

SUNNY BANK

NEWSLETTER



HEAD OF SCHOOL MESSAGE



As we come to the end of our first term, I wanted to take the opportunity to thank you all for your continued support. It has been lovely to see our children return from the summer holidays, which already seem such a long time ago! The term has been incredibly busy, but also thoroughly enjoyable, as we continue to provide exciting and meaningful learning opportunities for all of our children.

It has been especially lovely to welcome all of our new families who have joined the Sunny Bank community this term. We are particularly pleased with how well our new EYFS children have settled into school life.

They have quickly adapted to routines, built positive relationships with the adults who support them and embraced their learning with enthusiasm. We are very proud of the progress they have already made and look forward to seeing them continue to flourish throughout the year.



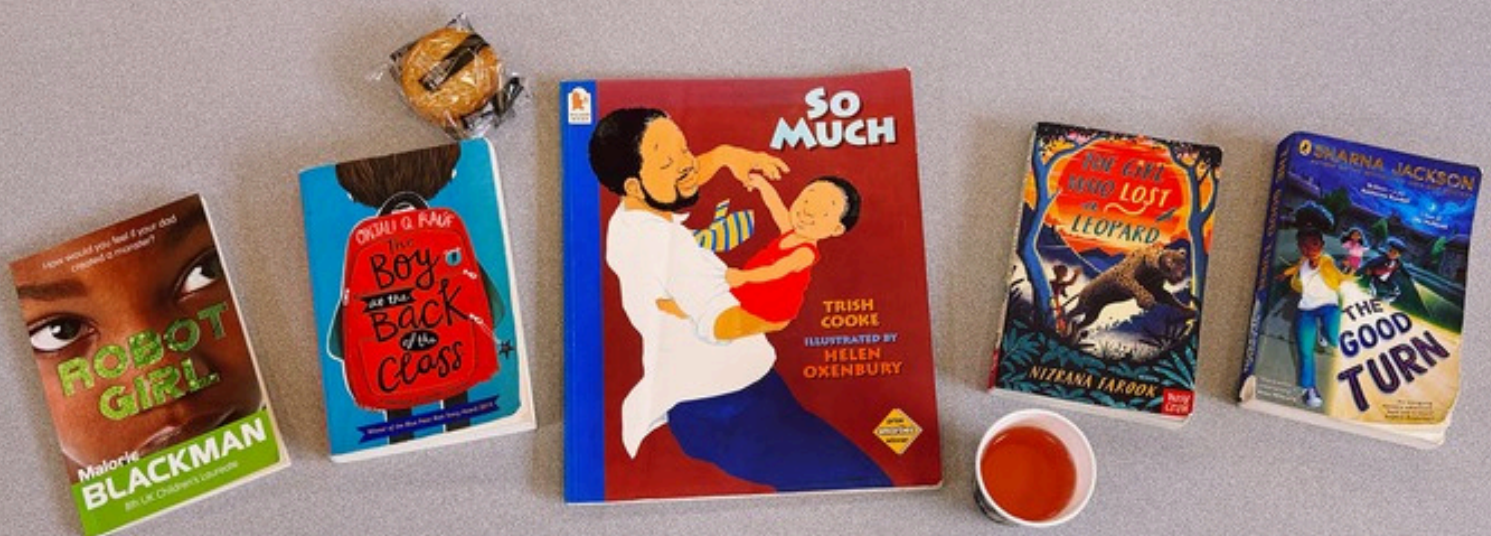
Before sharing some of this term's highlights, I would like to remind families of the importance of supporting children with their daily reading and **Times Table Rock Stars** (TTRS) homework. These activities make a huge difference to children's confidence and progress in school. We are particularly proud of the large number of children who have worked hard to improve their reading age this term and who have been successfully quizzing on their books. Well done to all of them for their dedication and effort!

Attendance continues to be a key priority for our school. Every day in school matters and regular attendance ensures that children can fully participate in the learning journey within their classroom. It also allows them to benefit from all the wonderful learning opportunities, experiences and activities our staff carefully plan and provide. Thank you for your support in helping us ensure that children attend school every day whenever possible.

