

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## HEADTEACHER'S WELCOME

It has been another busy and vibrant half term at GCA, filled with learning, enrichment and opportunities for our children to shine. Although the half-term break meant we were not in school to mark Chinese New Year, we know that this was celebrated by some of our families at home. In school, we have also taken time to recognise important periods such as Ramadan and Lent, helping children to develop their understanding of different faiths, cultures and traditions.

A real highlight of the half term was National Science Week, where children across the school took part in a range of exciting classroom activities. We were also delighted to welcome Spark2, who delivered engaging, hands-on workshops designed to get children thinking and working like real scientists. These sessions truly sparked curiosity and deepened children's understanding of the world around them. We are very grateful to our PTA for kindly funding this fantastic opportunity.

Our Year 6 pupils have received their secondary school places — an important milestone — and those moving on to Hinchingsbrooke have already taken part in their first visit as part of an enhanced transition programme. Year 6 have also successfully completed their Bikeability training, while our EYFS children have been developing their skills through Balance Bikeability, building confidence and coordination.

There have been plenty of whole-school events too. World Book Day and Red Nose Day were celebrated with great enthusiasm, and our Whole School Talent Show was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the many talents we have across GCA — we were incredibly proud of all who took part. Year 3 and 4 have continued to enjoy their Forest School sessions, while Year 4 welcomed parents into school for a special craft session, creating a lovely shared experience. Our ever-popular Mystery Noun Tea Party celebrated children's creative responses, alongside the introduction of a new and intriguing noun — pangolin!

We ended the half term with our Big Walk and Wheel event, organised by Mrs Millard and our JTAs, which saw many children choosing active and sustainable ways to travel to school. This continues to support our commitment to promoting safe and environmentally friendly travel across our community.

In terms of staffing, we say goodbye to Miss Hancock and thank her for her contributions to the school. We also wish Miss Skinner all the very best as she begins her maternity leave. Mrs O'Connor is currently away from school; we remain in regular contact with her and look forward to welcoming her back in due course. We are pleased to be welcoming two new Teaching Assistants, Mrs Healy and Miss Standen, after the Easter break. We also say goodbye to Mr Dorling, who has been with us for his contrasting placement — we thank him for his hard work and wish him every success in the next stage of his training. It has been a fantastic half term, full of energy, creativity and achievement. Thank you, as always, for your continued support — we wish you all a restful Easter break.

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## RECEPTION (EYFS)

It has been another excellent half term for us in Reception. With the better weather appearing, it has allowed for extended play and making the most of our large outdoor learning area. We've had the sandpit open, enjoyed water play in our tuff trays, and some children have even ventured (with wellies!) into the mud corner.

As the children have progressed, we have observed greater teamwork and collaboration, with lots of larger building projects taking place. These have included forts made with crates, as well as houses and garages to accompany the bikes.

The children have thoroughly enjoyed the weekly balance-ability sessions this term. It has been a fantastic opportunity for them all, and we've seen a real growth in their confidence.

The start of swimming has also been a real highlight of the children's week. We have been really impressed with their independence (thank you for all the practice at home). They get ready and changed again brilliantly, and have shown great courage in the water—especially those who are new to swimming.

In phonics this term, we have been recapping our Phase 3 digraphs and trigraphs, ensuring that the children are confident when reading them within words and when segmenting to spell. We have also focused on recognising tough tricky words and reading longer sentences, encouraging fluency by identifying digraphs and tricky words first. We continue to observe excellent progress.

During English, we have read the story 'How to Catch a Star' as part of our Talk for Writing work. The children have practised writing sentences each week with a different focus. We have encouraged them to verbally rehearse their sentences first, to support independent sounding out. They loved this text and enjoyed making lots of crafts to go alongside the story. The children were all so engaged during the world book day celebrations too earlier in the term and had the best time planting seeds with their buddies and sharing their new books together.

In Maths, we have focused on the numbers 9 and 10, including learning number bonds to 10 through practical games and a helpful rhyme for doubling. We finished the term by practising naming and describing 3D shapes. The children enjoyed hunting for 2d and 3d shapes in their environment.

