

THE OTTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF OTTERBOURNE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL.



***** COMING UP NEXT: The Lights and Laser Show is on Friday 14th November – tickets still available *****

Dear Families

If you have visited the school this week, you will have undoubtedly seen that there is a new addition at the front of the meadow playground, as we have extended The Holt Garden. Sadly, 'the ropes' as they were affectionately named had to be removed over the half-term so we have taken the opportunity to extend the garden and give more children the opportunity to play a part in planting and growing activities. I hope you like it.

Kind regards

Mr Geraghty

A Tribute

You may have noticed that a bright and very meaningful piece of furniture has appeared on the meadow playground. The new 'Buddy Bench' is a generous donation from Mrs Graveling, the wife of Mr Mike Graveling who was the Headteacher here for many years. Mike sadly passed away recently and it is befitting that we have a memorial to him here in the school, as many families and staff remember him with nothing but fondness. There is a memorial plaque on the bench to help the children understand the importance of the it, and they are aware of the name as we present the Mike Graveling cup each term for exemplary conduct, enthusiasm and determination.



Parent Tours – do you know anybody looking for a place in September 2026?

Due to the continued interest for places in Year R for next year, I've added two more dates to the diary for parent tours. These are open to new families but also anyone with a sibling starting in Year R too. The dates are:

- Monday 17th November 1:30pm
- Wednesday 19th November 9:30am

Spaces can be booked by contacting the school office.

Please note that the application process for school places is now open, and the deadline is January 15th 2026.

A message from FOS

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Autumn Trail — together we raised £72 for the school! We hope your little ones enjoyed hunting for the letters around the village and were excited to be led to our school gates to find the treasure.

For those who haven't yet spotted it, the treasure is inside a cabinet kindly donated to us by one of our parents, Jeremy Fishlock, from a company called Keter. We're calling it the Exchange Cabinet, and it will become a permanent feature here at school, located in the staff car park.

Take a look inside and feel free to help yourself to a book, toy or other donated item. When you're next able to, it would be wonderful if you could leave a little treasure in return for others to enjoy. This is a treat from us to you, so please don't worry about leaving any money — we simply wanted to create a space for sharing and kindness.

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Mission of the Month

At the end of last half-term, in our celebration assembly, a Mission of the Month certificate was awarded to a child in each class who had demonstrated the positive learning power of 'planning'. The focus for November is now Creative Thinking, and the Learning Council have created child-friendly wording to help everyone understand this month's mission:

KS1:

Using your imagination to have lots of ideas of your own.

MISSION of the Month Award
For appointing positive learning objectives to school

KS2:

Using your imagination to think in a different way and explore unique ideas and new possibilities.

MISSION of the Month Award
For appointing positive learning objectives to school

Children in our Learning Council create an image to support children's understanding of each month's Positive Learning Power. This month's fantastic design was created by Sophie Canto in Year 6.



The PSHE Theme This Half-Term

Our PSHE theme for this half term is '**Digital Wellbeing**'. Children in Years 1–6 will be learning about how to use technology safely, responsibly, and in a balanced way. Lessons will explore how digital devices and the internet can be positive tools for learning, creativity, and communication, while also highlighting the importance of setting healthy screen-time limits and recognising when time online might affect wellbeing.

Pupils will discuss topics such as protecting personal information, being kind and respectful online, and knowing what to do if they see something that worries or upsets them. Older year groups will also consider issues like social media use, online reputation, and the impact of digital content on mental health.

Through this unit, we aim to help children develop the knowledge, confidence, and strategies they need to make thoughtful, informed choices in their digital lives. More specific information about the lessons for each phase has been sent via email.

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LEARNING IN ACTION PHOTOS



Year 5/6 children have been outside creating a river to help them understand the processes of erosion, transportation and deposition. They predicted the course they believed a river would take and watched how the river developed its course and how the sediment travelled. They also explored a range of new vocabulary such as meander and tributary.



On Wednesday 5th November, Craig from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Trust came in to deliver a talk to Year 5/6 about what makes chalk stream habitats precious and why they need protection. The children listened carefully and made notes which will now support them to write their own persuasive speeches to the Winchester MP Danny Chambers, who is visiting school later this month. This work links to the Sustainability and Change pillar of our curriculum, which helps to teach the children the importance of caring for our planet and how we can be agents for change.



On Tuesday, Year 3/4 launched their new English unit 'Charlotte's Web' with a visit from Farmer Ham, who is a pig farmer and works on the farm with Mr Arable. The children got the opportunity to ask Farmer Ham lots of questions about his job and the reasons why he would want to kill poor little Wilbur, the runt piglet. The children are now inspired to write persuasive letters to Mr Arable asking him to save Wilbur.

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Year 2 children have been experimenting to find out what keeps a polar bear warm. They used their skin, a sock (fur) and fat (blubber) to compare how cold a bowl of ice-cubes felt.



Otters leading their own learning as they explore the continuous provision on offer within the classroom.

Nut Allergy – A Reminder

Please continue to ensure that snacks and lunch boxes are nut free as we do have children with serious allergies across the school, that we need to support. Thank you.

