DUNCTON CE JUNIOR SCHOOL
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OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

GRAFFHAM CE INFANT SCHOOL
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Dear Parents and Carers,

It is hard to believe that we have already reached the end of our first half-term. It has been a busy and positive start to the school year, and it has been wonderful to see the children settling into their classes, working hard and making the most of the many opportunities across both schools.

As you will see from this month's newsletter, there has been so much going on, from exciting learning in the classroom to sport, trips, new chickens and experiences beyond it. I am particularly pleased to see the enthusiasm, curiosity and responsibility that our children continue to show.

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our parents' evenings this week and a special thank you to those Graffham parents who came to Duncton on Wednesday night following the power cut in Graffham.

Thank you, as always, to our staff for everything they do and to you, our parents and carers, for your continued support. I hope everyone enjoys a well-earned and restful half-term break, and we look forward to welcoming the children back for another exciting half-term.

With best wishes,

Charles Beckerson

Wrens

Wren Class have had a very busy and exciting few weeks! In phonics, we have learnt lots of new sounds and are becoming more confident at blending CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words when reading. The children are working hard and making great progress.

In maths, we have been focusing on subitising numbers 2, 3 and 4, helping us to recognise small quantities quickly without counting.

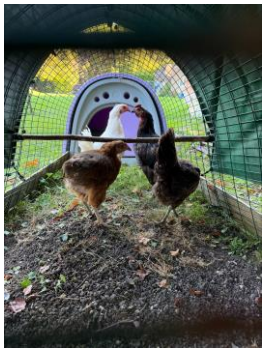
We have also enjoyed planting seeds and vegetables in our garden. We are looking forward to watching them grow and using them in the school kitchen for our lunches in the future.

During choosing time, the children have been enthusiastically practising their Kinetic Letters and are incredibly proud of the improvements they are making in their handwriting.

We were also delighted to welcome Scramble and Cherry, our new chickens, to Graffham. The children have loved learning how to care for them and are showing great responsibility when helping to look after them.

We are very proud of all the learning and enthusiasm that the children in Wren Class are showing every day!







Kingfishers

This month has flown by in Kingfisher class. The children are showing amazing progress across their learning - especially in their writing and their maths. We've read some brilliant books together - the three little wolves and the big bad pig, Rapunzel and I'm not scary and children have retold these stories with great accuracy and creativity. We're all very excited for Halloween and hollowing out the pumpkin that was so kindly donated has caused a lot of excitement! Year 1s continue to show a brilliant level of independence and resilience now that they are being tasked with daily whole class teaching and year 2s are desperate to start learning the recorder when they come back after half term... We hope everyone has a wonderful week off and looks forward to getting stuck into our winter learning when we come back.





Kestrels

This half term, Year 3 and 4 have continued their exciting topic on Ancient Egypt. In Art, the children have explored a range of Egyptian artefacts, creating their own Egyptian death masks using papier-mâché and paint, as well as developing their sculpting skills through clay work.

In English, the children have been learning about the Legend of Isis and Osiris, using this fascinating myth as inspiration for their reading and writing. They have also been working hard to apply their grammar knowledge to improve the quality and accuracy of their written work.

In Maths, the children have been strengthening their understanding of addition and subtraction, developing fluency with a range of strategies and applying these skills to solve increasingly challenging problems.

We are very proud of the enthusiasm and creativity the children have shown across all areas of their learning.









Peregrines

It hardly seems possible that we have already reached the Autumn half-term! The children are eagerly looking forward to the Halloween party before enjoying a well-deserved week of holiday.

October has been a wonderfully productive and engaging month in Peregrine Class, with the children demonstrating great enthusiasm, curiosity and dedication across the curriculum.