We wish everyone a happy break and a relaxing holiday. We look forward to the Summer term, when we can continue to explore the outdoors, return to the forest, and enjoy more swimming sessions. We will continue our little wandle teaching and we hope to be able to make the most of our garden area and get the children involved in planting to add some vegetables and some colour!.



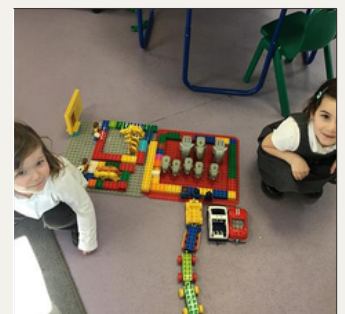
**TEAMWORK**



**INDEPENDENT  
WRITING**



**SWIMMING**



**SMALL WORLD  
PLAY**



**FOREST SCHOOL**



**STORY ACTING**



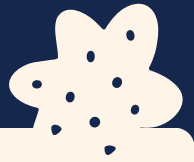
**BALANCE-  
ABILITY**



**'SNUGGLY'  
READING**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR ONE



Wow - a lot has been achieved in this Spring term! In Phonics, we have been continuing to learn alternative Phase 5 sounds while also practising reading and writing longer words and full sentences. The children recently completed a practice Phonics Screening Check and made us incredibly proud with their efforts and progress.

In English, our learning has been linked to our History topic, where we have explored the lives of David Attenborough and Amelia Earhart. The children have created fantastic predictions, written thoughtful diary entries, and even invented their own exciting adventure stories about travelling around the world.

In Maths, we have been focusing on tens and ones to help us understand and manipulate numbers up to 50. The children have been applying this knowledge to solve addition and subtraction problems. We have also enjoyed measuring items during provision time, using vocabulary such as "shorter" and "longer" with increasing confidence.

In Science, the children have been learning to classify animals, including identifying vertebrates and invertebrates. They have also explored animal diets and discussed how animals have adapted over time. In RE, we have had a wonderful half term learning about different celebrations, including Ramadan, Eid and Easter. The children have shown great interest and have enjoyed sharing their own experiences.

PE has been a particular highlight! The children have loved being coached by a professional player from Huntingdon Tennis Club, who praised their coordination, listening skills and resilience. This enthusiasm has continued into Provision, where many children have been practising their tennis skills and showing great determination to improve. We wish you a very happy Easter break together.



**WORLD BOOK DAY**



**SCIENCE**



**GROUP WRITING**



**PSHE**



**FESTIVALS IN RE**



**TEAM WORK IN  
FOREST SCHOOL**



**SKILLS IN FOREST  
SCHOOL**



**BRITISH SCIENCE  
WEEK**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR TWO

We are delighted to share some of the lovely learning that has taken place across Magnolia and Maple class. In English, the children have thoroughly enjoyed reading *The Storm Whale*. They have been developing their deduction and inference skills, particularly focusing on how the character's feelings change throughout the story. They wrote thoughtful diary entries and really enjoyed sharing these in our class diaries. We also explored writing limericks, which was jolly good fun and quite a challenge—especially when trying to find those tricky rhyming triplets!

In Maths, we have been learning about fractions, with a strong focus on understanding equal parts. The children have worked hard to apply this knowledge in a range of activities. In Science, we have continued our topic on Animals, including Humans. The children particularly enjoyed learning about classification, the importance of exercise, and maintaining good hygiene. In PSHE, we have focused on personal safety and identifying hazards in our environment. We have also continued with our Wellbeing Wednesdays, and it has been lovely to see the children using these strategies to help manage their feelings when things feel challenging.

Year 2 have also shone on the tennis court! Our coach from Huntingdon Tennis Club has praised their enthusiasm, resilience, teamwork, and determination to improve. During British Science Week, the children embraced their curiosity through hands-on activities, including building structures with plasticine and spaghetti and completing a team drawing challenge without speaking. On World Book Day, the children were highly engaged by being involved in fun activities based on different books. Thank you for helping them get into character with their fantastic costumes. We are continually impressed by all the children's positivity and determination to do "better than yesterday." Wishing you a fun Easter break together!