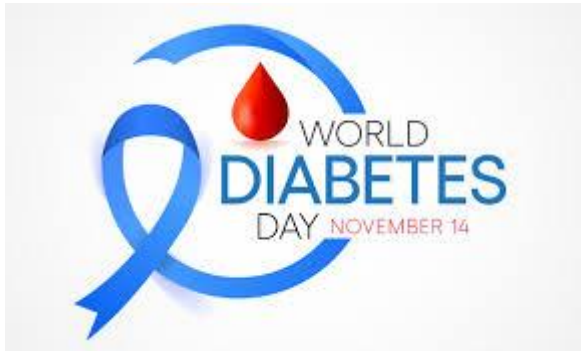
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Jewellery and Make-up

It was lovely to see the children being a little rebellious for break the rules day, but on regular school days, children should not be wearing bright nail varnish to school and only simple studs in their ears.



On Thursday 13th November children can wear something blue on their uniform to acknowledge World Diabetes Day on the 14th. We are doing this a day early as it is Children In Need Day on the 14th

PENALTY NOTICES AND NOTICES TO IMPROVE

The following is from The School Attendance Support Team at Hampshire County Council:

Schools are now authorised to issue penalty notices to parents who attempt to avoid penalties by scheduling holidays that fall below the threshold, including during weeks containing Bank Holidays or Inset Days. The Notice to Improve (NTI) process was introduced as part of the statutory framework outlined in Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024). It is intended as an early intervention tool to address emerging attendance concerns where the pupil does not present with complex needs. The Local Authority recommends that an NTI be considered when a pupil has accrued a minimum of 10 unauthorised absences within the last 100 sessions, but before reaching 30 unauthorised absences.

If you have any questions about this, please contact me directly. Thank you.

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Pupil Parliament Newsletters:

Pupil Parliament NEWSLETTER



5th November 2025

Community



40 x shoeboxes collected by Rotary Club
Winter clothes swap organised – children will be organising donations (sifting and sorting for suitable!) for OtterFest!

Children



JRSOs have been trained and are busy planning Be Bright Be Seen day including a competitive element they will be judging!

'Happy Toilet' campaign – working with Mr G and the building contractors to improve the toilet experience for everyone!

Learning



Article written for Otterbourne Life about what life is like at our school. This has been sent out to residents in the village.

Designing logos and child friendly wording for the Positive Learning Powers each month.

Wellbeing



Safe and well survey coming up using pupil voice – the council have come up with ideas about what the children could be asked about (EY to Y6!)

Anti-bullying week planned and assembly will be delivered by children and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors during the week.

Eco



Regular litter picking
Saplings delivered to each class to grow and plant along the field fence line.
Plan to rejuvenate small playground area outside Wrens by relocating rose garden.
Replacement rose garden at front of school

- ideas included planting flowers in the colours of the houses or in the shape of something.

Worship

Council created Harvest festival and delivered in the church to school and parents.
Planned and delivered a remembrance service for the whole school
Idea put forward of 'cross' to celebrate classes and their contributions to class worship and their worship tables.



Diversity



Visit to Nightingale school to discuss belonging
Children in Diversity council to visit EYFS to talk about celebrations including Diwali.

Sport



Play leaders established
House cross country coming up

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Pupil Parliament

Wednesday 3rd October 2025 (1)

Community Council

Shoebox appeal - 40 x shoeboxes have been collected and distributed to families to fill and return by 18th October. They have to use the set size shoebox for transport purposes.

Harvest Appeal - donations being collected in school for the foodbank.

Collections being taken until Friday 10th October. Community council will sort and organise taking it over to the church next week.

EARA council (was Diversity)

Rebrand to EARA (Equality and Rights Advocates) to align with work being completed within the council and other local schools.

October is Black History Month - a class worship will be sent to focus on this in the next few weeks.

Children Council

A whole-school suggestion box is being made by the children and will go outside the office with the other various boxes. Children council will then sort and sift for sensible suggestions to take to Mr G.

JRSO's (Junior Road Safety Officers) have been appointed and will have training next week.

Worship

Creation of wreath to hang on door to celebrate classes using worship tables and completing class worships each week.

They will also lead the Harvest worship on 10th October.

Learning Council

Started work on 'Positive Learning Powers' - rebrand from Building Learning Power (BLP). They will continue their child friendly wording to share with the children each month with a focus for Mission of the Month.

Wellbeing

Continued working towards the Diana Award Anti-Bullying badge which was started last year.

Request will be made to parents for a donation for a wellbeing/reading nook outside (a safe place to keep books waterproof!)

Sport

Playleaders appointed and rota being drawn up. Sport Council to assist with R&R lunch time activities.

NEXT PUPIL PARLIAMENT DATE:

Wednesday 5th November in Red Kite Class

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OTTERFEST WINTER CLOTHING SWAP SHOP

Community Council are bringing back our swap shop this year! Last year was a HUGE success. Not only did we raise money for our school but we donated a whopping 10 bags of high-quality clothing to Emmaus Winchester, who were thrilled to receive the donations. We are now collecting items and donations of good quality, clean winter clothing can be brought in to school any time between now and Monday 1st December so please have a rummage in half term! The swap shop will take place as part of OtterFest this year, where you will be able to take home what you need (for a small donation to the school if you wish). We love the sustainable message this gives to our children about reusing and recycling, but also the different it makes in our community. If you have any questions, please speak to Mrs Simpson.

OTTERBOURNE C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL'S

Winter Swap Shop

@ OTTERFEST 2025

WE ARE COLLECTING DONATIONS OF:

- COATS
- JUMPERS
- GLOVES
- HATS
- BOOTS
- WATERPROOFS

IN ALL SIZES

SWAP DON'T SHOP!

PLEASE BRING YOUR ITEMS TO SCHOOL BY
MONDAY 1ST DECEMBER