

Heathlands Primary Academy

A message from Mr McMahon

Welcome to our latest half-termly newsletter! I hope you're enjoying the new format, it's designed to be more visually appealing and easier to navigate, so you can quickly find the sections that interest you most. This has been an incredibly busy half term, but definitely one of my favourites. Inside, you'll read all about the exciting in-school and out-of-school events, our fundraising successes, and some of the fantastic learning that's been taking place across the school.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our amazing staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the first term back. The Autumn term is notoriously long, and both staff and children have earned a well-deserved chance to recharge their batteries.

A quick reminder: we have an INSET day on Monday 5th January, so pupils will return on Tuesday 6th January. Attendance remains a key priority for us—we've seen a dip in recent weeks, and we need to hit the ground running in the new year.

To those celebrating, I wish you a wonderful Christmas. And to all of you, I hope you enjoy the break, rest, recharge and make the most of family time. We look forward to welcoming you all back in 2026!

Best wishes,
Mr McMahon

OPAL Outdoor Play

We're thrilled to share the amazing success of our first term of OPAL! Outdoor lunchtimes have been transformed, children are making new friends, challenging themselves and exploring endless opportunities for fun and learning. Through independent play, they've developed confidence, creativity, and a wide range of social, emotional and physical skills.

A huge thank you to all our families for your incredible support in making this possible—we couldn't have done it without you! We're already looking forward to our next donation drive to keep OPAL growing and thriving.



Visits and Visitors

Reception's visit to Sandham Grange

This week, a group of Reception children visited Sandham Grange to share the joy of Christmas with its residents. The children performed a selection of festive songs from their nativity play, filling the room with warmth and laughter.

The elderly residents were absolutely delighted by the performance, joining in with smiles and gentle claps as the children sang beautifully. Many commented on how the visit brought back cherished memories and made their day truly special.

The children behaved wonderfully throughout, showing kindness and confidence as they sang with enthusiasm and clear voices. Their amazing performance was a testament to their hard work and festive spirit, leaving everyone feeling uplifted and full of Christmas cheer.



Aston Hall- Year 1

Year 1 had a fantastic time on their visit to Aston Hall! The children were excited to explore the grand rooms, learn about the history of The Great Fire of London and take part in activities that brought their classroom learning to life. Their behaviour and enthusiasm was excellent throughout the trip, and we are incredibly proud of how well they represented our school. It was a wonderful day filled with curiosity, discovery and memorable experiences for everyone.

Y3's Stone Age Day

At the start of the half term Year 3 participated in a Stone Age day where they looked at artefacts, analysed different bones and inferred what they may have been used for and even managed to craft their archery skills by shooting at animal targets- a super immersive day which really kick-started their Stone Age topic. Definitely a day the children will remember for some time!



Planetarium Visitor- Year 5

At the start of the term Year 5 had a visit from The Black Hole Planetarium.

This helped the children gain a greater understanding of each of the planets (including Pluto) within our solar system. As well as this they looked at the moon and its different phases. The children learnt some interesting facts about each of the planets including the size ratios in comparison to the sun.

As part of this day, the children also explored and learnt lots about the infamous star constellations including The Big Dipper and Orion's Belt. Next time there is a clear night outside please ask the children if they can help you point out the some of the most well know constellations.



Performances

EYFS Nativity

Our children truly shone in their nativity performance! They spoke with clarity and confidence, projected their voices beautifully, and sang together in perfect harmony. Their enthusiasm and teamwork were evident throughout, creating a joyful and memorable celebration. We are so proud of these confident little learners! It was so nice to see so many of our parents join us for this.



Year 2's Christmas performance

Year 2 delighted us with their performance of Father Christmas Visits the Land of Rhyme. Santa delivered perfect presents to a cast of beloved nursery rhyme characters, including Humpty Dumpty, Mary Mary, Little Miss Muffet and many more. The children brought the story to life with confidence, clear voices and festive cheer. What a clever Santa—and what a talented group of performers!

Year 5's Aladdin

Year 5 have spent a lot of time rehearsing, singing and practising their lines for their pantomime, Aladdin. The children have worked tirelessly to learn their lines, stage directions and consider their interaction with the audience. Performances like this show us how important speaking and listening for different purposes is. From visual graphics, to prop making. Everyone in Year 5 have had a part to play in the performance and it has been wonderful watching each of the children improve every time we rehearsed. We hope all the parents and carers enjoyed it too!



Cinderella Pantomime

On Friday 5th December the children of Heathlands were lucky enough to have a visit from Stage Ed performing their fantastic pantomime, Cinderella. Everyone from Reception up to Year 6 got to participate and enjoy the performance. Pupil voice has suggested that the children really enjoyed the performance and loved being able to participate in the interactive show. It also really helped year 5 understand the fun and action a pantomime can have before their very own performance.