**SCIENCE WEEK -  
BUILDING**



**SCIENCE WEEK -  
DRAWING**



**WORLD BOOK DAY**



**MOTHERS DAY  
CREATIONS**



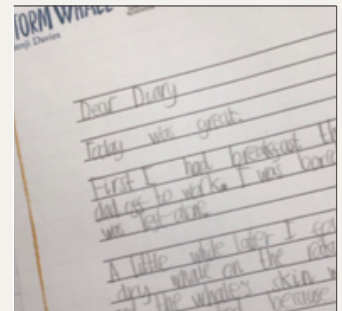
**TENNIS COACHING**



**SCIENCE ACTIVITIES**



**MATHS - FINDING A  
FRACTION OF AN AMOUNT**



**DIARY WRITING**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR THREE



Year 3 have had a fantastic half term and have continued to show enthusiasm and curiosity across all areas of their learning.

In English, the children thoroughly enjoyed exploring a story based on real-life events through *Escape from Pompeii*, which linked brilliantly to their volcano topic. They wrote descriptive letters, focusing on using sensory language to help the reader feel as though they were actually there during the eruption. Alongside this, they developed their understanding of how to write in a friendly, engaging style and practised asking questions to involve the reader. World Book Day was a real highlight of the half term, with children taking part in a range of drama, art and word-based activities inspired by their favourite books—proving once again that reading really can be fun!

In Maths, the focus has been on measuring length and weight using standard units. The children enjoyed practical activities around the classroom, measuring and comparing different objects and discussing their findings. More recently, they have begun learning about fractions and are starting to make connections between equivalent fractions, building a strong foundation for future learning.

Across the wider curriculum, Year 3 have been busy exploring the continent of Europe in Geography. They particularly enjoyed comparing countries such as Iceland, Greece, Italy and Spain, and were excited to share their own holiday experiences. In Science, the children have begun their topic on rocks and are looking forward to continuing their investigations next half term. In Art, they have produced some fantastic work by sketching characters inspired by Roald Dahl before bringing them to life using newspaper and ModRoc—these creations look brilliant! In PSHE, the focus has been on understanding how to lead a healthy lifestyle, with thoughtful discussions about making positive choices.

Elm Class have also made the most of their Forest School sessions this half term, embracing the outdoor environment and developing their teamwork and resilience skills.

Overall, it has been another hardworking, productive and enjoyable half term in Year 3. Well done to all the children!



**ELM FOREST SCHOOL**



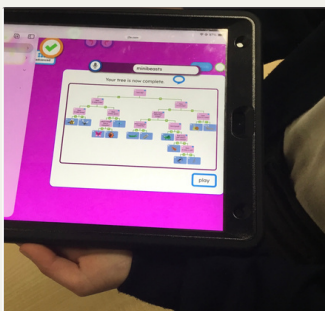
**ART**



**MATHS MEASURES**



**PSHE**



**COMPUTING**



**SCIENCE WEEK**



**WORLD BOOK DAY**



**ENGLISH**

# GCA HALF-TERM NEWS

## YEAR FOUR

Year 4 have had another brilliant half term, demonstrating enthusiasm, resilience and a consistently positive attitude to their learning. The children have worked incredibly hard and shown increasing maturity across all areas of the curriculum, which has been wonderful to see.

In English, inspired by *The Iron Man*, the children have focused on developing their reading comprehension skills. They have engaged in thoughtful discussions, using oracy to share their opinions and support them with evidence from the text. They have also made careful predictions and extended their writing through producing detailed newspaper reports, paying close attention to sentence structure, organisation and presentation.

In Maths, the focus has been on fractions and perimeter. The children have approached these new concepts with determination and have shown great perseverance in their learning. Times tables continue to be a key focus, and it has been fantastic to see so many children earning recognition for their effort and progress.

In Science, the children explored the topic of sound through a range of hands-on investigations. They learned how sound travels, how pitch and volume can change, and how vibrations are created. Their curiosity and enthusiasm during these experiments were excellent, and they asked some brilliant scientific questions.