Our World War II topic has truly captured the children's imagination, particularly our focus on evacuation. The class has created impressive Anderson shelters, explored the events surrounding the bombing of Petworth Boys' School, and enjoyed learning about this significant period in history through a local perspective. We were also incredibly privileged to welcome Woody's grandmother, Cathy, who shared her personal experiences of

being a nine-year-old child during the war. Her stories brought history to life and provided the children with a valuable insight into what life was really like. Thank you so much, Cathy, for giving us the opportunity to learn from your lived experiences.

In Mathematics, we have continued to build our understanding of place value and have enjoyed extending our learning through negative numbers, addition, subtraction and multiplication. More recently, we have explored factors, multiples and prime numbers, developing our reasoning and problem-solving skills along the way.

In English, the children have written some outstanding narratives depicting life in London during the Blitz, using vivid description and powerful vocabulary to create atmosphere. They then turned their attention to persuasive writing, composing convincing letters from the government encouraging parents to support the evacuation programme and keep their children safe.

Our class novel, Letters from the Lighthouse, has been thoroughly enjoyed by the children. The story follows two young evacuees sent from London to Devon during the war and complements our history learning beautifully.

In Art, the children have continued designing and creating their own propaganda posters with Ms Kenway, thoughtfully considering the messages and techniques used to influence public opinion during wartime.

There has also been great enjoyment in PE as the children continue to develop their football skills and understanding of teamwork. We have enjoyed taking part in a few inter-school football matches over recent weeks, and it has been wonderful to see the enthusiasm, determination and sportsmanship on display.

One of the highlights of the month was our visit to Petworth House, where the children studied a painting and then worked collaboratively to develop lyrics inspired by the artwork. It was a joyful and creative experience, and we are extremely grateful to Susan Hamilton and the Petworth Festival team for providing this opportunity. We are very much looking forward to welcoming them back into school in November for a musical takeover day.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We wish you all a happy, restful and enjoyable half-term break and look forward to seeing everyone refreshed and ready for an exciting second half of the autumn term.









School Absences

Pupils are only in school for 190 days each year, this leaves 175 other days for holidays and other activities. 90% attendance is the same as a day off every fortnight and is designated "persistent absence" by the authorities.

Absence for holiday - barring exceptional circumstances - will never be authorised

If you do have a holiday coming up please ask for a withdrawal from learning form in advance from the school office.

SCHOOL WEBSITE

Please take a look at our website https://graffhamanddduncton.w-sussex.sch.uk/

Prioritising Food Security for our Children...

We have been asked by a parent to circulate this plea as it is affecting many families in the area. If you would like to show your support, then please sign the petition (they hope to get 1000 signatures before half term!) -
https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/ask-the-environment-secretary-to-meet-parents-on-food-security

Food is costing more and getting harder to grow as our climate changes. Our kids deserve a food system they can count on. Add your name and tell the government to make food security a priority.

Putting food on the table is getting harder. The weekly shop costs more than it used to. Floods, droughts and heatwaves are hitting UK farms and harvests, and the same extreme weather is hitting the countries we import much of our food from. Because we rely so heavily on imports, those shocks end up in our kitchens and in our children's lunchboxes.

Food and climate are the same story. The way we farm and produce food is a big driver of climate change, and **climate change is now threatening the food we grow**. A secure food system protects our children's health, our family budgets and the world they'll grow up in.

The government has the power to change this. So parents and carers across the UK are coming together to ask for one thing: food our children can count on.

Parents are asking the Environment Secretary, Dame Angela Eagle MP, to commit to:



- **Backing the farmers who feed our families.** Support UK farmers to grow more healthy, climate-resilient food for families, with more plants on our plates, carbon in our soils, and nature on our farms. Ensure we do not increase our reliance on factory farming, and that water supplies for our farmers are protected before approving major new water users, like large data centres.

- **Providing healthy food for children at school which is bought locally and in line with the Eatwell Guide.** Improve guidelines, support, and monitoring to ensure our children have healthy food available in schools.

- **Keeping our promises on climate.** Meet our legally binding climate targets, cut emissions faster, and honour our commitments to help other countries adapt, so families here and around the world can put food on the table.