Music



Since September, 4P have been learning to play the fife and have made fantastic progress with their musical skills. Meanwhile, 4S have been mastering brass instruments and impressing everyone with their progress. Recently, both classes came together to perform a special concert for Key Stage 2, showcasing the wonderful music they have been working on. In addition, our elective music pupils also took part, sharing their talents and making the event even more memorable.

On Thursday, 11th December, we enjoyed another fantastic Rocksteady performance showcasing the incredible talent of our pupils! It was wonderful to see how much progress they've made, and the energy on stage was inspiring. We were also thrilled to welcome some new members who joined us this academic year—they're already off to a brilliant start.

We can't wait to see them perform again next half term.

Well done to all of you!

Kindness Day

In November, we proudly took part in World Kindness Day, celebrating the power of small acts to make a big difference. Each class worked hard to fill their Kindness Jars with thoughtful deeds and kind words. Pupils shared these with one another, spreading positivity and showing that kindness truly is contagious! It was wonderful to see our school community embracing this special day and making kindness a habit.



Remembrance Day

The children of Heathlands came together for Remembrance Day and completed a two minute silence on the playground. As always all of our children were respectful. We asked the children to consider what they had learnt about Remembrance Day and what it signifies. This concluded with children making their own poppies and using them to decorate door frames. Our reception children beautifully marched back into school like brave soldiers marching to battle. As always it was a poignant, special moment at Heathlands which makes each and every one of us proud to be a member of this school.

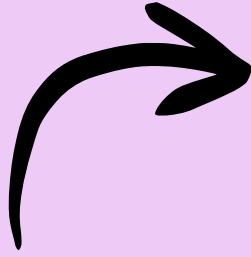
Anti-Bullying Week

This November, we proudly joined in with Anti-Bullying Week 2025, whose theme—"Power for Good"—encouraged everyone to use their voice and actions to make school a kinder, safer place.

During our special assemblies, we celebrated the many pupils who have shown real vigilance in looking out for others. We reminded everyone that in the face of bullying, it's best to be an upstander, not a bystander. By speaking up, offering help, and showing kindness, our children demonstrated the power of doing good even in small ways.

A huge well done to all our pupils for embracing this message and helping build a more caring school community!

Councils



This term we have supported a campaign encouraging healthy eating through eating lots of beans, pulses, and lentils. We've incorporated these into our lunch time options every day this week and have held activities across the year groups teaching children about the importance of healthy eating.



Our school councillors in Year 5 also attended the pupil forum involving children from across our trust. We discussed the importance of charities and which ones we could support in the future, healthy eating and growing food in grow towers.

In support of national outdoors day, on 6/11/25 every year group spent some time outside to enhance their learning. This included one of our year groups creating their very own bird feeders and artwork involving objects found in nature.



The school council has had a positive start! The first meeting successfully brought all councillors together, allowing them to introduce themselves and begin sharing thoughtful, productive ideas on how to improve the school. Roles are being allocated during each meeting to ensure representation within classes, and councillors are tasked with gathering feedback to bring back to the council. This collaborative approach will set the foundation for positive changes across the school community.

Christmas celebrations



December has been full of festive cheer here at school! We've enjoyed a wonderful range of events and activities that brought our community together and spread plenty of Christmas spirit.

Our talented pupils wowed us with their Christmas performances, showcasing music, drama and lots of enthusiasm. A highlight was the traditional pantomime, a much-loved part of our seasonal celebrations, which had everyone laughing and joining in.

The school Christmas dinner was another special moment. Children pulled crackers, wore party hats and shared a meal together, filling the hall with laughter and fun. Our Christmas Fayre was a huge success too, raising over £1,000 for school projects. Thank you to everyone who supported this fantastic event! Christmas Jumper Day added a splash of colour and sparkle, with an amazing variety of festive designs on show. In-class Christmas parties gave pupils a chance to celebrate with friends, and for our youngest learners in Nursery through Year 2, there was an extra magical surprise...a visit from Santa himself! From start to finish, December has been packed with joy, generosity, and togetherness. A big thank you to our staff, families, and pupils for making this season so memorable.

Children will have dance in PE when we return, they will be bare foot in the hall or they can wear grip socks (no slipper socks).

We are delighted to share that we have been accepted onto the 'free breakfast club' pilot scheme from the government. This will launch in the Summer term with more information coming out next term.