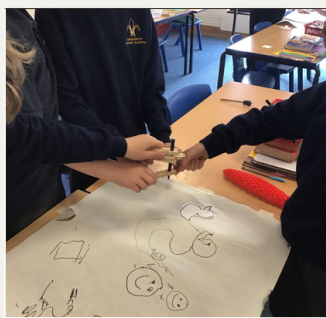
There have been some real highlights this half term, including World Book Day and Science Day, where the children showcased excellent teamwork, creativity and problem-solving skills. We were also delighted to host successful Family Events and would like to thank all the families who attended—your support truly makes a difference to the children's learning experience.

Looking ahead to next half term, we are excited for the children's creative showcase. They have already put a great deal of effort into their projects, and we are very much looking forward to celebrating their achievements.

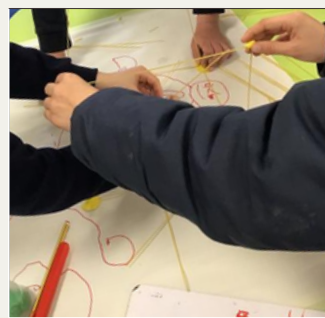
We are incredibly proud of all the children for their hard work, positive attitudes and kindness this half term. We hope everyone enjoys a well-deserved restful break and we look forward to another exciting term ahead!



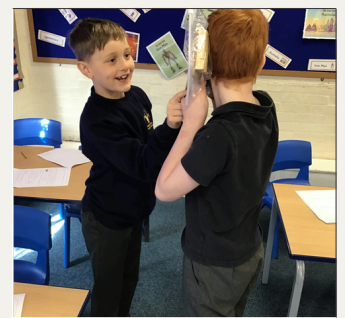
ENGLISH



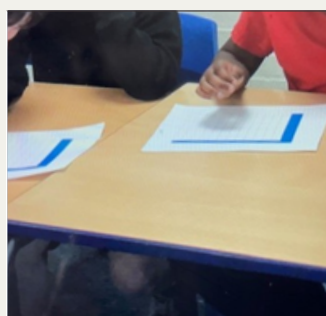
SCIENCE DAY



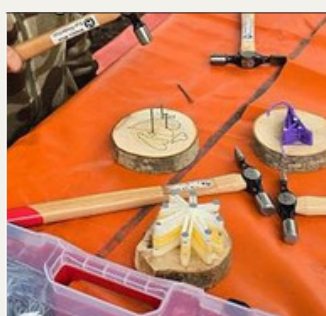
SCIENCE DAY



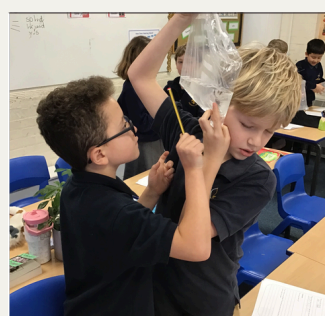
SCIENCE



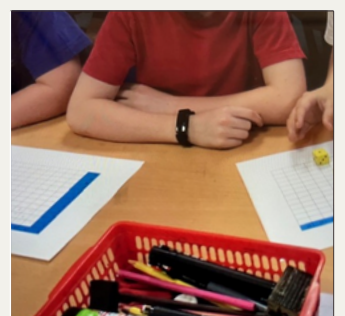
MATHS



FOREST SCHOOL



SCIENCE



MATHS

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR FIVE

As we reach the end of the Spring Term, it is wonderful to reflect on just how much Year 5 have grown both emotionally and academically since September. We can hardly believe that we are already two-thirds of the way through the school year! We are incredibly proud of the hard work the children have put into their learning, as well as the resilience they continue to demonstrate. They have approached challenges with positive mindsets, supported one another brilliantly, and shown real determination when faced with difficulty.

In English, we have been completely engrossed in the story of Street Child, following the journey of Jim Jarvis. Through our reading sessions, the children have developed their inference skills and expanded their vocabulary, while engaging in thoughtful discussions about plot and characterisation. Their writing has been equally impressive, with pupils showcasing strong grammar skills in their narrative writing and detailed character descriptions.

In Mathematics, the children have been building a secure understanding of the place value of decimals, before applying this knowledge to explore the links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Towards the end of the half term, they have also been learning about the area and perimeter of rectilinear shapes. Alongside this, regular arithmetic practice has helped to strengthen their fluency and confidence, with many pupils making excellent progress.