Our Year 6 children thoroughly enjoyed their recent trip to the **Fenn Bell Conservation Project**, where they took part in a range of engaging animal workshops and learning experiences. We would also like to thank our parent helper who supported us during the visit. Opportunities such as these simply would not be possible without the support of our families and we are extremely grateful for your help.

We also had a fantastic **Community Spirit Week**. The children embraced every activity with enthusiasm and positivity and I was delighted to receive emails commenting on how wonderfully behaved they were. They were a real credit to themselves, their families and our school community.

As part of our **Black History** celebrations, every class studied a famous figure from history and explored their achievements and impact. Children also enjoyed an exciting djembe drumming workshop and spent time in a special 'Book Café', exploring books written by Black authors. These experiences provided valuable opportunities for learning, discussion and celebration. Special thanks go to Mrs Odumosu for organising and coordinating these enriching activities.





Thank you also to everyone who contributed to our **Harvest Collection** in support of the Salvation Army. We have been informed that the donated items have already been distributed to families in need or included in Christmas hampers for those who require additional support this festive season. Your generosity has made a real difference to our local community.

Finally, a huge thank you goes to our PTA for organising the amazing **Boo Bash Disco**. It was a fantastic event that brought so much enjoyment to our children. Once again, these wonderful opportunities would not be possible without the support of our families and our dedicated PTA team and staff, who generously give up so much of their own time to organise and run these events.

Thank you for all your support during Term 1. We are proud of everything our children have achieved and look forward to seeing what they will accomplish next.

We hope you all have a wonderful half-term break and enjoy spending time together as a family. We look forward to welcoming everyone back, refreshed, ready and eager to learn at the start of Term 2.

Best wishes.

Nicole Hyett
Head of School



HAWTHORN SCIENCE

In Science this term Hawthorn have been looking at the digestive system of humans and animals. We investigated 'poo clues' about animals diets, and what this tells us about their teeth.

The children had 3 stations to investigate. At each station was an animal poo, magnifying glasses, some animal picture cards, vocab cards and skulls. The children had to use the magnifying glasses to investigate the poo and find clues about what animal it could be, whether it was a herbivore, carnivore or omnivore and what sort of teeth it would have, e.g. carnivore large canines for tearing meat, herbivores large molar for grinding plants.

It was great seeing the children getting excited about Science, working as a team and using scientific vocab such as 'let's investigate'.



MAKING READING ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE



At Sunny Bank, we want every child to discover the joy of reading and to feel confident picking up a book. We are delighted to have a selection of Barrington Stoke dyslexia-friendly books in our school library, helping to make reading more accessible and enjoyable for children who may find traditional books challenging.

Barrington Stoke books are specially designed to support developing and struggling readers. With carefully chosen layouts, accessible fonts, appropriate spacing and engaging stories, they help to reduce some of the barriers children can experience when reading, without compromising on exciting plots or age-appropriate content.

For some children, finding a book that feels manageable can make all the difference. It can help build confidence, encourage independence and, most importantly, allow children to experience the pride and pleasure of getting lost in a good story.

At Sunny Bank, we believe that every child deserves the opportunity to see themselves as a reader. By providing a range of accessible books, we are continuing our commitment to inclusion and ensuring that all our children have the opportunity to develop a love of reading, whatever their starting point.



COMMUNITY SPIRIT WEEK

Litter picking and cleaning our local church!



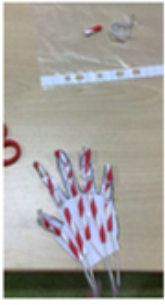


NEW OPAL EQUIPMENT

Our collection of outdoor play and learning equipment continues to grow with exciting new additions!







ELM EXPLORE MUSCLE MOVEMENT

In Elm Class in Science, we have been exploring how our muscles move. We learnt that some movements are voluntary, for example when we clench our fist, and some movements are involuntary, for example our heart beating. We know that our muscles can relax and contract and for today's experiment we made our own hands that show a fist clenching(contracting) and opening as a flat hand again (relaxing).



WILD ABOUT LEARNING

Year 6 pupils went on a hands-on science adventure to the Fenn Bell Conservation Project! The children got up close with a variety of rescued animals—from cheeky meerkats to curious otters—while learning all about animal welfare, habitats, and vital wildlife conservation work. It was a fantastic day of discovery that brought our science curriculum to life and inspired our young learners to think more about conservationism.