Noticeboard

Parent Workshops
Spring Term
EVERY WEDNESDAY 14:15 - 15:15

JAN 7	Making mornings manageable: taking the stress out of the school run Mrs Purshall
JAN 14	SEND Drop in Mrs Begum and Mrs Williamson
JAN 21	Communication and behaviour (information and strategies for parents) CAT Team and Mrs Begum
JAN 28	Early Help: Accessing Support Services in the Community: Finance / Housing & Parental Mental Health Early Help Team and Mrs Williamson
FEB 4	Anxiety Compass
FEB 11	Behaviour at home Mrs Williamson and Mrs Poole

ALL PARENTS WELCOME - PLEASE CONFIRM VIA MCAS OR INFORMING THE OFFICE

Thankyou for everyone who responded to the homework policy parent voice. The new guidance is currently in draft format and will be shared in the new year.

Raffle winners were contacted- well done to all

winners:

1st- 578

2nd- 555

3rd- 632

4th- 614

Congratulations!



Dates for your Diary

A selection of key dates- these will be repeated, and any new dates updated, in the weekly bitesize news:

5.1 - INSET (School closed)

6.1- School reopens

7.1- Making mornings manageable (see above)

14.1- SEND Drop in (see above)

15.1- Y5/6 athletics (selected children)

18.1- World Religion Day

20.1- Y6 Height and weight

21.1- Reception Height and weight

21.1- Communication & behaviour (see above)

28.1- Early Help workshop (see above)

2.2- Year 2 visit to Tamworth Castle

4.2- Anxiety Workshop (See above)

Signposting

Advice to keep
safe online:



PUPIL SUPPORT

WE HOPE THAT YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY AND A WELL-DESERVED REST. IF YOU NEED SOME GUIDANCE OVER THE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS THE RESOURCES BELOW MAY HELP.

ChildLine
0800 1111

CHILDLINE IS MORE THAN AN EMERGENCY NUMBER, THEY HAVE GREAT RESOURCES AND GAMES THAT CAN HELP YOU UNDERSTAND HOW YOU MIGHT BE FEELING

https://www.childline.org.uk/?in_type=under12service

shout
85258
here for you 24/7

FEELING CONFUSED OR STRUGGLING WITH A FEELING YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN? TRY TEXTING THE SHOUT NUMBER FOR PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT WHILST NOT AT SCHOOL.

<https://giveusashout.org/>

kooth

ANOTHER WAY YOU CAN GET SUPPORT IS KOOTH. TRY LISTENING TO THEIR PODCAST ON SPOTIFY OR FOLLOWING THE HEALTHY TIPS ON SOCIAL MEDIA. YOU COULD USE THEIR COUNSELLING SERVICE FOR FREE. LOG ON TO THEIR WEBSITE:

<https://www.kooth.com/>

LUMI NOVA
TALES OF COURAGE

LUMINOVA IS FUN, GAME-THEMED DIGITAL THERAPY FOR CHILDREN TO SUPPORT WITH ANXIETY. PERHAPS GIVE IT A TRY IF YOU WANT TO TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

Lumi Nova: Tales of Courage

It's Christmas Time – Parents guide to help keep children safe online

It's Christmas Time!

A Parent's Guide to Social Media

A Parent's Guide to Sharing Pictures

A Parent's Guide to Gaming

A Parent's Guide to Online Grooming

scan the QR code with your phone's camera to see the guides on our website

A Parent's Guide to Live Streaming

A Parent's Guide to Online Influencers

A Parent's Guide to Fake News

A Parent's Guide to Privacy Settings

It's always best to be prepared

Many parents may be planning to give electronic gadgets to their children this festive period. Our guide is designed to help parents take a realistic approach to help keep their children safe when using the internet, social media and playing online games.

Scan the QR code to find out more.

Online safety is when young people know who they can tell if they feel upset by something that has happened online.

Parents please contact your school to enquire attending their next e-safety workshop or have any concerns.

Working with Home Office 'PREVENT', The Police and Crime Commissioner and Children's Safeguarding Partnerships to help keep children safe online.

Skips Educational Email: info@skipsed.com Tel: +44 121 227 1941

Developed in partnership with

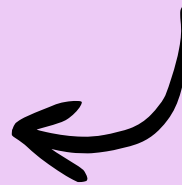
Home Office
KIDSAFE & SAFER ONLINE
FOR ALL AGES

West Midlands
Police
Reduction Unit

West Midlands
police and crime
commissioner

Skips www.skipsafety.net

Other bits of
advice:



If you have an immediate concern about a child's safety please contact 999

If you would like to raise a concern to Birmingham Children's Trust then please contact:

0121 303 1888

If there is a safeguarding concern that you need to inform the school about, which does not require an immediate response, please email dsl@heathlands.uwmat.co.uk