Year 5's learning has extended well beyond English and Maths. In History, the children have begun their exciting topic on the Vikings, while in Science they have been investigating the properties of materials. Science Day was a particular highlight, filled with engaging team activities, and the recent visit from a scientist provided a memorable and inspiring experience for all.

Overall, it has been a fantastic and productive term, and we are very proud of everything the children have achieved.

We would like to wish all our families a fun and restful Easter break—and we hope the Easter Bunny pays a visit!



**MATHS: DECIMALS**



**SCIENCE DAY:  
TEAMWORK**



**HISTORY: CHRONOLOGY**



**WORLD BOOK DAY**



**TALENT SHOW**



**SCIENCE  
WORKSHOP**



**TEAMWORK  
CHALLENGE**



**COMPUTING:  
SORTING DATA**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## YEAR SIX

Year 6 has enjoyed an exceptionally busy and productive half term, with pupils embracing every challenge and opportunity that came their way. They began by completing their Bikeability cycling training, where they not only strengthened their cycling skills but also learned how to navigate roads safely and responsibly. As part of their transition to secondary school, the children visited Hinchingsbrooke School, taking part in an engaging computer science lesson and exploring the site on a guided tour that helped them imagine the exciting changes ahead. World Book Day brought a wonderful buzz to the classroom, giving everyone the chance to celebrate stories, characters and the joy of reading together. Science Day added even more excitement, as pupils worked collaboratively to build the tallest spaghetti tower and later took part in a dynamic Spark2 workshop filled with enormous bubbles, electricity demonstrations and fascinating experiments exploring absorption. The talent show provided a brilliant moment for pupils to showcase their confidence and creativity, all while supporting the important fundraising efforts of Red Nose Day. In English, the children immersed themselves in suspense writing inspired by *Clockwork* by Philip Pullman. Their maths learning focused on algebra and measure, allowing them to apply logical thinking and problem-solving skills. Science lessons deepened their understanding of electricity, with pupils exploring circuits and components. In PE lessons, the children developed their skills in street dancing, while outdoor games helped them refine their tennis skills through practice, teamwork and match play. It has been an exciting, energetic and jam-packed half term, and Year 6 should feel incredibly proud of everything they have achieved and the enthusiasm they have shown throughout.



**WORLD BOOK DAY**



**WORLD BOOK DAY**



**TALENT SHOW**



**TALENT SHOW**



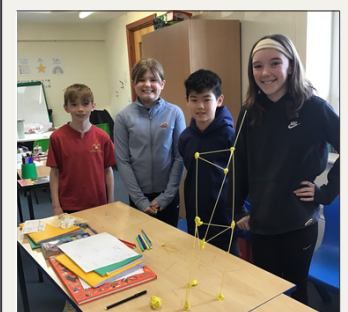
**SPARK2 WORKSHOP**



**SPARK2 WORKSHOP**



**SCIENCE DAY**



**SCIENCE DAY**

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Our Beyond the Classroom provision continues to go from strength to strength, offering children valuable opportunities to develop confidence, resilience and key life skills in a range of engaging ways. Forest School remains a particular highlight. Beech and Elm classes have thoroughly enjoyed their sessions this half term, while Year 1 and EYFS children have continued to gain so much from their time in the forest. We are fully committed to this provision as we consistently see the positive impact it has. Children are encouraged to take risks, explore new skills and equipment, and work with different peer groups. In doing so, we often see a different side to many children — with confidence, enthusiasm and independence shining through in ways that are not always as visible in the classroom. We are excited that Year 5 will begin their sessions next half term, with Year 6 ending the year in the forest. Thank you to everyone involved, and especially to Mrs Hill, Mrs Clarke and Mrs Pegram, for their continued efforts in developing the space and introducing new features that capture the children's imagination.

We have also been delighted to continue welcoming Monty and his owner Denise into school. As part of the Pets as Therapy programme, these sessions provide calm, supportive interactions that help children build confidence, develop communication skills and promote emotional wellbeing — and they always bring a smile to everyone involved.

ArtScape, led by Mrs Smith, has continued to provide a safe, creative space where children can express themselves through art. These sessions support emotional literacy and give children the opportunity to explore and communicate their feelings in a structured and supportive environment.