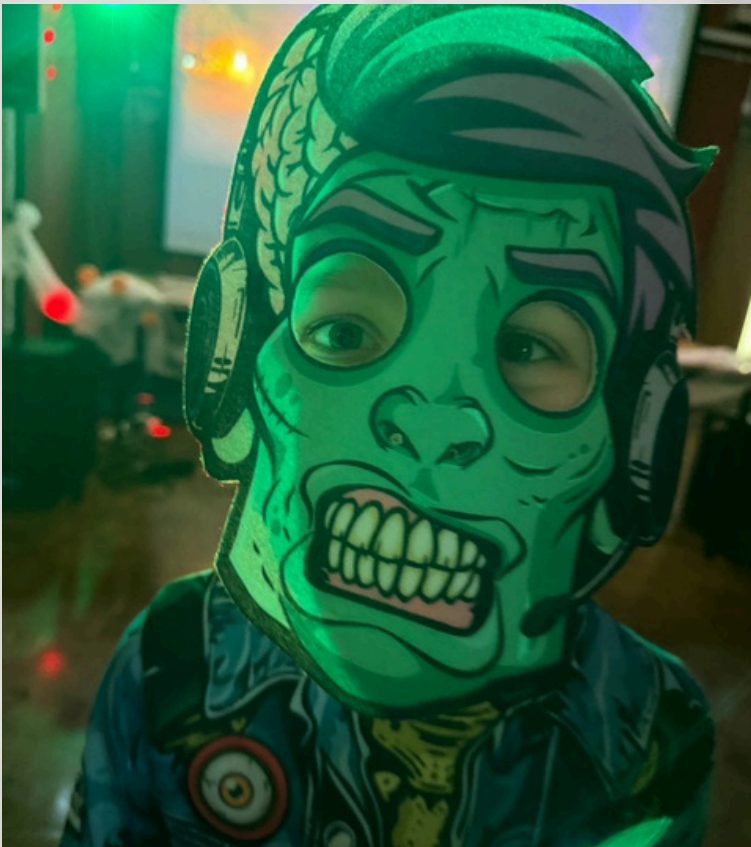


FEEL THE BEAT!

As part of **Black History Week**, our pupils took part in an exciting, hands-on African Drumming Workshop! Guided by an expert, the children explored the rich heritage and storytelling traditions of West Africa through traditional drumming and call-and-response.

The children discovered some of the vibrant roots of Black history, built teamwork, rhythm, and active listening skills—all while making fantastic, joyful beats together!

BOO BASH DISCO



OUR NEXT DISCO



Happy Hearts

FEBRUARY 2027

CLASS

DOJO



**We now have 100% of
EYFS parents on Class Dojo!**
(both Squirrels - Nursery and Acorns)

**THANK
YOU!**



HARVEST DONATIONS

Hello everyone,

I just wanted to send a quick note to say a heartfelt thank you for all the donations you kindly gave to The Salvation Army through your Harvest collection.

I am pleased to let you know that the donations have already been distributed within the community and are helping people who need a little extra support at this time.

Thank you once again for your generosity and kindness. Your support is greatly appreciated and makes a real difference to the lives of others.