- **Listening to parents about what food security means for our families.** The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Angela Eagle, should meet with parents and carers to offer assurances and share how UK families can support the Government to deliver on these commitments.

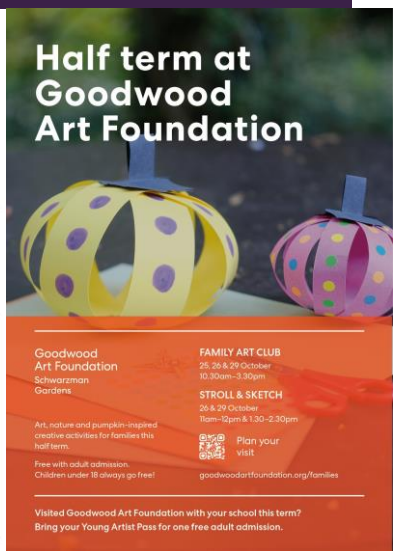
- **Making food security for our children a national priority.** Deliver a proper, joined-up food strategy that supports the Good Food Bill and protects families from shortages, price shocks and climate impacts.




DAYTIME
Trick or Treating
In participating businesses in MIDHURST
Saturday 31st October 2026
10am to 1pm
Participants must wear fancy dress and be accompanied by an adult, regardless of age!
For further information on which businesses are taking part, visit: www.midhurst-tc.gov.uk


Free
Detective Pumpkin's Trail
Can you help solve the case of the missing Midhurst spellbook?
Complete the trail anytime during Half-Term between:
24th October 2026
31st October 2026
To receive a prize for solving the case, go to:
The Old Library, Knockhundred Row, Midhurst, GU29 9DQ on the following days:
Friday 30th October 2026 - 9.30am to 2.00pm
Saturday 31st October 2026 - 9.30am to 2.00pm (also the Autumn Market with free crafts and daytime trick or treating in the town)
Collect the activity sheet from outside The Old Library, or download from www.midhurst-tc.gov.uk


Free Halloween Trail & Crafts
Midhurst Town Council
AUTUMN MARKET
Saturday
31st October 2026
9am to 2pm
At The Old Library and Market Square, Midhurst
www.midhurst-tc.gov.uk


Half term at Goodwood Art Foundation
Goodwood Art Foundation
Schwarzman Gardens
Art, nature and pumpkin-inspired creative activities for families this half term.
Free with adult admission. Children under 18 always go free!
FAMILY ART CLUB
25, 26 & 29 October
10.30am–3.30pm
STROLL & SKETCH
26 & 29 October
11am–12pm & 1.30–2.30pm
Plan your visit
goodwoodartfoundation.org/families
Visited Goodwood Art Foundation with your school this term?
Bring your Young Artist Pass for one free adult admission.

Reaching Families

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person who has, or may have, special educational needs and disabilities in West Sussex?



Reaching Families is a parent-carer led charity which aims to empower parent-carers and families of children & young people with special educational needs and disabilities in West Sussex through the delivery of information, training and peer support.

Making Sense of it All
In-depth parent-carer guide covering SEND issues from birth to adulthood

Umbrellas
Parent support groups based at locations across West Sussex and online, via Zoom

Training
Workshops and courses on a variety of issues delivered in-person and online

Face-2-Face
Peer based befriending for parents of children undergoing diagnosis

Animations
Short animated films on a variety of subjects

Fact sheets
Covering a range of SEND issues localised to the needs of West Sussex families

Benefits Advice Service
1-2-1 advice & claim checking support for families applying for DLA, PIP & Carers Allowance

NDP Navigation Service
Support service for parent-carers of children undergoing assessment on the West Sussex Neurodevelopmental Pathway (via referral from a professional)

Facebook Group
An online parent support group providing news, information and peer support

If you would like more information about how Reaching Families can help, please contact:

Email: admin@reachingfamilies.org.uk
Telephone: 01903 366 360

Reg Charity No 1150906

Reaching Families

www.reachingfamilies.org.uk