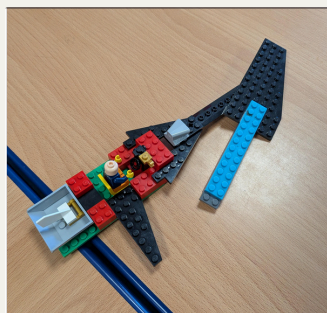
Following a short pause in Spring 1, we are pleased that Mr Gibbs has resumed a small number of LEGO Therapy sessions. These continue to be highly effective in developing collaboration, turn-taking and communication skills in an engaging and purposeful way.

In addition, we are very fortunate to offer targeted small group swimming and PE sessions for a select group of pupils, helping to build water confidence, physical development and teamwork skills.

Our Beyond the Classroom offer is carefully designed around the principle of equity rather than equality — ensuring that provision is tailored to meet the varied and individual needs of our pupils. Through this approach, we are able to provide the right support, at the right time, to help every child thrive.



**DIGGING FOR  
WORMS**



**BUILDING  
LEGO**



**LET'S MAKE  
MUSIC**



**TREATS OVER  
THE FIRE**



# £20.26

## READING FUNDRAISER

**Raise £20.26 through Reading in 2026!**

We are excited to launch our £20.26 Reading Challenge to celebrate 2026 as the National Year of Reading.

Each child is invited to take part in a fun, reading-focused challenge to raise £20.26 between 26<sup>th</sup> March and the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2026. This is a voluntary activity, and there is no pressure to reach the full amount – every contribution makes a difference.

### **What's the challenge?**

Children are encouraged to raise money through reading-based activities. They can be as creative as they like! Some ideas include:

- A sponsored read (number of books, pages, or time spent reading)
- Reading 2,026 pages
- Reading for 2,026 minutes
- Reading to others (siblings, parents, grandparents, neighbours)
- Hosting a bedtime story event
- A readathon with friends
- Selling pre-loved books
- Creating and selling bookmarks or book reviews
- Running a storytelling session for younger children
- Writing their own story and sharing it for donations
- A "reading challenge chart" with sponsorship per milestone reached

### **Why are we doing this?**

- To promote a love of reading as part of the National Year of Reading
- To encourage creativity, independence, and teamwork
- To raise funds for new and exciting books in both our library and classrooms

### **How to donate**

All donations will be made through Arbor:

- You can select a payment of £20.26, or
- Enter the amount your child has raised (please round to the nearest £1)

### **Prizes**


The class that raises the most money will:

- Receive extra weekly library time throughout Summer 2
- Help choose 20 new books for our library.

There will also be a prize for the most creative reading fundraiser.

**Thank you for your support in helping us build a love of reading across our school community.**

**Let's see how far reading can take us! 📖 ✨**



# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## STAFFING UPDATE

This half term we have said goodbye to Miss Hancock, who has left GCA to work with younger children in a nursery setting. We thank her for her contribution to school life and wish her every success in her new role. We also say goodbye to Miss Skinner, who has now begun her maternity leave. We hope she is able to enjoy some well-deserved time to herself before her baby arrives and wish her all the very best for this exciting new chapter.

Mrs O'Connor is currently away from work, both in school and at Kids Club. We remain in regular contact with her and look forward to welcoming her back to work next academic year. In the meantime, we are currently recruiting for an interim manager for Kids Club, as well as additional playworkers. Further details about these roles can be found on the My New Term website.

We have also said goodbye to Mr Dorling, who has been teaching in Oak Class alongside Mrs Bright as part of his teacher training. Mr Dorling has worked incredibly hard during his time with us, and we thank him for his contribution to the school. We wish him all the very best for the remainder of his training.

Finally, we are excited to share that we will be welcoming two new members of staff to our support team after the Easter break, and we look forward to introducing them to the school community soon.

## ATTENDANCE MATTERS

We have recently seen an increase in requests for term-time holidays, including requests for these to be authorised by the school. We would like to remind families that, in line with national guidance, holidays during term time cannot be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances are rare and, where agreed, are typically limited to a small number of days — it is very unusual for an entire holiday period to be authorised.

