looked.

Have a lovely half-term break and don't forget to visit the now famous Lower Halstow Scarecrow Trail which has been organised by the FOLHS and supported by the families in the village.

Best wishes,

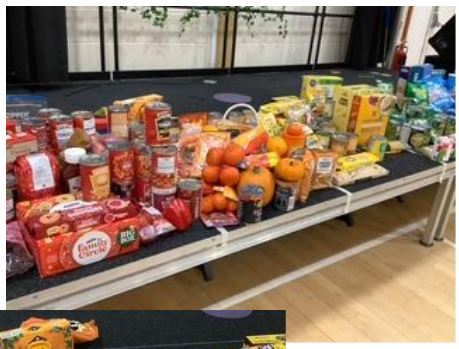
Mrs Deevoy and Miss Crowe

A Rainbow of Kindness at Our Harvest Festival!

Our first whole-school event of the year was our annual Rainbow Harvest Festival, and what a lovely celebration it was! Each class represented a different colour of the rainbow and brought in food donations to match, creating a wonderfully colourful collection of goodies to support the Swale Food Bank.

The celebration, led by John Guest, included prayers, thoughtful poems, beautiful autumn descriptions and some fantastic rainbow artwork from our Year 1 and 2 children, alongside some wonderful singing from everyone.

A real highlight was joining together to sing one of our favourite harvest songs, Cauliflowers Fluffy — a song that always brings a smile to our faces! It was especially lovely to welcome Acorn Class to the celebration for the very first time. A huge thank you to all our families for your generosity and support. The Swale Food Bank were incredibly grateful when they collected our donations, and it was wonderful to see our school community coming together to help others.







Celebrating our Family Heritage



Our Heritage Month has been a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the different backgrounds, traditions and stories that make our school community so special.

The children have enjoyed sharing photographs and artefacts that tell us more about their family histories, and it has been lovely to hear about special family celebrations, treasured traditions and exciting places visited. We have learnt so much about one another and the children have enjoyed discovering similarities as well as celebrating what makes each family unique.

Our activities have been a wonderful reminder that we all have our own stories and come from a variety of backgrounds and heritages, but we are all part of one big school family. It was a lovely way to celebrate our differences and recognise that we may all be different, but we belong together! Thank you for supporting your children and allowing them to bring things in to share.







Our Pupils Shine on the Cricket Pitch!

Our pupils have once again enjoyed the opportunity to get active and develop their sporting skills through the Chance to Shine Cricket programme, delivered by Kent Cricket.

Children in Years 2 to 6 have taken part in fun, engaging coaching sessions, developing their cricket skills, including batting, bowling, catching and fielding. The sessions have been a fantastic way to build confidence, encourage teamwork and introduce the children to new sporting challenges, all while enjoying being active.

It has been lovely to see the children getting involved so enthusiastically, cheering one another on and discovering that cricket is about much more than just scoring runs — it's about teamwork, perseverance and having fun!



Leaves of Learning, Growing our History

As part of our 150th birthday celebrations, the children have been busy creating something truly special to mark this important milestone in our school's history.



During two clay art workshops with artist Christine Arnell, the children designed and glazed their very own clay leaves, each contributing to a unique whole-school art installation. We now have an amazing 200 individual leaves, which will be brought together to create a beautiful commemorative piece of artwork to adorn the front of our school. It has been wonderful to see the children take such pride in creating something that will become a lasting reminder of our 150th birthday celebrations.

The final leaves are currently being fired, and we are very excited to see the finished masterpiece come together. We can't wait to share the completed installation with you all soon!



Owls, Ice Cream and a Whole Lot of Fun!



What a hoot we had when the children were treated to a very special visit from the Owl and Raptor Centre! The children enjoyed a fascinating demonstration, watching in amazement as owls swooped right over their heads. They learnt lots of interesting facts about owls and other birds of prey, making it a wonderfully memorable experience for everyone.

However, the excitement didn't stop there! As an extra special treat, the children enjoyed ice creams for lunch, served by Miss Crowe and Mrs Deevoy on a beautiful, hot and sunny September day — what could be better? Our School Council had the important job of choosing the toppings, ensuring there was something delicious for everyone to enjoy. It was a lovely way to celebrate the start of the school year, and there were plenty of happy faces, sticky fingers and big smiles all round!







Staying safe, wherever we go

Keeping our children safe is always a priority, and our recent Safety Week provided lots of opportunities for pupils across the school to develop important skills to help them stay safe in today's world.