Every blessing

Major Marie Burr

Church Leader Sittingbourne Salvation Army



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



MONDAY
2nd November

All Day
Term 2

THURSDAY
12th November

All Day
Parent Workshop - Supporting Your Child

MONDAY
16th November

All Day
Kindness Week

TUESDAY
17th November

All Day
Parents Evening

THURSDAY
19th November

All Day
Parents Evening

FRIDAY
20th November

All Day
Children in Need

www.sunnybank.kent.sch.uk

Subscribe to our **Online Calendar**

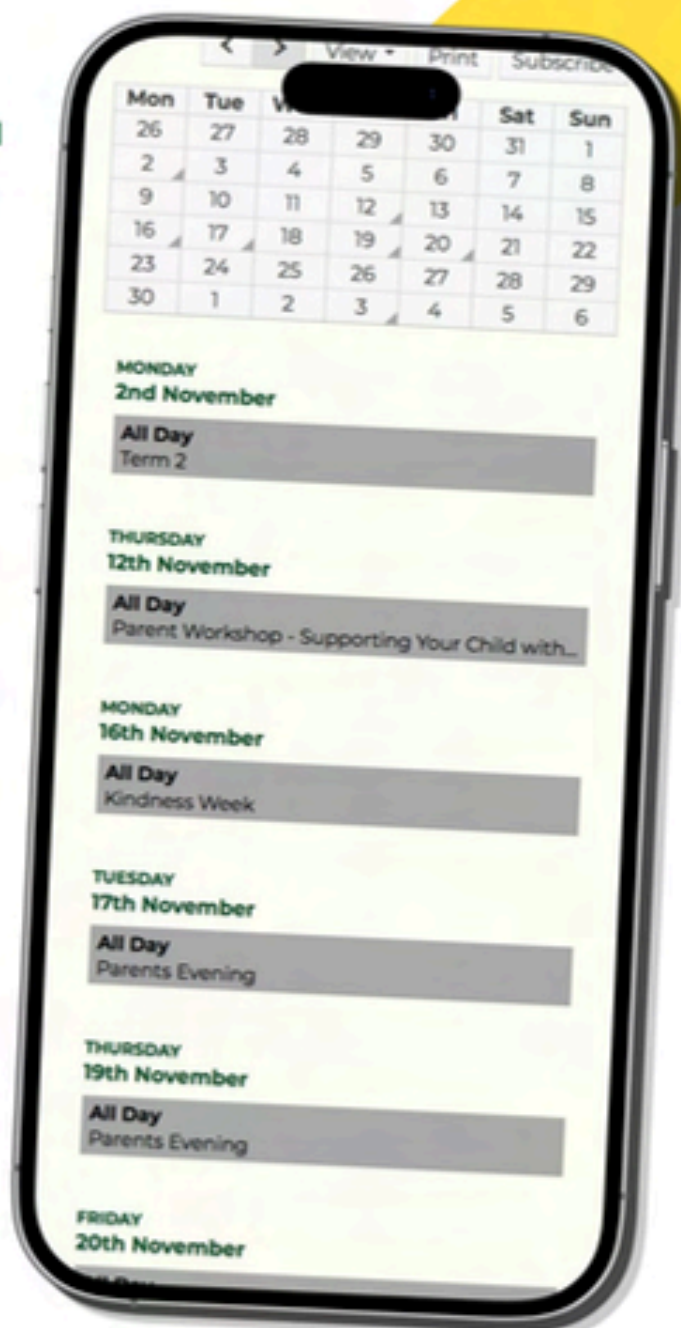
And have our dates
and events
automatically appear
on your phone!



www.sunnybank.kent.sch.uk

News and Events / Calendar

or scan the QR code





Emotional Wellbeing team Kent
Emotional Support team Medway

Parent Workshop

Aimed at parents of children in primary school

Supporting Your Child with Worries & Fears

Thursday 12th November 9am—10am

Are your child's worries and fears starting to impact their day to day life? Would you like to come and **meet with other parents and carers** and learn about ways to **support your children so they can manage their concerns and enjoy themselves more?**

You are invited to a workshop which focuses on **understanding what anxiety is, the symptoms** you may notice in your child and some **techniques to help manage this anxiety.**

This workshop will be held at **Sunny Bank Primary School**. If you have any questions or would like to attend, please speak to your school team.

We look forward to meeting you!

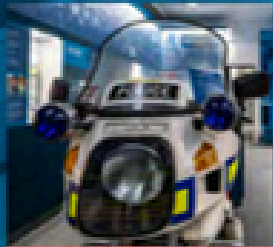
POPPY APPEAL

A SELECTION OF POPPY ITEMS WILL BE ON SALE FROM
MONDAY 2ND NOVEMBER



Visit Kent Police Museum in Faversham and become a detective!