We do understand the financial pressures families face, particularly with increased costs during school holidays. However, it is important to recognise that every day in school matters. Even a short period of absence can mean missed learning, gaps in understanding, and difficulty keeping up with peers — particularly as key teaching in reading, writing and maths builds day by day.

We appreciate your support in prioritising attendance and ensuring that children are in school, on time, every day wherever possible. Together, we can give every child the best opportunity to succeed.

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## LOST PROPERTY

We currently have a very large amount of lost property in school, and the majority of it is unnamed, meaning it cannot be returned. Please ensure all uniform, coats, lunchboxes and water bottles are clearly named. We are also seeing items regularly left behind at the end of playtimes. We would really appreciate parents reinforcing the importance of children taking responsibility for their own belongings and looking after their property throughout the school day. Your support with this makes a real difference.

## SCHOOL UNIFORM

Thank you to the many pupils who wear our school uniform with pride. However, we are still seeing a significant number of children coming to school in incorrect uniform, particularly PE kit. This has been raised with families previously, but we are not yet seeing the improvement we need. From next half term, we will be monitoring uniform expectations more closely and will be contacting parents where children are not in the correct uniform.

Please ensure your child is wearing the correct uniform each day, including:

- Navy sweatshirt/cardigan
- White or navy polo shirt
- Grey/black trousers/shorts/skirt/pinafore
- Plain black shoes (not trainers)

PE kit must be:

- House colour or white t-shirt
- Navy/black shorts or tracksuit bottoms and jumper (if needed)
- Trainers for outdoor PE

Full details are available on the school website.

If you are struggling to provide uniform or PE kit, please contact the school office — we can help. Finally, please ensure all items of uniform are clearly named, so lost items can be returned. Thank you for your support.

## PUPIL PREMIUM - COULD YOUR CHILD BE ELIGIBLE?

Pupil Premium is extra funding that helps schools support children's learning and wellbeing. Your child may be eligible if your family receives certain benefits, or if they have been eligible for Free School Meals at any point in the last six years.

Even if your child receives universal free meals (Reception–Year 2), it's still important to apply, as this funding makes a real difference in school.

You can find out more and apply here:

Government guidance and application: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

Cambridgeshire County Council information:

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/children-and-families/schools-learning/help-with-school-learning-costs/pupil-premium>

If you're unsure whether you're eligible, or would like help applying, please contact the school office — we're very happy to help.

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## ONLINE SAFETY

### Digital Devices and Wellbeing

Children aged 7 to 14 spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles and computers. This half term's Online Safety guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can support in nurturing healthier digital habits.

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit [nationalcollege.com](https://nationalcollege.com).

## What Parents & Educators Need to Know about DIGITAL DEVICES & WELLBEING

Children aged 7 to 14 now spend roughly 3 to 5 hours a day on phones, tablets, consoles, and computers. That much screen time has parents and educators worried – not just about the hours logged, but about online safety and the knock-on effects on mental health. This guide brings together practical, expert-backed strategies so adults can nurture healthier digital habits and help young people thrive both on and offline.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

#### SLEEP DISRUPTION

Excessive screen time, especially before bed, can interfere with melatonin production and delay sleep onset. Children may struggle to concentrate or regulate emotions due to poor sleep hygiene linked to late-night device use.

#### ONLINE PEER PRESSURE

Social media platforms expose children to unrealistic standards and peer validation loops. Likes, comments, and follower counts can influence self-worth and lead to anxiety or risky behaviour to gain approval.

#### CYBERBULLYING EXPOSURE

Children may encounter bullying through messaging apps, games, or social media. This can be persistent and anonymous, making it harder to detect. Victims often feel isolated and reluctant to report incidents.

#### REDUCED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Time spent on screens often replaces outdoor play and physical activity. This sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, poor posture, and reduced cardiovascular health.

#### EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

Fast-paced digital content can overstimulate young brains. Children may become irritable, impatient, or struggle with boredom and emotional control when not engaged with screens.

#### PRIVACY AND SAFETY RISKS

Children may unknowingly share personal information or interact with strangers online. Without guidance, they may not understand the long-term consequences of digital footprints or unsafe online behaviour.