Our Reception children learnt how to cross the road safely, practising the all-important Stop, Look and Listen message. Year 1 and 2 enjoyed learning how to ride their scooters safely, while Years 3, 4 and 6 explored the importance of sun safety and water safety.



Our Year 5 pupils headed off to Margate Railway Centre, where they took part in interactive activities to learn about railway safety and the potential dangers around railway lines.

Each year group enjoyed activities suited to their age, helping them understand how to make sensible choices and keep themselves and others safe. We hope the children will remember these important lessons and put them into practice both in and out of school.



School Attendance

The whole school attendance stands at 95.7% whilst this is an improvement on 2 years ago, we are 0.6% down on last year's Term 1 attendance. Thank you for all your support in encouraging your children to come to school even if they aren't quite 100%, if in doubt the best policy is to always give it a try. Please be assured that we WILL call you if we feel your child is too poorly to be at school. Please could we remind you to phone or e-mail in by 8.45 if your child is absent.

Good attendance is vital for children to make the most of their learning, build friendships and feel part of our school community. Even a few days of absence can add up over the school year, meaning children may miss important learning and find it harder to keep up with their classmates.

The table below shows how attendance percentages translate into time missed from school over a typical 190-day school year. It is a powerful reminder that every day really does count!

Attendance rate	Days of school missed (out of 190)	What this means
100%	0 days	Every opportunity to learn
95%	10 days (2 weeks)	2 weeks of learning missed
93%	13 days	Below the school's attendance target
90%	19 days (nearly 4 weeks)	Persistent absence threshold
85%	Around 29 days (nearly 6 weeks)	Significant gaps in learning can develop

Please note: persistent absence is defined as missing 10% or more of possible school sessions, which equates to attendance of 90% or below.

Termly Breakdown:

Terms (cumulative)	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027
1	95.2%	96.3%	95.7%

Dates for your diary

Please note dates in red are changed from the Term 1 newsletter.

Term 2

Date	Event
2.11.26	Start of Term 2 – Children return
4.11.26	Year 6 Pizza Express trip
5.11.26	Year 5 swimming continues (last session 10.12.26)
11.11. 26 3.30 - 5.00	FOLHS Table Top sale
Week Beg 16.11.26	Anti-Bullying Week
Week Beg 16.11.26	Year 1 Parent Phonics sessions – details to follow
20.11.26	Children in Need – details to follow
26.11.26 am	Maidstone Museum workshops in school for Year 3 and 6
27.11.26	FOLHS non-uniform day – please bring chocolate for the tombola
2.12.26 5.30 - 7.30	FOLHS Shopping Event
8.12.26 at 1.45pm	Rock Steady Concert by invitation only
11.12.26 pm	Santa Run (children only)
11.12.26 at 1.00 pm	FOLHS Christmas Fayre – details to follow
14.12.26 2.15pm	Year R Christmas songs to parents
15.12.26 2pm	Year 1 and 2 nativity to parents
16.12.26 2pm	Year 1 and 2 nativity to parents
16.12.26 – 3.20 – 4.00pm	Open Classrooms
17.12.26	Christmas jumpers, Christmas dinner and parties day
18.12.26	End of Term 2



Term 3

Date	Event
4.1.27	Staff Development Day – **children do not attend**
5.1.27	Start of Term 3
11.1.27	Year 4 Swimming begins – details to follow
13.1.27	Year 6 Houses of Parliament trip – details to follow
20.1.27	Year 5 Mote Park trip – details to follow
25.1.27 pm	Year 6 Money Workshop
27.1.27 at 9.15am	Year 3 Class Assembly to parents
28.1.27	Maths Day – Money focus
1.1.27 pm	Year 6 Money Workshop
2.2.27	Year 3 to the Guildhall, Rochester – Roman talk
5.2.27	FOLHS Non uniform day, money donation
9.2.27	Internet Safety workshops
9.2.27 pm	Pancake Races (parents don't attend)
10.2.27 at 9.15am	Year 4 Class Assembly to parents
10.2.27 3.20 – 4.00pm	Open Classrooms
12.2.27	**End of Term 3**
22.2.27	**Start of Term 4**
Week Beg: 1.3.27	Book week – details to follow
4.3.27	World Book Day – dressing up. Details to follow
4.3.27 3.10pm	Golden Ticket chocolate bar sale
8.3.27	Science Day
9.3.27	Year 4 to Kent Life – Ancient Egyptian Day

2026-2027 Staff Development Days:

- Monday 4th January 2027
- Monday 21 June 2027
- Wednesday 21 July 2027