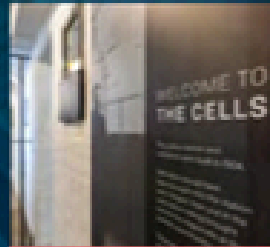
**FREE
entry**



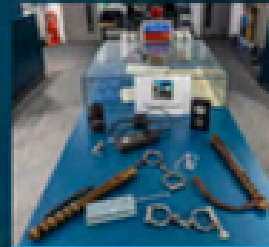
MOTORCYCLE



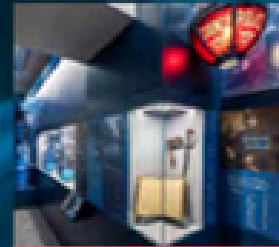
**DRESS-UP
OPPORTUNITIES**



**INTERACTIVE
EXHIBITS**



**HISTORIC
EQUIPMENT**



**REAL STORIES
FROM KENT'S
PAST**



Follow clues, explore real crime stories, discover fascinating police equipment, and enjoy interactive displays.

Learn how crimes were solved in the past and see unusual objects from more than 200 years of Kent Police history.

Looking for something to do this October half term?

The museum will be open from **Tuesday 27 October to Saturday 31 October, 10am to 4pm**. For the latest opening times and visitor information, please check the museum website before you visit.



**Kent
Police
Museum**

Bringing Our History to Life

 [kentpolicemuseum](https://www.facebook.com/kentpolicemuseum)
 [@kpolicemuseum](https://twitter.com/kpolicemuseum)

www.kent.police.uk/kent-museum
Email: museum@kent.police.uk
Telephone 01795 433028

A NEW KIND
OF CHURCH

SAINTS ALIVE

NEW FRIENDS

WORSHIP

MUSIC

FOOD

FUN!

ALL SAINTS CHURCH
MURSTON
SUNDAYS

11 OCT 8 NOV 13 DEC

3.30-4.30PM





**The Island
Learning Trust**



ADVERTISE IN OUR NEWSLETTERS

Advertising is a powerful communication tool used to inform, persuade, and influence potential customers. It plays a critical role in shaping consumer behavior and building awareness for products, services, or ideas. In today's fast-paced world, effective advertising goes beyond just exposure - it creates emotional connections and drives action

We design visually captivating newsletters for schools and our trust, which have become quite popular among parents, children, staff and visitors alike. Now, we're offering local businesses the chance to advertise in these newsletters at an affordable rate, allowing them to reach a broad audience



SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS

- Sunny Bank Primary School
- Halfway Houses Primary School
- Minster in Sheppey Primary School



TRUST PARENT NEWSLETTER

News Highlighting All Three of Our Schools and Trust



SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook and Instagram

SCHOOL WEBSITES

For each school and the trust

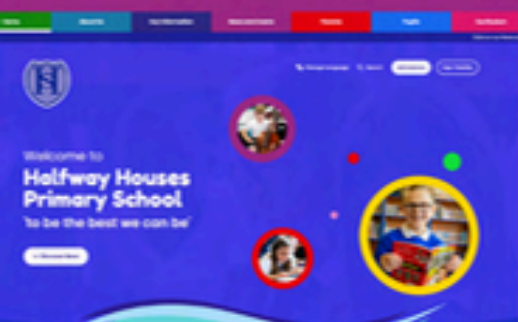
CLASS DOJO

Communication tool for all parents

EMAIL

An email is sent to parents with a direct link

HOW WE PROMOTE OUR NEWSLETTERS



A WIDE AUDIENCE

WEBSITES FOR THE SCHOOLS AND TRUST

in a typical 4-week period, our websites have received a total of 7,312 visits

SOCIAL MEDIA FACEBOOK

in a typical 4-week period, our Facebook pages have garnered a total of 86,000 views

CLASS DOJO FOR PARENTS

All parents at our schools are engaged and actively participate in viewing the School Story



The Island Learning Trust

**FOR
MORE
INFORMATION
AND
PRICING**



**The Island
Learning Trust**

CONTACT

PHIL REYNOLDS

The Island Learning Trust, Brecon Chase,
Minster, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 2HX

PHONE

01795 606458

EMAIL

finance@TILTrust.org

**This is a preview edition of our complete advertising brochure.
The full version can be obtained upon request.*

What Parents & Educators Need to Know about AI COMPANIONS

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

Powered by generative AI models like ChatGPT and Google Gemini, AI companion apps and virtual chatbots such as Character.ai, Snapchat My AI, Replika and Talkie, allow users to create, customise, and chat to synthetic avatars around the clock. While many young people use them for harmless entertainment, creative writing or homework help, these tools are designed to simulate genuine human empathy, emotional bonding and deep friendship.

EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY

AI companions are programmed to be endlessly agreeable, attentive, and available 24/7. Unlike human friendships, an AI companion never disagrees, sets personal boundaries, or gets tired. Young people (especially those experiencing loneliness, social anxiety, or low self-esteem) can quickly develop an unhealthy emotional attachment, viewing synthetic software as their 'best friend' or a surrogate romantic partner.

DANGEROUS MENTAL HEALTH ADVICE

AI chatbots possess no genuine empathy, professional clinical knowledge, or moral reasoning. While developers state these tools are not therapists, vulnerable teenagers often turn to them in crisis. Chatbots have previously hallucinated unsafe medical guidance, validated depressive spirals, and failed to safely escalate disclosures of self-harm or suicidal ideation to real-world protective services.

DATA HARVESTING & OVERSHARING

Because conversational bots simulate warmth and understanding, children often lower their guard and treat the chatbot as a trusted friend. They may disclose sensitive personal information, including full names, school details, private family problems, or secrets, unaware that their conversations are being logged, may be analysed by third parties (including advertisers), or used to train future AI models.

DISTORTED SOCIAL SKILLS

Navigating real-world friendships can be messy, involving dealing with conflict, compromise, boredom, and awkwardness. If a teenager spends hours interacting with an AI that is tailored specifically to validate and flatter them, they may become impatient with real-world relationships. Over time, this can lead to social withdrawal, heightened anxiety in peer groups, and isolation: a vicious cycle of growing online dependency coupled with a heightened sense that relationships in the 'real world' are too challenging to maintain.

INAPPROPRIATE OR EXPLICIT CONTENT

While most mainstream platforms feature safety filters and guardrails, young people frequently discover 'jailbreak' prompts to bypass them. Some companion platforms subtly nudge users towards mature themes, romantic roleplay, or sexually suggestive conversations. In worse cases, third-party apps with weak safety checks have been found to generate sexually explicit text or intimate images.

"FREEMIUM" UPSELLS & SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many companion platforms operate on a freemium model. While basic chat is free, features like voice calls, uncensored responses, custom avatars, or 'deeper bonding' tiers are locked behind expensive monthly recurring subscriptions or in-app token purchases. This can lead to significant hidden costs and pressure on young people to spend money to maintain the 'friendship'.

Advice for Parents & Educators

TALK OPENLY ABOUT FAKE RELATIONSHIPS

Demystify how these tools work. Explain to young people that an AI companion has no feelings, memories, or consciousness; it is simply calculating the next most mathematically probable word based on its training data. It is helpful to explain to them the mechanics of large language models so that they understand how they are trained and how they are designed to always flatter and be helpful.

AUDIT PRIVACY SETTINGS & AGE LIMITS

Check which companion apps are installed on your child's phone or tablet. Many dedicated companion apps carry an App Store rating of 17+, while platforms like Character.ai set a minimum age of 13+ (or 16+ in the UK/EU). Review the privacy settings together: turn off data-sharing toggles, disable model training where possible, and ensure location permissions are blocked.

ENCOURAGE REAL-WORLD CONNECTION

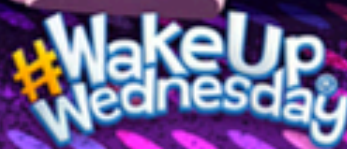
Ensure technology habits do not replace face-to-face peer socialisation, sports, hobbies, and family time. Create healthy boundaries at home (such as keeping phones and tablets out of bedrooms overnight) to prevent late-night, unmonitored attachment loops with conversational chatbots when young people are at their most vulnerable.

REINFORCE WHERE TO GET REAL HELP

Make sure young people know that a machine can never replace professional pastoral or mental health care. Remind them of the trusted adults they can turn to at school - such as their Form Tutor, Head of Year, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - as well as dedicated youth support services like Childline (0800 111) or Shout (text 83214).

Meet Our Expert

Darren Coxon is the Founder and Executive Director of Kompass Education, a consultancy specialising in supporting educators, students and parents in making wise choices with AI. His book *Ethical AI and Education*, co-authored with Clara Hawking, will be released later in 2024 by Taylor and Francis.



The National College

See full reference list on our website



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