### Advice for Parents & Educators

#### SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES

Establish screen-time limits and device-free zones, e.g. classrooms and dinner tables. Use parental controls and co-create a digital use agreement with children to encourage accountability. Trying a visual schedule or timer app can help children understand and stick to limits.

#### MODEL HEALTHY HABITS

Children mirror adult behaviour. Demonstrate balanced device use, take regular screen breaks, and prioritise face-to-face interactions to reinforce positive behaviours. Making a habit of putting your phone away during meals and conversations can show that real-life interactions come first.

#### ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE

Create a safe space for children to talk about their online experiences. Ask open-ended questions like, "What did you enjoy online today?" to build trust and awareness. Try setting aside 10 minutes each day for a digital check-in where children can share what they've seen or done online.

#### PROMOTE DIGITAL LITERACY

Teach children how to evaluate online content, recognise misinformation, and understand privacy settings. Empower them to think critically and act responsibly in digital spaces. You could use real-life examples from the news or social media to help children practise spotting fake information.

#### Meet Our Expert

Adam Gillett is Associate Vice Principal for Personal Development at Penistone Grammar School and works on secondment one day a week for Minds Ahead, which works with schools on improving their mental health provision.



#WakeUpWednesday

The National College

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## IS MY CHILD WELL ENOUGH TO ATTEND SCHOOL?

Deciding whether your child is too unwell for school can be difficult. The NHS provides clear, helpful guidance on common illnesses and when children should stay at home to recover and prevent the spread of infection.

Read the NHS guidance here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

If you're unsure, please don't hesitate to contact the school office for advice.

# IS MY CHILD TOO ILL FOR SCHOOL?

yes

until...

NHS

CHICKENPOX	At least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over.
DIARRHOEA AND VOMITING	48 hours after their last episode.
HIGH TEMPERATURE	If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.
IMPETIGO	Their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics.
MEASLES	4 days after the rash first appeared.
MUMPS	5 days after their swelling started.
SCABIES	They've had their first treatment.
SCARLET FEVER	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics.
WHOOPING COUGH	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics.



NO



CONJUNCTIVITIS	You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.
COUGHS & COLDS	It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold.
HAND, FOOT & MOUTH	If they seem well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.
HEAD LICE	There's no need to keep your child off school. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing your GP.
THREADWORMS	Speak to your pharmacist, who can recommend treatment.
SORE THROAT TONSILLITIS	You can still send your child to school if they have a sore throat. But if they also have a high temperature, they should stay at home until it goes away.
SLAPPED CHEEK	You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome because, once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious.

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## TERM DATES

### 2026-2027

#### Autumn Term

*Professional Days: Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September; Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2026*

*Half Term Starts: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2026*

*Half Term Ends: Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2026*

*CAM Academies Trust Conference (Professional Day): Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2026*

*Half Term Holiday: Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October- Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2026*

*Half Term Starts: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2026*

*Half Term Ends: Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2026*

#### Spring Term

*Professional Day: Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2027*

*Half Term Starts: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2027*

*Half Term Ends: Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2027*

*Half Term Holiday: Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2027*

*Half Term Starts: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2027*

*Half Term Ends: Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2027*

#### Summer Term

*Professional Day: Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2027*

*Half Term Starts: Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2027*

*Half Term Ends: Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2027*

*Professional Day: Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2027*

*Half Term Holiday: Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May- Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2027*

*Half Term Starts: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2027*

*Half Term Ends: Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2027*

# GCA HALF-TERMLY NEWS

## TERM DATES

### 2027-2028

#### Autumn Term

*Professional Days: Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September - Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2027*

*Half Term Starts: Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2027*

*Half Term Ends: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2027*

*CAM Academies Trust Conference (Professional Day): Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2027*

*Half Term Holiday: Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2027*

*Half Term Starts: Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2027*

*Half Term Ends: Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2027*

#### Spring Term

*Professional Day: Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2028*

*Half Term Starts: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2028*

*Half Term Ends: Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2028*

*Half Term Holiday: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February - Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2028*

*Half Term Starts: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2028*

*Half Term Ends: Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2028*

#### Summer Term

*Half Term Starts: Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2028*

*Half Term Ends: Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2028*

*Half Term Holiday: Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May- Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2028*

*Half Term Starts: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2028*

*Half Term Ends: Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2028*

*Professional Day: Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2028*